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International Research Collaboration: Contemporary Trends and Trajectories from GCC Countries

Saif Al-Sinani[1], Farhad Hossain, Anthony Sumnaya Kumasey and Foteini Kravariti

Abstract

There has been a phenomenal increase in the mobility of researchers and research-students between Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and the rest of the world. However, this emerging phenomenon remains largely under-researched. Drawing on empirical examination, the paper provides insights into ongoing international research collaboration in the Gulf region. The context is examined using bibliometric studies to analyse published research outputs from contemporary Standard International Database (Scopus) for the period 2004 to 2013. The findings revealed that USA is the most paramount research collaborating country. Simultaneously, Egypt is the second most important country and the only nearest neighbour of the top fifteen countries with which GCC countries collaborate with, whilst other countries follow with significant differences. Additionally, GCC countries' international research collaboration focuses mainly on the academic arena of physical sciences followed by life sciences with compelling variations.

Keywords: *research policy, international research collaboration, academic research, academic disciplines, GCC countries.*

1. Introduction

In recent decades there has been remarkable increase in research collaboration and mobility of both researchers and research-students across the globe (Boekholt et al., 2009) and extended to continents that research collaborations

were hitherto unknown or hardly existed (Kim et al., 2017). This is driven by the desire to find ways to solve societal challenges that have "global implications including climate change, anti-microbial resistance, pressure on resources such as food, water, and raw materials" (Ulrichsen and Featherston, 2016:1). The increase in international collaborations among academic researchers has become a key dimension in the strategic considerations of governments, funding bodies, research institutions, and researchers (Boekholt et al., 2009). The motives behind this trend are many, ranging from simply seeking advice in a specific research area to gaining access to resources such as funding, instruments and national data. For the individual researcher, the ultimate aim to collaborate is to gain knowledge, enhance research quality and career advancement not relinquishing increase productivity. At the national level, the motive is to maximize national competitiveness and solve complex international research problems.

Studies on collaborations have examined a wide variety of factors and dynamics (Shrum et al., 2007) aimed at finding solutions to fundamental human concerns (Handley, 2011). This notwithstanding, individual academics and higher education institutions have engaged with their international colleagues in collaborations, some of which have resulted in the joint publication of research findings. Universities these days emphasize the need for not only publications per se but international collaborations as well (Luukkonen et al., 1992). Besides academic advancement, academics sustain and broaden their influence through intellectual discourse across networks and the exchange of publications, and in reports and conferences as well (Davies, 1995).

Empirical literature on international research collaboration in higher education abounds (Tight, 2007; Kim et al., 2017), but it is believed researches in the GCC countries are lagging behind (Farhat et al., 2013; Zyoud et al., 2014). Surprisingly, no known study is readily available regarding international research collaborations in higher education within the Gulf region; the closest is the contribution of Arab researchers to ophthalmology (Sweileh et al., 2015). This study aims and attempts to fill this lacuna by focusing on international research collaborations in GCC countries with the goal of examining these collaborations with the top fifteen most prominent collaborating countries between 2004 and 2013. We sought to answer the following research questions: What are the main characteristics and trends of research collaboration among the GCC countries and their top 15 collaborators? What is the pattern of this research collaboration among GCC countries and at what academic discipline are these collaborations? To answer these questions, we used the number of international co-authored papers in GCC to ascertain the impact of research collaboration (Chinchilla-Rodríguez et al., 2012; He, 2009; Katz and Martin, 1997). Researchers also use acknowledgements (sub-authorship) as a second

indicator (Cronin, 2005) especially when not all collaboration results in ultimate co-authored publications. Further, scholars use citation rate of international co-authored papers to measure the quality of international collaboration (Levitt and Thelwall, 2010) because the rate of citation for internationally co-authored papers appear higher than single-authorship or nationally co-authored papers. These also tend to be published in high-impact journals and have higher visibility through conferences (Levitt and Thelwall, 2010; Persson et al., 2004). In addition, studies have proven that collaborative research results in positive impacts on countries, institutions and individual researchers as well in terms of productivity (Abt, 2007; Duque et al., 2005; Beaver, 2001).

The paper is looked at through the lens of social interdependence theory which requires the collaboration of members of a group to solve complex societal problems (Lee et al., 2015; Bell, 2010). The paper contributes to empirical literature by bringing the region's perspectives of international collaboration in higher education to the fore. Hitherto, the region has been known because of its wealth in oil reserves and natural energy (OPEC, 2016). Thus, the findings would provide valuable insights into planning and managing research collaborations, establishing links between and among GCC countries and beyond and equally serving as a reference point. The rest of the paper is structured as follows: the next section presents a brief theoretical overview of international research collaborations and the social interdependence theory. This is followed by the methodology. The results and discussion of findings are subsequently presented. The findings and conclusion suggests the regions' collaborations focuses mainly on physical science disciplines, followed by life sciences before the arts and humanities disciplines. The USA and Egypt are the topmost collaborating partners of the region.

2. Theoretical Review of Literature

2.1 International Research Collaborations

Collaboration, not overt competition, has become a catchword in the international arena. Countries need to be interdependent on each other and consequently call for international collaborations. Research collaborations have become inevitable in the development of nations. Boekholt et al., (2009) have reported that the last forty years have witnessed an unprecedented emergence and growth of international collaborations. This has been necessitated by the need to resolve issues related to climate change, diseases, cyber security, terrorism, food and water security and other concerns (Boekholt et al., 2009; Ulrichsen and Featherston, 2016; Handley, 2011). International research collaborations are research projects that involve investigators whose primary

employment affiliations are in different countries (Anderson, 2011:3). Within higher education institutions, collaborative research is widely promoted to break-down barriers between universities and industry, commerce, government and public services (Smith and Katz, 2000). This occurs at individuals, groups, departments, institutions, sectors and countries levels (Smith and Katz, 2000) and could be formal or informal. Collaboration provides the means to both professional advancement and increased knowledge. It also offers access to resources (both information and equipment) and association with the scientific community (Luukkonen et al., 1992). The incentive to collaborate is mostly influenced by the maxim 'publish or perish' (Luukkonen et al., 1992). These notwithstanding, international research collaborations are affected by many factors including the country size, academic disciplines, geography, politics and language (Jeong and Choi, 2014; Davidson Frame and Carpenter, 1979). Collaborations occur more in basic research as compared to applied research (Katz, 2000; Davidson Frame and Carpenter, 1979) and is influenced by socioeconomic and cultural ties (Boekholt et al., 2009).

2.2 Social Interdependence Theory

We used the Social Interdependence Theory (SIT) because it provides conceptual understanding of cooperation in groups (Lee et al., 2015; Parolia et al., 2011) and has been applied extensively in education, business and service organizations (Johnson and Johnson, 2003) to promote the development of collaborative skills, improve critical and creative thinking, aid complex problem solving, and transfer positive attitudes towards tasks (Johnson and Johnson, 1989; Bell, 2010; Lee et al., 2015). The theory relies on the interdependence of members of a group to achieve common goals. Social interdependence exists when the accomplishment of one's goals are affected by the actions of others (Deutsch, 1962; Johnson and Johnson, 1989; Johnson and Johnson, 2003). Literature has shown two main types of social interdependence, positive (cooperation) and negative (competition) interdependence. Positive interdependence exists when individuals perceive that they can reach their goals only if other individuals with whom they are cooperatively linked also reach their goals thereby promoting each other's efforts to achieve the goals (Johnson and Johnson, 2003; Johnson and Johnson, 2009). Negative interdependence on the other hand exists when individuals perceive that they can only obtain their goals if other individuals with whom they are competitively linked fail to obtain their goals. They deliberately impede each other's efforts to achieve the goals (Johnson and Johnson, 2009). Positive interdependence results in effective collaboration with beneficial outcomes such as "mutual help and assistance, exchange of needed resources, effective communication, mutual influence, trust and constructive management of conflict" (Johnson and Johnson, 2005:936) as well as cohesion,

esprit-de-corps, and social support (Johnson and Johnson, 2009). Negative interdependence results in divergent perceptions of the same situation, goal incongruence, conflicts, resistance and unnecessary delays (Kazanjian et al., 2000; Parolia et al., 2011).

The SIT fits very well with international research collaborations because social interdependence facilitates the pulling of cultural, relational and material resources together to promote not only collegial support but improve research innovation and conceptual framings for practice (Drew et al., 2016) as well as transfer new ideas and techniques from one place to the other (Johnson & Johnson, 2008). SIT would therefore lead to higher achievement and productivity (Johnson & Johnson, 2008). Individuals, who hitherto could not achieve more, would achieve tremendously under SIT when they work collaboratively (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). There is therefore the 'power of unity' in collaboration to achieve much.

2.3 Propositions

Based on the review of literature, the following propositions are being investigated:

Proposition 1: Collaborative research increases research outputs of GCC countries.

Proposition 2: Research collaboration tends to take place between GCC countries and mostly economically and technologically advanced countries.

Proposition 3: Research collaboration between the GCC countries and the collaborating countries is mostly concentrated in the science disciplines (health, life and physical sciences).

3. Methodology

The GCC is a regional political organisation comprising the energy rich Gulf monarchies of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. The GCC was set-up to boost economic cooperation between members, guard against threats from neighbouring states and establish scientific research amongst others (GCC, 2014). The countries share similar political, social and cultural ideologies. Saudi Arabia is the most influential member of the alliance, the largest and richest of the six and this is followed by UAE. Collectively, GCC countries possess almost half of the world's oil reserves and about 23% of global natural gas reserves (OPEC, 2016). Most of the higher education institutions in the region are private sector-driven but depends more on government assistance

(Hertog, 2014), while others are affiliated to international universities. Most of the region's research output is produced by academics in the universities and research centres. These researches are mainly published in international journals listed in the Scopus database. However, few of the published researches (mainly from humanities and social science disciplines) are written in Arabic, and are therefore not included in the Scopus database. The main indicator used in measuring international research collaborations is research that has one or more co-authors from a different country.

The authors used bibliometric analysis to examine international research collaboration within the region. This involved the use of statistical methods to extract the key research indicators from the SciVal software derived from the Elsevier Company's web-based digital solutions (Elsevier Research Intelligence Suite). SciVal uses content from the Scopus database from 1996 onwards. Among the research inputs in this software are articles, reviews, conference papers, editorials, and short surveys, which are updated weekly. In some few instances, the authors directly used the online Scopus database for some key indicators.

We extracted publications emanating from GCC countries from 2004-2013 and selected the international research collaborations within the same period. The criteria used were that at least one address of the collaborating authors should come from one of the GCC countries, and at least one from the top fifteen countries. The publications that had more than one address from each of the fifteen countries were allocated to each of these countries. Data collected were then used to generate information on international research collaboration between GCC countries and the most collaborative countries, and the academic disciplines that these collaborations came from. Publications have been used to categorize the most productive and cited authors in higher education research (Budd and Magnuson, 2010; Kim et al., 2017). In this study, the total number of publications from the GCC countries was 105,974, showing an overall growth rate of 15.6% from 4,676 publications in 2004 to 22,188 in 2013. These are expatiated in the next section.

4. Results, Discussion and Examination of Findings

Data for this section was derived from SciVal. Table 1 below illustrates the yearly research output of all GCC countries from 2004 to 2013. During this period, GCC countries produced a total of 105,974 publications, with KSA producing the most (59,854), and Bahrain producing the least (2,964). The significant variance is probably due to the size and number of research institutions in each country. For example, KSA has twenty-five public funded universities whereas

Bahrain has only one where almost all the research outputs are generated. This corroborates research preposition 2. The size, reputation, employability and history of the research institutions of the GCC countries are beyond the scope of this paper. We only examined the annual growth rate of research collaborations in these countries.

Table 1: Annual Research Output of GCC Countries from 2004-2013

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
Bahrain	196	238	272	267	277	307	325	341	314	427	2964
Kuwait	764	862	932	965	1089	1145	1141	1239	1266	1307	10710
Oman	432	494	550	601	621	752	900	1089	1151	1227	7817
Qatar	205	264	293	420	545	627	808	953	1305	1807	7227
KSA	2265	2382	2578	2771	3245	4308	6263	9405	12005	14632	59854
UAE	906	1206	1407	1422	1656	1950	2331	2674	3064	3261	19877
GCC	**4676**	**5349**	**5888**	**6292**	**7230**	**8879**	**11492**	**15325**	**18655**	**22188**	**105974**

Source: Elsevier B.V. SciVal (2014), a registered trademark of Elsevier Properties.

In terms of annual percentage growth of research, KSA has the highest, reaching its peak in 2011 at 50%. However, this trend decreased to 28% and 22% in 2012 and 2013 respectively. Oman and UAE also increased their research output from 2009 to 2010 but with a significant decrease in 2012 and 2013. Bahrain, despite the significant decrease in 2012, showed a higher growth rate of research output up to 35.37% in 2013. Kuwait showed increases in 2005 and 2008 at 13% and a decline in the rest of the years. Qatar had oscillating annual growth rates up-to 2011, but remained fairly stable at approximately 37% in 2012 and 2013. Generally, GCC countries' overall growth rate peaked in 2011 with 33.88%. However, this subsequently dropped in 2012 and 2013. In annual percentage terms, GCC countries demonstrated a continuous decrease in their research outputs from 2011 to 2013 despite the fact that in quantitative terms, their research output was increasing. This is depicted in Table 2 below;

Table 2: GCC Countries Growth Rate of Research Productivity for 2004-2013

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
Bahrain	-	21%	14%	(2%)	4%	11%	6%	5%	(8%)	36%	7.8%
Kuwait	-	13%	8%	4%	13%	5%	0%	9%	2%	3%	5.4%
Oman	-	14%	11%	9%	3%	21%	20%	21%	6%	7%	10.4%
Qatar	-	29%	11%	43%	30%	15%	29%	18%	37%	38%	21.8%
KSA	-	5%	8%	7%	17%	33%	45%	50%	28%	22%	18.7%
UAE	-	33%	17%	1%	16%	18%	20%	15%	15%	6%	12.8%
GCC	-	**14%**	**10%**	**7%**	**15%**	**23%**	**29%**	**33%**	**22%**	**19%**	**15.6%**

Source: Elsevier B.V. SciVal (2014), a registered trademark of Elsevier Properties.

Following Table 2 above, we looked at international collaborations that resulted in publications between GCC countries and international collaborators in the SciVal software. The data showed there was tremendous increase in international research collaboration within the period under consideration. For instance, in 2013, 14,404 out of 22,188 publications were as a result of international collaborations. This represented 65% of 2013's research output. The total number of research output in 2004 was 4,676 and out of this number 1,786 were products of international collaborations. This also represented 38% of the regions research output. From 2004–2013, in terms of individual member countries, Qatar was the most internationally collaborative country (66% of her publications) while Kuwait was the least collaborative country with 41% of her publications. This confirms that SIT has beneficial outcomes including "mutual help and assistance, exchange of needed resources…" which eventually leads to increased productivity (Johnson and Johnson, 2003:936). This corroborates proposition 1. Table 3 below presents data on the number and percentage of international collaboration for 2004 and 2013 for the GCC countries.

Table 3: Two Year's Percentage of GCC Countries International Collaboration

Country	2004			2013		
	Total Publications	International Collaboration	International Collaboration (%)	Total Publications	International Collaboration	International Collaboration (%)
Bahrain	196	80	41%	427	232	54%
Kuwait	764	220	29%	1307	585	45%
Oman	432	190	44%	1228	700	57%
Qatar	205	89	43%	1807	1398	77%
KSA	2265	688	30%	14632	9774	67%
UAE	906	460	51%	3261	1904	58%
GCC	**4676**	**1784**	**38%**	**22188**	**14404**	**65%**

Source: Elsevier B.V. SciVal (2014), a registered trademark of Elsevier Properties.

Various reasons accounted for the positive growth in research productivity in the region. One of such was the introduction of funding programs and other strategies especially from 2005 onwards. For instance, in KSA most of the publicly-funded universities received funding packages for research and this made them become dominant research producers. The University Research Fund (URF) Program in King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) established in 2007 is a typical example. The URF provided academic researchers in the university seven different funding opportunities (KAUST, 2016). In Qatar, the Qatar Foundation (QF) also established the Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF) in 2006 to provide funding opportunities for researchers to enhance research, improve innovation and technological capacity. In addition, the QF also entered into partnership with other foreign universities and this led to the establishment of eight satellite campuses in QF campus (Virginia Commonwealth University, Weill Cornell Medical College, Texas A&M University, Carnegie Mellon University, Georgetown School of Foreign Service, North-Western University, HEC Paris, and University College London). These partner universities further played a vital role in the national research productivity of Qatar, the regions' research output and beyond through collaborations with other researchers, especially US-based research institutions.

In UAE, the National Research Foundation (NRF) was also established to provide funding for not only private and public universities but also colleges through the introduction of different funding schemes to increase research productivity. Public universities in the UAE including the UAE University, the

American University in Sharjah and the University of Sharjah have allocated substantial amounts of resources to enhance research productivity of faculty members. The University of Sharjah provides grants for conducting collaborative research overseas during the summer break. Finally, The Research Council (TRC) was established in Oman somewhere in the mid-2005 to be Oman's exclusive research funding body to support and promote research activities. TRC launched about thirteen different funding programs including the Open Research Grant Program (ORGP), the Strategic Research Grant (SRG), and the Research Chairs Program (TRC, 2017) to enhance research productivity. These programs, it is believed, led to the remarkable improvement in research output in the region especially during their first five years of inception. These reasons support the proposition that collaborative research increases research output. Despite these gains, the region suffers from institutional and national level bureaucracies related to managing and funding research activities as well as insufficient allocation of funds for collaborative research.

Data in Table 4 below shows the top fifteen countries with which GCC countries have collaborated. These countries are located across the globe and are: United States (US), Egypt, United Kingdom (UK), Canada, India, Germany, Malaysia, China, France, Pakistan, Australia, Italy, Turkey, Spain and South Korea and thus, supporting Preposition 2. The US is the topmost collaborative country with joint research output up to 12.7% and followed by Egypt with 9.9%. It is important to note that Egypt is the only country from the Arab World that falls within the top fifteen international collaborative countries and outside the Gulf region. Although ranked second, Egypt's main collaborator is KSA and not with the other GCC countries, since it is ranked fourth for Qatar and UAE, and seventh for Oman. UK and the rest of the top fifteen countries follow suit with great variations. The least collaborative country is South Korea with 1.1% output.

The volume of GCC's research collaboration with the US is attributed to the fact that US is the top research-intensive country in the world, and researchers across the globe collaborate with her researchers to achieve excellence, attract scarce human resources, and build national science and technological capabilities. In addition to that, Bozeman and Corley (2004) argue that researchers select their collaborators based on factors such as language and nationalities, opportunities to seek research experiences, supporting younger colleagues, and others prefer collaborating with researchers they have previously worked with. Most GCC-based researchers completed their PhD degrees in US, UK, and Canada, which explains why these three countries are among the topmost collaborative countries.

Moreover, many researchers from the top fifteen collaborative countries work in higher education/research institutions in GCC where they either collaborate with colleagues back home or introduce them to local researchers in these institutions. Besides, within the Arab world, Egypt is the highest research producing country and some Egyptian researchers work in higher education in GCC. Notwithstanding, some GCC researchers also pursued their PhD degrees in Egypt (humanities and social sciences) and still maintain research collaboration ties. These arguments support Bozeman and Corley (2004) view that researchers collaborate with colleagues and those with whom they worked during their studies.

As earlier indicated, it is worth noting that some GCC countries have attracted the opening up of foreign university campuses by providing the needed logistics. As indicated earlier, Qatar alone has eight satellite campuses. These universities encourage research collaboration with their home countries, and have cascaded the total research publications to twenty-fold increase between 2004 and 2013. Similarly, the UAE has also attracted the establishment of foreign based higher education/research institutions. This explains why US is the main research collaborative country with Qatar, UAE and the Gulf region. To compliment these, some GCC higher education institutions are also affiliated with universities in UK, France and Canada. These revelations support preposition 2 that research collaborations takes place between GCC countries and most economically sound and technologically advanced countries.

Table 4: GCC Research Publications with the Top Fifteen Collaborative Countries from 2004-2013

Country	Country Location	Number of Collaborative Publications	Share of Total GCC Output (%)
United States	N. America	13427	12.7%
Egypt	Arab World	10494	9.9%
United Kingdom	Europe	6846	6.5%
Canada	Canada	4934	4.7%
India	Asia	4393	4.1%
Germany	Europe	3251	3.1%
Malaysia	Asia	2582	2.4%
China	Asia	2495	2.4%
France	Europe	2788	2.6%

Country	Country Location	Number of Collaborative Publications	Share of Total GCC Output (%)
Pakistan	Asia	2337	2.2%
Australia	Australia	2500	2.4%
Italy	Europe	1635	1.5%
Turkey	Europe	1466	1.4%
Spain	Europe	1288	1.2%
South Korea	Asia	1214	1.1%
Total Share		**48662**	**46%**

Source: Elsevier B.V. SciVal (2014), a registered trademark of Elsevier Properties.

In order to better conceive the pattern of international collaboration with the top fifteen collaborative countries, we examined the publications patterns of these collaborations over the period 2004-2013. As illustrated in Figure 1 below, GCC countries showed a rapid increase in their research publications. Simultaneously, GCC also showed a rapid increase in their research collaboration patterns with the top fifteen collaborative countries. This reveals that the growth of GCC countries publications for the ten years also had an impact on academic collaboration. Consequently, the growth of international collaboration with the top fifteen collaborators was significantly high.

Figure 1: Growth Patterns of Publications and International Research Collaboration between GCC and their Top Fifteen Countries
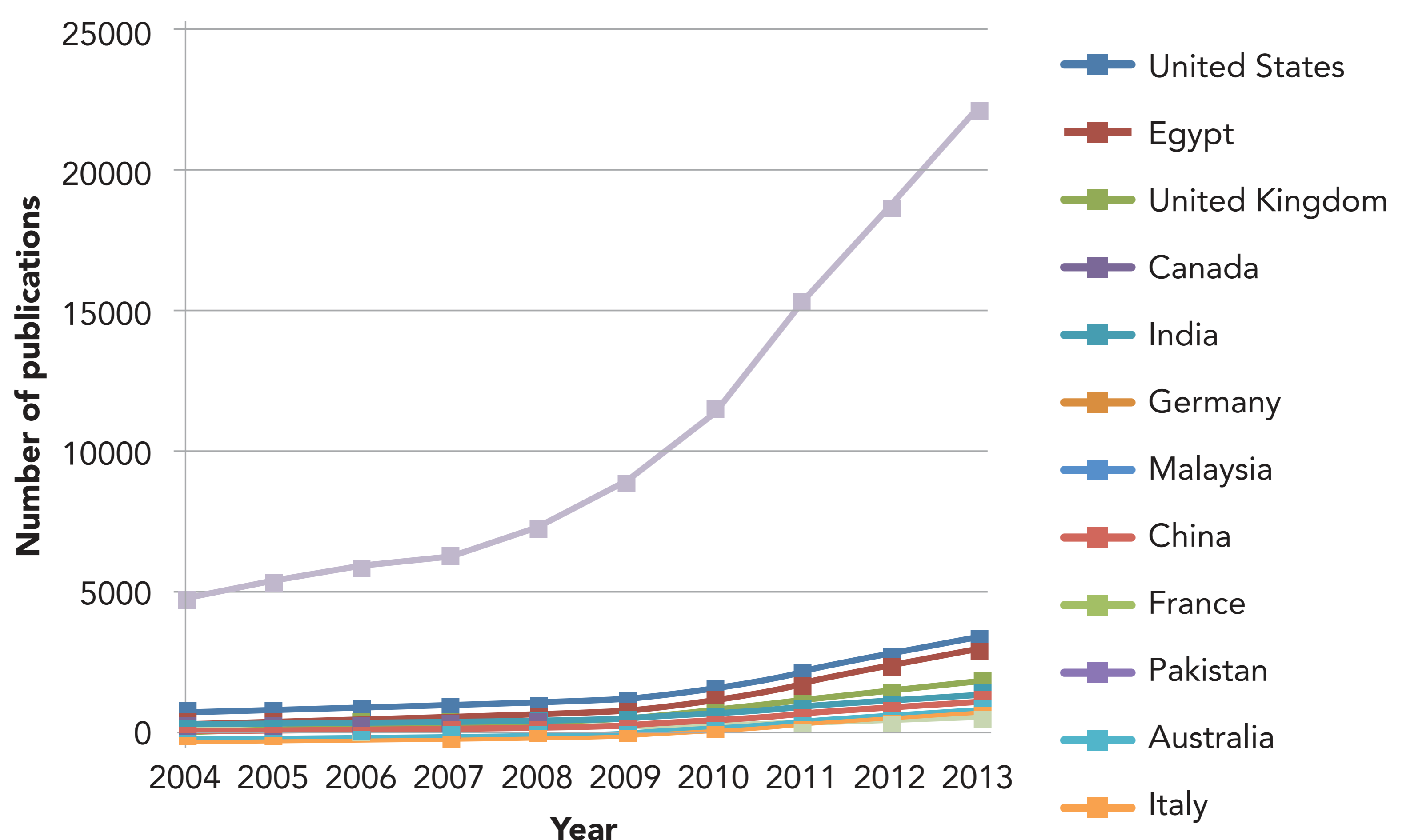
We made this comparison by producing the exponential function model of publications in GCC countries and region's collaboration with her top fifteen collaborators as shown in Table 5 below. The formula we used was:

$P(t) = P_oe^{rt}$

$P(t)$ = the amount at time t r = the growth rate P_o = initial amount at time t = 0
t = time (number of periods, i.e. 1,2,3,4,5), where the year 2005 corresponds to t=1

Table 5: Exponential Function Model of International Research Collaboration between GCC Countries their Top Fifteen Collaborating Countries

Countries	r	Po	P(t)
United States	21.62%	466	3263
Egypt	26.10%	302	3169
United Kingdom	18.00%	293	1481
Canada	19.50%	182	1054
India	26.00%	109	1131
Germany	26.66%	72	796
Malaysia	40.40%	19	718
China	38.60%	26	840
France	25.30%	67	652
Pakistan	31.00%	38	620
Australia	25.85%	64	656
Italy	27.41%	44	517
Turkey	24.55%	50	457
Spain	31.50%	24	408
South Korea	40.80%	10	395
Top 15 Countries	23.57%	1489	12419
GCC	**17.30%**	**4676**	**22188**

In We observed the growth rate of GCC research collaboration with the top fifteen collaborators is quite high; however, this varies from country to country. For example, the growth rate of research publications with India and Germany is higher than that of UK and Canada. Additionally, we also observed the growth rate of collaborations between GCC countries and all fifteen collaborating countries (see r values of each country or r value for all top 15 countries) was consistently higher compared to the growth rate from only GCC countries' (23.57% for top fifteen countries compared to 17.3% for GCC).

In addition, we realised that collaborations with South Korea, Malaysia and China are highest (40.8%, 40.4%, and 38.6% respectively) while collaborations with UK, Canada, and US are the lowest (18%, 19.5%, and 21.6% respectively). This might be due to fact that research productivity of these countries showed a massive increase during the last ten years. For example, Chinese research output has witnessed significant increase since 2004, in quantity from 177,878 in 2004 to 750,368 in 2013 (WoS, 2015) and world share, where China is ranked fifth largest research producing country after the US, Japan, UK, and Germany (He, 2009; Wu et al., 2004).

Figure 2: Growth of Publications in the Top Fifteen Collaborative Countries with GCC
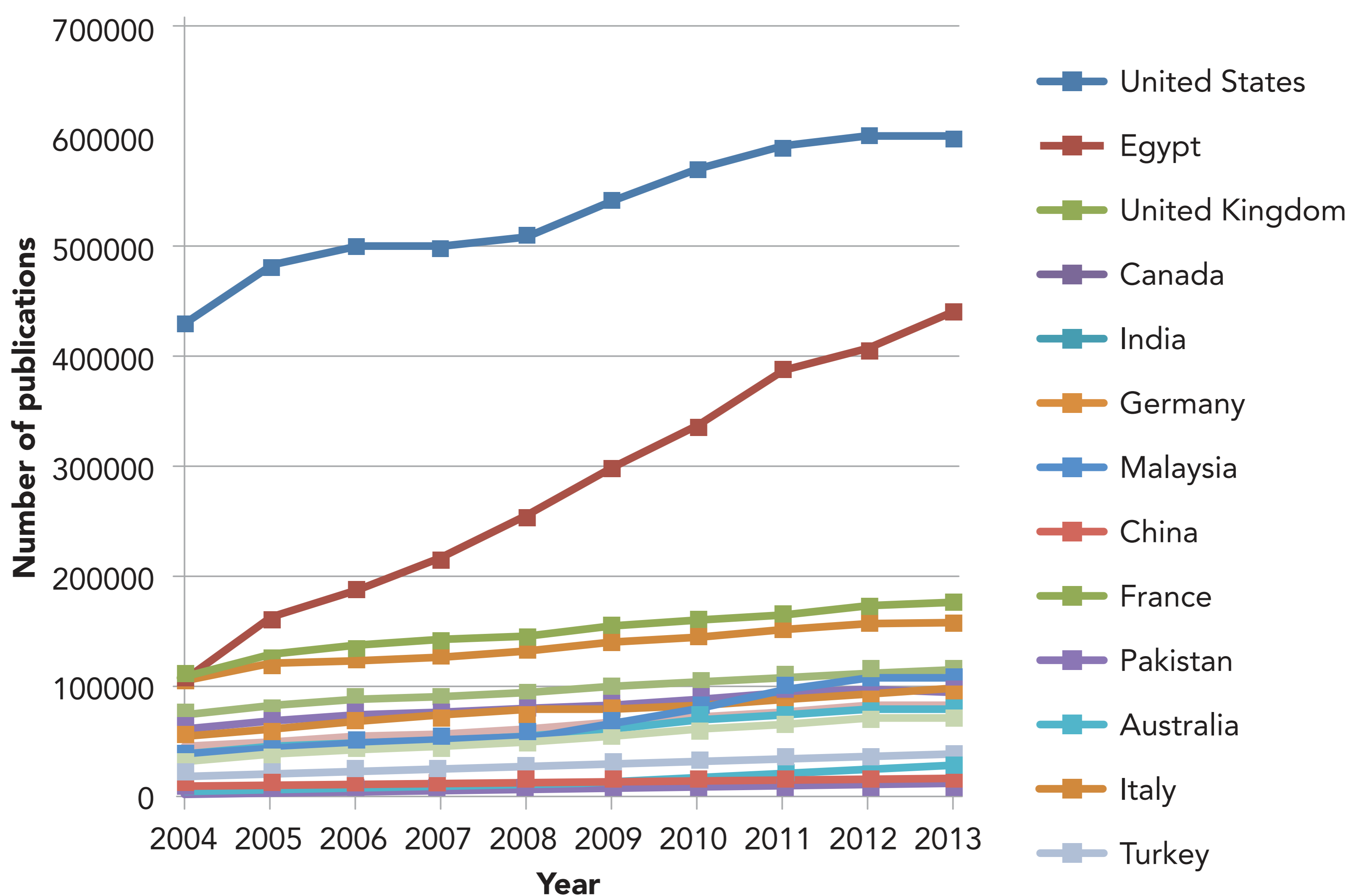
Figure 2 above shows the annual growth rate of research output for the top fifteen countries. The figure shows slow linear growth for all the countries except for US and China. This suggests that the reason behind the growth of international collaboration with the top fifteen countries was due to the rapid growth in GCC research output during the last decade. The US is the main collaborative country for GCC, and its research output is far ahead of other countries. Similarly, China's research output has grown rapidly since 2004 compared to other countries, which may explain why the growth rate of Chinese-GCC collaboration is one of the highest rates compared to other collaborative countries.

5. Strength of Collaborations' Relationship and Variance

It is significant to examine whether or not the research output of GCC countries has a relationship with the countries' research collaboration with the top fifteen collaborators. Additionally, it is important to understand how much variance in the GCC's research output is explained by each of the international research collaboration.

5.1 Correlations

Table 6 below shows Pearson's (r) correlation of the international research collaboration between GCC countries and the top fifteen collaborative countries for the period 2004-2013. Pearson's (r) correlation between GCC countries and all top fifteen collaborators is more than 0.95. For example, Pearson's (r) correlation values between GCC countries and the US and Egypt are 0.998 and 0.986 respectively. This implies there is an almost perfect positive relationship between GCC countries and the top fifteen collaborators as the Pearson's (r) quantities are very close to 1 (Mukaka, 2012). Additionally, as $p \leq 1\%$ we reject the null hypothesis and argue that the correlation between GCC countries and each of the top fifteen collaborators is not due to random sampling and that the variables are statistically significant (Pallant, 2001).

Table 6: Inter-Correlation Matrixa

Countries	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.
GCC															
United States	.998**														
Egypt	.986**	.993**													
United Kingdom	.998**	.999**	.989**												
Canada	.995**	.991**	.972**	.994**											
India	.996**	.994**	.980**	.994**	.996**										
Germany	.994**	.992**	.975**	.994**	.998**	.997**									
Malaysia	.966**	.964**	.947**	.965**	.978**	.983**	.984**								
China	.990**	.995**	.996**	.992**	.984**	.991**	.987**	.971**							
France	.998**	.994**	.975**	.996**	.997**	.994**	.994**	.964**	.983**						
Pakistan	.995**	.990**	.976**	.990**	.995**	.998**	.993**	.980**	.988**	.992**					
Australia	.993**	.995**	.991**	.996**	.985**	.984**	.985**	.949**	.990**	.990**	.981**				
Italy	.979**	.988**	.996**	.985**	.968**	.971**	.971**	.939**	.992**	.970**	.967**	.992**			
Turkey	.974**	.985**	.997**	.979**	.960**	.971**	.966**	.944**	.994**	.961**	.966**	.982**	.994**		
Spain	.989**	.995**	.991**	.992**	.983**	.989**	.987**	.961**	.994**	.985**	.982**	.990**	.989**	.987**	
South Korea	.994**	.998**	.994**	.995**	.989**	.993**	.991**	.970**	.999**	.989**	.990**	.992**	.991**	.990**	.997**

[a]n=10

$p \leq .01$

5.2 Linear Regression

Furthermore, we ran linear regression by setting the research output of GCC countries as the dependent variable, and the output from each of the top fifteen research collaborators as the independent variables. Table 7 below shows that R^2 equals 0.999. This means the almost perfect model (99.9%) explains the variance in the research output of GCC countries. Additionally, it is confirmed that the research collaboration of GCC countries with the United States significantly contributed to the GCC countries research output (beta= 1.513), followed by Canada (beta= 0.580) and Turkey (beta= 0.417).

Table 7: Results of Linear Regression for GCC Research Output

Variables	
United States	1.513
Egypt	-.185
United Kingdom	.300
Canada	.580
India	.043
Germany	.024
Malaysia	-.161
China	-.310
France	-.058
Pakistan	.230
Australia	.167
Italy	-.314
Turkey	.417
Spain	.047
South Korea	-.321
R^2	.999
Adjusted R^2	.998
N	10

Moreover, we determined the regression equation as: $yi= bo + b1xi$. In Table 8, the constant (b) and the b1 coefficient (slope) are presented. Our regression model will be different for each of the collaborative countries. For instance, for the collaboration with the US, it will be:

$yi= 2111.428+ (6.320xi)$

In the above equation, *xi* represents the units of the international research collaboration of GCC countries with the US and *yi* the amount of the increase in the GCC countries' research output when xi changes. Our regression model for the rest of the countries follows the same pattern.

Table 8: Constants and Slopes

Country	bo	b1
United States	2111.428	6.320
Egypt	4101.956	6.190
United Kingdom	391.360	14.908
Canada	1323.470	18.796
India	3736.322	15.618
Germany	3288.252	22.483
Malaysia	5626.971	19.250
China	5429.439	20.713
France	2323.919	29.675
Pakistan	4164.529	27.526
Australia	2844.585	31.011
Italy	4472.622	37.460
Turkey	4380.037	42.410
Spain	4961.639	43.756
South Korea	5224.229	44.260

5.3 Research Collaboration across Academic Disciplines

In Table 9, we distributed the research publications of GCC countries with the top fifteen countries for the period 2004-2013. This facilitated an easy analysis of academic fields in which these collaborations occurred and the reason(s) behind it. More than 65% of collaborative activities were in the physical science discipline. US, Egypt, UK, and Canada were the top collaborative countries (17%, 14%, 7.5%, and 6.3% respectively). Life sciences were the second collaborative field with 24.2% and again, US, Egypt, UK, and Canada were the top collaborators (6.2%, 6.8%, 3.7%, and 1.6% respectively). The probable explanation is that most science related researchers either come from or obtained their degrees from these countries. The least collaborative academic discipline was social sciences and humanities, with 8.7%. One explanation for such decimal performance is the use of Arabic as a medium of instruction in

the humanities and social science disciplines and also most of the collaborative researches are published in Arabic which is not listed in Scopus. Thus, our analysis of collaboration across disciplines supports the previous literature and proposition 3, which states that international research collaboration happened mainly in basic science fields.

Table 9: Discipline-Wise Publications' Distribution of International Scientific Collaboration of GCC Countries with the Top Fifteen Countries

	Health Sciences	Life Sciences	Physical Sciences	Social Sciences & Humanities
United States	3677	3035	8262	1409
Egypt	436	3294	6780	527
United Kingdom	98	1793	3662	809
Canada	1525	821	3072	448
India	966	1340	2826	288
Germany	1000	1139	1864	186
Malaysia	390	471	2072	287
China	302	664	1952	130
France	711	692	1799	219
Pakistan	560	601	1546	158
Australia	742	969	1371	437
Italy	632	443	869	77
Turkey	308	255	1097	98
Spain	384	333	792	77
South Korea	145	233	1011	72
Total	**11615**	**11766**	**31641**	**4252**

Source: Elsevier B.V. SciVal (2014), a registered trademark of Elsevier Properties.

Further, we adopted the International Collaborative Index (ICI) to analyse the collaboration between GCC countries and their top fifteen collaborators. The ICI has been used in the examination of many collaborative studies (He, 2009), especially when the researcher needs to calculate the proportional publications' output of international collaboration (He, 2009). For the purpose of our study, we followed the formula below:

$$ICI = (I_{ii} / I_{it}) / (I_{gi} / I_{gt})$$

In the above formula, I_{ii} represents the amount of publications of GCC countries with the country in a specific field each time. I_{it} identifies the amount of publications of GCC countries with the country i in all fields. I_{gi} is the amount of publications of GCC countries with the top fifteen countries in a specific field, whereas I_{gt} is the amount of publications of GCC countries with the top fifteen countries in all fields. Table 10 below illustrates the ICI of GCC countries with the top fifteen collaborative countries in all disciplines. UK had the highest collaborative effort with GCC in life sciences, and social science and humanities, but had the lowest collaborative efforts in health sciences. Italy had the highest collaboration effort in health sciences and the lowest in social science and humanities. South Korea had the highest collaboration in physical sciences. Australia and Canada are the lowest in physical sciences and life sciences respectively. For country-wise level, the GCC and the US have the highest collaboration in social sciences and humanities and the lowest in life sciences. Egypt had the highest collaboration effort with GCC in life sciences and lowest in social sciences and humanities. In a nutshell, research collaboration between GCC countries and the collaborating countries are mostly concentrated in the science disciplines (proposition 3).

Table 10: ICI of Scientific Collaboration between GCC Countries and their Top Fifteen Countries

Fields	USA	Egypt	UK	Canada	India	Germany	Malaysia	China	France	Pakistan	Australia	Italy	Turkey	Spain	South Korea
Health Sciences	1.15	0.95	0.08	1.33	0.91	1.22	0.62	0.51	1.06	1.00	1.08	1.60	0.89	1.24	0.51
Life Sciences	0.93	1.27	1.42	0.71	1.25	1.37	0.74	1.10	1.02	1.06	1.39	1.10	0.73	1.06	0.80
Physical Sciences	0.94	0.97	1.08	0.98	0.98	0.83	1.21	1.20	0.99	1.01	0.73	0.81	1.17	0.94	1.30
Social Sciences & Humanities	1.20	0.56	1.77	1.06	0.74	0.62	1.24	0.59	0.89	0.77	1.73	0.53	0.78	0.68	0.69

Source: Authors' construct

6. Concluding Remarks

The paper sought to review international research collaborations in the GCC countries. We analysed 105,974 research publications emanating from GCC that had a form of collaboration with her Top 15 Collaborating countries and published in the Scopus database during 2004-2013. The study revealed 15.6% annual growth rate of GCC publication. While some member countries annual growth rates are higher (KSA and Qatar having 21.8% and 18.7% respectively), others are lower (UAE 12.8%, Oman 10.4%, and Kuwait 5.4%). Fifty-six and half percent (56.5%) of GCC publications were produced by or with KSA research institutions while the remaining 43.5% were produced by or with other research institutions at other GCC countries. Fifty-five percent (55%) of total GCC publications were from international collaborations and 46% (48,662 out of 105,974) were with the top fifteen research collaborating countries. Within the period of study, total research output of international collaborations increased from 38% in 2004 to 65% in 2013, with an exponential annual growth rate of 23.2%.

These results represented the genuine collaborative researches between GCC countries and their top 15 counterpart countries published in international reviewed journals. The analyses obtained can therefore serve as a baseline data for future evaluation as well as for comparative purposes with other collaborative research in non-GCC countries. These notwithstanding, the study had some inherent limitations especially with the methodology. For instance bibliometric analysis have been criticised severely especially pertaining to the role and level of contribution of each author in a co-authored paper. Data were obtained from SCOPUS neglecting other publications falling outside this terrain including those that are either delayed or never get published. Furthermore, some articles on research collaborations might have been published in Arabic and therefore had limited coverage in peer reviewed international journals. Nonetheless, it has become a standard practice in scientific research to use bibliometric indicators because it is relatively convenient due to the availability and accuracy of data. This finding has also not taken into account the hindrances of the social interdependence theory as well as international research collaborations conducted in Arabic between the GCC countries.

Given the high investments in R&D in most of the GCC countries, we suggest the region could develop different strategies to encourage international collaboration, especially with developed countries in order to fully utilize the available resources at regional level and across the globe. This will improve research quality and productivity at either the researchers' level or at the national or regional levels. Mostly, international research collaboration ensue

in basic research and countries with low research productivity have more international collaborations (Katz, 2000; Davidson Frame and Carpenter, 1979). Policy-makers in the region could foster intra-regional collaboration especially between the publicly-funded universities to enhance their research productivity and share resources and infrastructure as well. This will further have a positive impact on the quality and productivity of research output in the region.

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Politicization of Bureaucracy in South Asia: A Comparative Study of Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Politicization of bureaucracy is a very common phenomenon irrespective of developed and developing countries. This problem is acute in South Asian countries like Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan etc. The Indian Subcontinent was a British colony for about two hundred years. The administrative system of South Asian countries was developed over the period and the bureaucracy of South Asia is sustaining British elements till now. Though the Great Britain has a systematic administrative system, the South Asian countries have not been following the British administrative system properly. British bureaucratic system prioritizes merit in appointment, promotion and in other affairs while politicization of bureaucracy is a great concern in South Asian countries. This study is a qualitative research which explores that bureaucracy of Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka, which was once considered as the "steel frame" of the British Empire, is now hanging between professional neutrality and political loyalty. Consequently, the bureaucracy of these countries is becoming inefficient and ineffective to provide quality social services to the citizens.

Keywords: *Bureaucracy, Politicization, British administrative system, Efficiency and effectiveness, South Asia.*

1. Introduction

Bureaucracy is an inseparable part of any government. The role of bureaucracy in the process of governance is well recognized around the world (Rahman, 2017). It is a pre-requisite for the modernization of every country. It is engaged in nation building activities and providing social services (Panday, 2012). South

Asia has a longstanding tradition of bureaucratic organization. It was a colony of Great Britain for about two hundred years. The administrative system of South Asian countries was developed over the period, especially during the British period. So, most of the South Asian countries share a common history of the development of bureaucracy and is sustaining the traits and culture of colonial bureaucracy (Azizuddin, 2011; Rahman, 2017). However, South Asian countries do not follow the inherited administrative system properly. Politicization of bureaucracy is a very common phenomenon in South Asia. But the intensity of application and reasons for politicization vary from country to country (Panday, 2012). The intensity might differ but the causes of politicization are very common in South Asian countries like Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka. Most of the successive governments of South Asian countries tried to control the bureaucracy for political reasons. Political principals attempt to exercise control over the bureaucracy where "party loyalty" is one of the most important requirements for getting appointment, posting, promotion and other benefits (Almendares, 2011; Panday, 2012). Because of open politicization the bureaucracy of Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka has lost much of its dynamism and efficiency. As a consequence, the civil bureaucracy of these countries has become sluggish and incapable of providing social services efficiently (Rahman, 2015). This study has explored the nature, causes and consequences of the politicization of bureaucracy in Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka.

2. Methodology of the Study

This is a qualitative research that has been conducted through the secondary source of data. Secondary data is the data that have been already collected and analyzed by someone and readily available for use (Kothari, 2004). Such data are cheaper and more quickly obtainable than the primary data (Abdullah, 2017). For this study, secondary data and information have been collected mainly from books, journals, articles, reports, newspapers, and internet sources. For the purpose of this study, some theoretical literature have been reviewed.

3. A Brief Conceptual Framework

Bureaucracy is the administrative body of appointed officials (Prasad et al., 2016). It is an administrative system which is designed to accomplish large-scale administrative tasks by systematically coordinating the work of many individuals (Yourarticlelibrary.com, 2019). According to Max Weber, "bureaucracy is the formal system of organization and administration designed to ensure efficiency and effectiveness". He has given a number of characteristics of bureaucracy. Impersonality or impersonal relationships is one of the important characteristics of bureaucracy. It means the relationships among individuals in official

positions are governed through the system of official authority and rules. This type of relationship is free from personal emotions, nepotism and favoritism. In addition, rational factors govern the decision making process (Tyrocity.com, 2019; Yourarticlelibrary.com, 2019). However, the rejection of impersonality for personal reasons in the functioning of the bureaucracy is meant politicization of bureaucracy (Appiah and Abdulai, 2017).

Politicization of bureaucracy is not a new phenomenon. Many developed and most of the developing countries have shown evidence of greater politicization. In a descriptive sense, it is the right of a government to appoint their own people to senior public service positions while the pejorative sense refers to the substitution of political criteria for merit based criteria. Politicization of bureaucracy in most of the developed countries can be explained from the descriptive perspective. But governments of developing countries follow neither the principle of descriptive politicization nor pejorative politicization. They consider "party loyalty" as one and only guiding principle for appointment, promotion, posting, transfer etc. in the civil services (Panday, 2012).

We can consider two dimensions to analyze the process of politicization of bureaucracy. First one is bureaucratic participation in public policy process. The politics–administration dichotomy implies that there is a clear distinction between politics and administration, where policy decisions are made by the politicians and bureaucrats are supposed to implement the policy decisions. From this dimension, politicization occurs when the civil servants are vested with the responsibility to carry out political decision, adopt them and explain them. The second dimension is partisan appointments in the bureaucracy which refers to a situation where appointment, placement, transfer, promotion and other career decisions of civil servants are dependent on the will of their political bosses (Rahman, 2017). From sociological perspective, this dimension can be called social exchange relationship. Social exchange is a type of interaction in which one person voluntarily does something for another with the expectation of reward in return (Shepard and Greene, 2001). Likewise, civil servants are placed, promoted and transferred to the favorable or important positions, expecting carrying out political decisions.

Partisan appointment at the key strategic positions of the government is common in many developed countries. It is also constitutionally accepted. 'Spoil system" in USA allows the partisan appointment at the top positions which is constitutionally accepted and also legitimate. But this scenario is different in most of the developing countries like in South Asia. There is no constitutional option for the politicization of bureaucracy in most of the South Asian countries. But the governments of South Asian countries try to control

the bureaucrats by imposing their political ideology to the bureaucrats after forming the government (Rahman, 2017).

However, high level of politicization decreases the efficiency of the bureaucrats or civil servants. To get the efficiency of the bureaucrats, the following mechanism should be sustained,

a. An effective scheme of Recruitment;

b. An effective scheme of Performance Evaluation;

c. An effective scheme of Training;

d. An effective scheme of motivation of employees (Silva, 2015).

The above mentioned mechanisms cannot function properly due to over politicization in the developing countries. Consequently, civil service of these countries becomes inefficient to play a major role in public service delivery.

4. Politicization of Bureaucracy in South Asia

The roots of administrative structure of South Asian countries (Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and Maldives) lie deep in their history. The administrative structure of South Asian countries is a legacy of British Indian Civil Service (Ahmed, 1968; Khan, 2013; Rahman, 2017). Its origin can be traced further back to the ancient and medieval period (Khan, 2015). The Mauryan dynasty (320-185 BC) developed an efficient administrative structure resembling many principles of modern bureaucracy. In the medieval period, the Mughals established the most centralized administration in the history of Indian Subcontinent. They came from the Central Asian region and brought with them their past administrative experience. They utilized that experience and resulted in having good effect to build and efficiently run the vast Indian empire (Khan, 2013). The coming of British rule brought significant changes in the existing administrative structure in Indian subcontinent (Khan, 2009). The British Indian administration shared many of the salient features of the Mughal administration (Ahmed, 2013). Civil Service in British India has been described from time to time as the "most distinguished civil service in the world or the "steel frame". It was highly centralized bureaucracy and had been the backbone of the British colonial administration (Khan, 2009).

In reality, the administration in South Asian countries is not wholly a clone of the administrative structure developed in British India (Khan, 2015). The administrative system of those countries was changed over the period after the disintegration of British Empire. The bureaucracy of these countries, which was once considered as the "steel frame" of the British Empire, is now hanging

between professional neutrality and political loyalty. As a result, politicization of bureaucracy has become a common phenomenon in South Asia.

In Pakistan, civil service system which was formed by colonial masters to rule the natives is still being used (Hussain, 2012). The civil bureaucracy played the dominant role in Pakistan's policy-making from 1947 to 1971. During this period, there was limited scope for interference from politicians since the Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP) maintained control over the selection, training and posting of its members. Colonial administrators developed powerful and highly centralized bureaucratic institutions to rule the empire that characteristics were still existed in the Pakistan's bureaucracy (Ahsen, 2019). However, political conflicts and the liberation war (by a legacy of blood Bangladesh emerged as a new state from the domination and oppression of West Pakistan) seriously undermined the political strength and legitimacy of both the civil and military bureaucracies (Ahsen, 2019; Rahman, 2017). Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto exploited this weakness after coming to power in 1971. He took initiatives to redress the power imbalance between the elected and unelected institutions of the state (Ahsen, 2019). In 1973, the government of Pakistan took a bold decision to abolish the monopoly of top administrative posts by the CSP. The government also abolished the classes among government servants and all services and cadres were placed in a unified graded structure of 22 grades. These major reform initiatives in the administration were for the first time relatively wreaking the bureaucratic position in Pakistan. These reform initiatives increased the relative influence of elected representatives over the civil servants and also increased politicization. In fact, the process of politicization was started during the 1960s and Yahya Khan also followed the same process. He removed 303 CSP officials from the service on various allegations without due process. However, after a short period the domination of civil-military bureaucrats was reestablished by military intervention in politics. Actually, in the post- independent period, civil-military bureaucracy dominated pattern of governing system emerged in Pakistan under the banner of political leadership which is still continuing. As a consequence, the bureaucrats do not feel obliged to be accountable to the citizens. Moreover, mismanagement, inefficiency, using excessive discretionary power etc. are seen in Pakistan's bureaucracy (Rahman, 2017).

In Nepal, political intervention in bureaucracy is an old phenomenon. Its bureaucracy has a mixture of traditional and modern characteristics. The size of the bureaucracy of Nepal is small considering South Asian standards. Civil servants were hired solely on the basis of loyalty towards the king before the restoration of democracy in 1990. After the restoration of democracy the political leaders took politicization as the means of keeping their control over the bureaucracy (Rahman, 2017). Political affiliation is considered much in the time

of promotion to higher positions and transfers depriving the competent and experienced civil servants (New Spotlight News Magazine, 2010). Nepal Civil Service Regulation Act 1965 was amended thirty times where the only clause amended every time was related to promotion. The bureaucrats are also divided into political party lines (Rahman, 2017). However, Nepalese bureaucracy is power and position oriented instead of service and citizen oriented (Shrestha, 2017). It is not functioning as per the expectations of the people of Nepal (New Spotlight News Magazine, 2010). However, the bureaucrats cannot be made accountable to the citizens, because they have political backing (Rahman, 2017). Consequently, Nepalese bureaucracy has become a sluggish and non-performing organization in the country (Rijal, 2009).

In this paper, the main focus is on three South Asian countries which are Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka.

4.1. Politicization of Bureaucracy in Bangladesh

Bangladesh was a colony of British Empire and was a part of Pakistan for over two centuries. The administrative system of Bangladesh was developed over the period, especially in British period, and is sustaining the traits and culture of colonial bureaucracy (Azizuddin, 2011). Though it is seen that Bangladesh has been following the British style of bureaucracy since her independence, but actually it has failed to follow the British system properly. British bureaucratic system prioritizes merit in appointment, promotion and in other affairs while politicization of bureaucracy is a great concern in Bangladesh (Reza, 2017; Oishy, 2018).

The government of Bangladesh has a two-tier administrative system. The upper tier is the central secretariat at the national level consisting of the ministries and divisions and the other tier consists of line departments/directorates attached to the ministries and divisions (Jahan and Shahan, 2008). In Bangladesh, "party loyalty" is considered as the main guiding principle for promotion, posting and transfer in the civil services (Panday, 2012). After independence, all successive governments tried their best to control the public bureaucracy in different ways. Every successive government allowed the members of civil bureaucracy in party activities, instead of implementing the far-reaching recommendations of the different administrative reform commissions. Many civil servants joined the political parties immediately after retirement. Some civil servants worked as advisers of the chief executive of the government and very few of them turned minister. After the independence of Bangladesh in 1971, the first challenge of the government was to reinstate the civil administration and to transform the existing provincial administration to central one. The new government under

the leadership of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman took some initiatives for reforming the administration. But the government faced many challenges. Actually, the government was passing a transformation period. Nepotism, politicization etc. in various public jobs were also seen in that time (Mollah, 2014). After coming to power, President Ziaur Rahman formed a Council of Advisors where most of these Advisors were either bureaucrats or technocrats. In the regime of H. M. Ershad, the civil-military bureaucrats became dominant not only in the cabinet secretariat, but also in the chief policy-making and policy-implementing institutions. Local government bodies, especially Upazila Parishad, were used as the political mobilization platform and not a genuine institutional partner. During the military rule in Bangladesh (Ziaur Rahman and H. M. Ershad regimes), civil military bureaucrats mutually ruled the country. In 1991, democracy was restored in Bangladesh by the general election of 1991 under the caretaker government (Doullah, 2016).

In the first five years of democracy (1991 to 1996), Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) ruled the country. Politicization appeared in various forms. The placement of party loyalists in important civil service positions was common. On February 8, 1992, the government made a controversial decision of promoting 654 officials. In this regime, at least 51 civil servants were given forced retirement where most of were never shown any reason. However, in 1996 a number of senior civil servants were directly involved in a movement to remove BNP government. Bangladesh Awami League (AL) came to power in 1996 for the period of 1996 to 2001 and continued the process of politicization. The new government decided to reward those civil servants who were directly involved in the movement of removing BNP government by including one of them in their ministry and by promoting the others. In 2001, 355 officials were promoted by AL government for political reasons depriving many competent officials. In 2001, the BNP came to power again for the period of 2001 to 2006 and created a record by appointing 978 officials as "Officer on Special duty" (OSD). Promotion decisions were no longer being made according to seniority or merit; rather importance was given to party loyalty (Jahan and Shahan, 2008). In January 2009, Bangladesh Awami League (AL) (Sheikh Hasina led Grand Alliance) came to power again and exists still now. In fact, AL won majority seats for the third straight term (Government tenure: January 25, 2009 - January 24, 2014; January 29, 2014 - January, 2019; January 30, 2019- Present) (Parliament.gov.bd, 2019). Former cabinet secretary and former adviser of caretaker government Dr. Akbar Ali Khan said that no positive changes were effected in the administration by that government. He also said that politicization has lowered the standard of the civil service and its capacity to deliver service to the public (Rahman, 2015). The draft Civil Service Act-2010 has not been finalized yet. There is a question that is the government in fear of losing its dominance over the bureaucracy if it approves the draft Civil

Service Act-2010. A good Civil Service Act can change the present scenario of the politicization of bureaucracy in Bangladesh (Reza, 2017). The government also showed no interest to introduce performance based evaluation system for promotions to replace the outdated system of annual confidential report (ACR) (Rahman, 2015).

However, it is generally perceived that bureaucracy has been divided into pro-Bangladesh Awami League (AL) and pro-Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) groups. Every government tried not only to recruit its supporters in the civil services, but also the supporters of the ruling party were rewarded with promotion while supporters of the opposition were often being made Officer on Special Duty (OSD). Many competent civil servants have been penalized time to time in the name of "party loyalty" (Panday, 2012). Sometimes more officers were promoted by the government to the same post than the number of actual post (Reza, 2017). In addition, field-level civil servants who perform election duties with party loyalty get promotions easily or are able to press the government to get promotions due to the groupings (Rahman, 2015).

It is said that politicization of civil service has been institutionalized in Bangladesh because the governments think seriously about the composition of the Public Service Commission (PSC) (Panday, 2012). The whole process of selecting the chairman and the members of the Commission has been showing an absolute lack of transparency since its establishment (Doullah, 2016). It can be said that the chairman and the members of PSC are appointed on political consideration with the expectation that they will recruit supporters of the ruling party.

4.2. Politicization of Bureaucracy in India

Indian administrative system which was introduced by the British is continuing in similar spirit for about seventy years. In an independent and democratic country, the bureaucratic system should be sincere and responsive to the people. The political rulers of India have ignored this vital issue. The Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS), Indian Foreign Service (IFS) cadres always have national status and enjoy a sort of privilege and protection which is not normally available to the lower levels of the same system. They are as much rulers as the political ones. They enjoy the status as they implement all governments' decisions and enjoy permanency until they retire. They enjoy such privileges throughout their career and after retirement or leaving their career by way of voluntary retirement they enjoy pension and other benefits. They also have safe alternative to approach the central government when they feel that they are under any crisis of political interference by the state

level political wings (Kulkarni, 2014). But the dual control (state and central government) of bureaucracy creates problems. It creates mistrust between the politicians and bureaucrats. Both state and central government always try to control the bureaucrats for serving their narrow political interests. So, the politicization of bureaucracy is a common phenomenon in India. It is seen that bureaucrats are promoted and given favorable or important positions on the basis of their loyalty to the incumbent political parties. Supporters of the incumbent political parties get promotion timely and rewarded with favorable positions, while supporters of opposition political ideologies are punished with delayed promotion and given unfavorable positions. In addition, the civil servants who want to serve the country according to the principle of law are transferred to unimportant posts. The civil service conduct rules of India prohibit civil servants from active participation in political activities. So, many civil servants are indirectly politically involved and seek political patronage from politicians (Rahman, 2017).

After retirement, some members of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) are set in different high ranking positions for political reasons. There are also many instances. Najeeb Jung was an IAS officer who had a controversial background before he became Lieutenant Governor (LG). He was retained by the BJP government for political reasons when it assumed power in Delhi in 2014 (Subramanian, 2017).

Arvind Kejriwal became Chief Minister of Delhi in 2015 when his party captured an overwhelming 67 out of a total of 70 seats in the state assembly. He was an anti-corruption crusader and was the Convener of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). Kejriwal's functioning as Chief Minister was out of favor with the Modi-led central government. Najeeb Jung was also under pressure from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) to control the functioning of the Arvind Kejriwal-led state government. So, Jung asserted his authority as LG and repeatedly clashed with Chief Minister Kejriwal on perhaps every vital issue that concerned the state government. The Police Commissioner of Delhi enthusiastically supported Jung's campaign against Kejriwal. He was fully rewarded by the Narendra Modi government when he retired from service. After that Najeeb submitted his resignation from the job. The unexpected resignation of Najeeb Jung as LG of the Union Territory of Delhi had serious implications. It was thought that, he apprehended that he would meet the same feat as his fellow Governors of Uttarakhand and Arunachal Pradesh did in having to face the wrath of the Supreme Court of India for their irregularities. Najeeb Jung was replaced by Anil Baijal. Anil Baijal was a former member of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) and former Union Home Secretary. He was also member of the Executive Committee of the influential right wing think tank, the Vivekananda

International Foundation (VIF) after retirement. The role of Lieutenant Governors of states in India has always been controversial (Subramanian, 2017).

However, many bureaucrats enter politics after their retirement in India and few of them turned ministers. S. G. Barve was perhaps the first bureaucrat who entered politics after retirement and achieved the status of a minister. There are some other instances like former bureaucrat Yeshwant Sinha joined politics after serving the administrative cadre for twenty-four years and turned minister in the BJP-led central government. S. G. Barve contributed to the urban development of Pune in Maharashtra but he is not known to have contributed much as a minister (Kulkarni, 2014).

4.3. Politicization of Bureaucracy in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka became a republic in 1972 and Sri Lanka Administrative Service (SLAS), formerly known as Ceylon Administrative Service (CAS), was established as the leading administrative service of the Sri Lankan Government. It is the permanent body of government that helps the elected representatives on day-to-day functions and is working for both in the central government as well as in the provincial councils (PC) (Fernando, 2014; Rahman, 2017; Studentlanka, 2019).

Like other South Asian countries, British elements have existed in Sri Lankan administrative system and it is also politicized. Slight politicization was seen in Former Ceylon Civil Service (CCS) and Ceylon Administrative Service (CAS) which were developed during the colonial period. It was also tolerable in the early days of the Sri Lankan republic. But it appears as "a matter of fact" issue in present Sri Lanka (Fernando, 2013).

There is close linkage between politicians and bureaucrats in Sri Lanka and ministers and Members of Parliament (MP) have recognized political influence as an essential component of bureaucracy. Political support is essential for appointments, promotions, transfer etc. of the civil servants (Ibrahim and Irfan, 2016). Political patronage also assists to locate civil servants in favorable positions after appointment. Once a politician has obliged a civil servant this way, the officer is obliged to reciprocate and cannot refuse the demand of political favors (Fernando, 2013; Rahman, 2017).

Sri Lankan bureaucracy was affected by the constitutional changes over time. Before 1972, there was an independent Public Service Commission (PSC) which was responsible for the appointment, transfer, dismissal and disciplinary control of CAS officers. However, Sri Lankan Constitution of 1972 diminished the power of the PSC and gave power to the Cabinet to determine all matters

relating to Sri Lanka Administrative Service (SLAS) officers. The Constitution further strengthened the Cabinet of Ministers when Article 106 of the Constitution of 1972 was repeated in the Constitution of 1978. 13th Amendment to the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka in 1987 brought some other changes relating to SLAS like creating provincial councils as a follow up action on Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of 1987 to devolve powers to the Tamil majority north and east (Fernando, 2014).

In Sri Lanka, the Governor is the administrative and executive head of the Provincial Council and they are highly empowered to exercise their discretion in the discharge of any function. Even their decision cannot be challenged in a court of law. The provincial level bureaucracy is under the control of the Governors. The Governors have influence over all kind of issues like recruitments, transfer, promotion, etc. of the bureaucrats (Ibrahim and Irfan, 2016; Rahman, 2017). So, there is great opportunity of using bureaucrats for political purposes. However, the 17th Amendment of the constitution tried to address what was lost by politicization and had integrated arrangement for good governance and de-politicization. Unfortunately, it was repealed by the 18th Amendment in 2010 and this controversial amendment bill was passed with 161 Members of Parliament voted for and 17 against the bill (Sultana, 2010; Rahman, 2017). This amendment of constitution paved the way for more politicization instead of making the bureaucracy transparent, responsive and service oriented (Fernando, 2013).

In addition, political interventions were formalized by different governments over time. Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike's development administration arrangements like establishing District Political Authority (DPA) and Decentralized Budget System, President J. R. Jayewardene's appointment of District Ministers (DMs) under the constitution of 1978 can be considered as political encroachment of long-standing recognized institutions (Fernando, 2013). Members of Parliaments (MPs) were also made Chairman of Divisional Development Councils and District Development Councils (Fernando, 2014). This gave a more organized opportunity for politicians to interfere in the different issues of local government.

5. A Brief Analysis

In South Asian countries, there is no constitutional option for the politicization of bureaucracy. But there is another option. "party loyalty" is considered as one and only guiding principle for appointment, promotion, posting, transfer etc. in the civil services (Panday, 2012). So, many civil servants in Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka involve in politics indirectly and seek political patronage from

politicians in the name of "party loyalty" (Rahman, 2017). But after immediate retirement, many civil servants involve in politics directly. Some civil servants work as advisers of the prime ministers and few of them turn ministers.

However, the reasons for politicization are more or less the same in Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka. But the intensity of application varies from one to another. In, India, both central and provincial government always try to control the bureaucrats indirectly for political purposes. Dual control (central and state governments) of bureaucracy creates acute problems. In Bangladesh there is unitary form of government and attempts for politicization come only from the central government (incumbent political party). However, in Sri Lanka, the constitution has made a path for greater politicization in the central government as well as in the provincial councils. The political executives of Sri Lanka are in a more dominant position over civil servants than Bangladesh and India.

The consequence of the politicization of bureaucracy is devastating. The bureaucracy is becoming inefficient and ineffective in the absence of professionalism, fairness and impartiality (Rahman, 2017). As "party loyalty" is one and only guiding principle for promotion, the newly recruited and promoted civil servants do not feel interest in improving their capabilities instead they remain busy in *tadbir* management (Panday, 2012). If the candidates who do not have proper training and skills get promoted to various important positions they are not able to ensure effectiveness and efficiency in providing social services to the citizens (Doullah, 2016; Panday, 2012). In addition, they cannot be made accountable because in politicized administration both politicians and bureaucrats work with closer allies (Rahman, 2017). Moreover, the practice of patronage creates sharp divisions in the bureaucracy and lowers the morale of career civil servants (Rahman, 2015). One of the most threatening things is that thousands of brilliant graduates are discouraged from competing for the civil services because of such situation (Panday, 2012). The roots of the structure of South Asian bureaucracy lie in the Indian Civil Service (ICS) during the British period. The ICS bureaucrats were considered as the "steel frame" of the British Empire because they were hierarchically disciplined, strictly rule-bound, politically neutral and meritorious. However, the inherited "steel frame" of the bureaucracy has become dismantled and absolutely collapsed in South Asia over time because of over politicization (Rahman, 2017).

6. Conclusion

Politicization of bureaucracy is of great concern in the development of civil service system in the Third World countries. Most of the developing countries have inefficient bureaucracy due to over-politicization so incapable of providing social services to the citizens. The successive governments of Bangladesh, India

and Sri Lanka should take the responsibility for this situation because they have always tried to control the bureaucracy for their own narrow political interests. In addition, for over-politicization of bureaucracy of these South Asian countries has not been developed systematically yet. So, at first the politicians should come forward with strong will that they will control the bureaucracy not for political reasons but for ensuring timely and quality service delivery. At the same time, the governments should have plans to make the bureaucracy modern, well-equipped and service-oriented. On the other hand, as the civil servants are supposed to serve the country efficiently they should welcome the reform initiatives taken by the governments. Finally, the governments may learn lessons from the civil service system of developed countries, but they should consider the local issues to take reform initiatives.

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Dynamics of Social Accountability at Local Government in Nepal

Hari Bhakta Shahi

Abstract

Social accountability requires collective efforts of the service providers and service receivers in which citizens and/or civil society organizations engage to bring state officials or service providers to be accountable. Here, the binding mechanism could be social audit and citizen charter which promote effectiveness of social accountability. This article assesses how these mechanisms – social audit and citizen's charter are helpful in establishing and maintaining social accountability at the local level in Nepal. The findings show the citizens' confusion regarding the implementation of such mechanisms for promoting social accountability at the local level. Despite the fact that accountability is essential to strengthen democracy, it takes time to bring it in practice. Nepal's initiation to strengthen the local government through democratic exercise would be helpful with citizens' participation in the accountability process.

Keywords: *Social Accountability, Social Audit, Citizen Charter, Citizens' Participation, Local Government, Nepal*

1. Background

Accountability is the obligation of power-holders to take responsibility for their actions. It lies at the heart of both democratic, rights-based governance and equitable human development. A democratic and inclusive society is based on a social contract between a responsive and accountable state and responsible and active citizens, in which the interests of the people particularly marginals are taken into account. Such contracts "have to be constructed over time, through mutual interactions between states and citizens" (Kabeer, 2010). 'Social accountability' refers to a form of civic engagement that builds accountability through the collective efforts of citizens and civil society organizations to hold

public officials, service providers and governments to account for their obligations with responsive efforts (Houtzager and Joshi, 2008). With the strengthened civic engagement and amplified 'citizen voice', social accountability initiatives aim to increase the transparency of governance in many arenas, ranging from local service delivery to national processes of policy formulation. In social accountability initiatives, information is provided to citizens about their rights and legal and institutional procedures. Building awareness of these issues is often a first step to fostering active and effective citizenship and encouraging citizens to engage (Gaventa and Barrett, 2010).

The social accountability agenda has developed against a background of broader democratization and decentralization trends and new mechanisms and instruments have been developed and refined in response to the broader changes. The new social accountability mechanisms include participatory budgeting, public expenditure tracking, gender budgeting, citizen juries and other forms of public hearings, participatory monitoring of donor commitments to advance the MDGs and reporting to international treaty-monitoring bodies. It is important to point out that many of the more recent initiatives have not aimed at increasing efficiency but at claiming rights.

Despite the high level of interest in social accountability initiatives, there is no consensus on a common definition of what it is. In fact, some might characterize it as a set of practices in search of a definition. Some scholars take a very wide definition that encompasses almost all citizen-engagement activity, particularly including both participation in deliberative decision-making and participation in accountability (Malena et al., 2004; Arroyo, 2005). Others take a bit narrow definition, focusing on monitoring the use of public resources and related accountability demands, such as "the on-going and collective effort to hold public officials to account for the provision of public goods which are existing state obligations" (Joshi, 2008; Houtzager and Joshi, 2008). The emphasis then is more on collective efforts at accountability demands as rights. The work of the Affiliated Network for Social Accountability, East Asia and the Pacific, captures this element of rights by noting, "the goal of social accountability action brings us back to the vision of a good society—meeting people's basic needs through improved public service delivery, building a caring community that enhances people's welfare and promoting equality and justice by strengthening people's rights" (ANSA-EAP, 2010). With regard to the expected outcomes of social accountability, three types of outcomes are usually cited. The broadest set of claims relates to citizen empowerment of the poor people, including increased awareness of rights and the potential construction of citizenship through engagement in civic life. Another set claims social accountability would lead

to increased responsiveness and subsequently improved public services, and the third one claims in relation to service delivery which initiates improved governance and particularly reduced corruption. Here, it is quite important to point out that while anti-corruption and social accountability initiatives overlap, they are not the same—there are many anti-corruption accountability measures that do not involve social accountability mechanisms, and many social accountability efforts may not address corruption.

Nepal's political landscape has changed rapidly over the last fifty years, from the unitary *Panchayat* system in the early 1960s to multiparty democratic rule under a constitutional monarchy in 1990 and again to a democratic federal republic system since 2007. One of the spirits of the new constitution is to address issues related to public sector governance and public service delivery. To maintain social accountability, mechanism is devised to bring both elected representatives and non-elected public servants to deliver services to the citizens.

2. Statement of the Problem

Public service delivery is affected both due to inadequacy of funds and also the lack of institutional effectiveness in the interaction of state, private and social sectors in resource mobilization for service provision. Looking into the existing institutional constraints, the government has initiated to improve weak institutional capacity of the development administration, service delivery institutions, and monitoring entities to improve poor service delivery making it simple, easy, and transparent (MoF 2013:4; NPC 2013:8). For promoting social accountability, a number of legal measures has been enacted in Nepal by the government for service providers and service receivers. At present, there are 753 local governments and 77 District Coordination Committees at the lower level of the government. There is a common tendency that the citizens still have some hesitation to claim the services from the public organization as their right. However, these bodies should follow the citizen's trust as mechanism of service delivery and initiate citizens' participation in social audit which can scrutinize the functions of the public officials. To implement accountability mechanism, citizens' active participation in the development and service delivery mechanism is highly essential. However, the appropriateness of the mechanisms for implementable conditions for accountability have not been sufficiently explored in the literature. In this context, it is pertinent to discuss how social audit and citizen's charter as accountability mechanisms are helpful to maintain social accountability at the local level in Nepal. Some questions related with this research are as follows:

- Does government performance matter to enhance social accountability at the local level?

- Are male and female perceptions different for social accountability at the local level?

- What factors contribute to implement social accountability mechanism at the local level?

3. Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to measure the social accountability status in the local government of Nepal from a different perspective, however, the specific objectives are as follows:

- To identify the level of social accountability practiced by the local government in Nepal.

- To examine the role of different factors affecting the maintenance of social accountability in the local Government of Nepal.

- To identity the relationships between social accountability and performance in the local Government of Nepal.

4. Conceptualizing Social Accountability

Social accountability (SA) represents a specific form of more general accountability. As Bovens (2007) noted, in the contemporary political and scholarly discourse 'accountability' often serves as a conceptual umbrella that covers various distinct concepts, such as transparency, equity, democracy, efficiency, responsiveness, responsibility and integrity which may also be used interchangeably with 'good governance'. Bovens (2007: 450) describes accountability as 'the obligation to explain and justify conduct' and defines it as 'a relationship between an actor and a forum, in which the actor has an obligation to explain and to justify his or her conduct, the forum can pose questions and pass judgment, and the actor may face consequences'. The actor can be either an individual or an organization, institution or agency; the accountability forum can be a specific person or the society, the relationships can have the principal agent relation, while obligations can be both formal or informal (Bovens, 2007: 451). Social accountability represents one form of accountability, in addition to political, professional, corporate, or administrative accountability. In some of the influential approaches, social accountability is understood as a mechanism whereby citizens, citizens' associations, movements and media hold political authorities accountable through various actions monitoring, performance monitoring, naming and blaming etc. The work of the Affiliated Network for Social Accountability, East Asia and the Pacific, captures this element of rights by noting, "the goal of social accountability action brings us back to the vision of

a good society—meeting people's basic needs through improved public service delivery, building a caring community that enhances people's welfare and promoting equality and justice by strengthening people's rights" (ANSA-EAP, 2010).

Social accountability employs both institutional and non-institutional tools (Peruzzotti and Smulovitz, 2006). In other interpretations, social accountability includes almost all the activities of citizens vis-à-vis the state, such as monitoring, participation in decision making and participation in design and delivery of policies and services (Malena, Forster and Singh, 2004, Joshi and Houtzager, 2012). Social accountability should not be confused with political accountability that is manifested through democratic elections whereby citizens hold government officials and politicians accountable. In contrast to these, social accountability relies on civil society, including media institutions, to put pressure on politicians and public officials (Malena, Reiner and Singh, 2004; Kimcheoun, 2007).

Social accountability initiatives are increasingly expected to facilitate positive development outcomes such as more responsive local government, exposing government failure and corruption, empowering marginalized groups, and ensuring that national and local governments respond to the concerns of the poor. As O'Neil, Foresti, and Hudson (2007: v) argued, "there is a need for more evidence on how change occurs, and how voice and accountability relate to more effective states and better development outcomes." Thus, an acknowledged conceptual void in this field concerns the specific causal chains by which better governance outcomes can be associated with social accountability approaches.

Conceptualizing social accountability begins with an understanding of the concept of accountability per se. Accountability is here defined as a process within a principal-agent relationship. In this relationship the behaviour and perfor¬mance of the agent is evaluated against predetermined standards by the principal and misdeeds are sanctioned (Baez-Camargo 2011:6). In public governance, citizens are intrinsically the ultimate principals with the state acting on their behalf to provide a wide array of public goods and services. As per the World Bank (2004), there are five components that need be present for accountable relations to take place in public governance: mandate, resources, performance, information about performance, and enforceability.

Social accountability refers to formal or informal mechanisms through which citizens and/or civil society organizations engage to bring state officials or service providers to account. In recent years, donors and policymakers have come to consider social accountability as one of the more promising approaches to build bottom-up democratic governance processes since it takes place precisely at the

interface where the state and citizens interact. The direct participation of citizens is in fact what distinguishes social accountabil¬ity from other conventional mechanisms of accountability (Malena, Forster, and Singh 2004).

1. In social accountability the citizens' role expected for monitoring and oversight of public and/or private sector performance, user-centered public information access/dissemination systems, public complaint and grievance redress mechanisms, and resource allocation decision-making including participatory budgeting (Joshi and Houtzager 2012). Social accountability also covers fiscal accountability which allows participation of people in every stage of budgetary process as it seeks transparency in the management of public funds. In political accountability, the leaders win election through votes where the citizens hold their elected officials to account for their behavior and performance. Whatever the type and approaches of social accountability, the participatory interventions can make a meaningful contribution to combat corruption and improve the livelihoods of the people.

UNDP (2010:11) identifies three core elements - voice, enforceability and answerability involved in social accountability. Voice is understood as a variety of mechanisms – formal and informal – through which people express their preferences, opinions and views and demand accountability from power-holders. The enforceability refers to a situation where consequences are expected to ensue, i.e., it is a critical underlying factor for shaping the incentives of service providers to act in a more or less responsive manner with respect to the communities they serve. The third aspect answerability is taken as the obligation to provide an account and the right to get a response. Whatever its core elements social accountability without will and capacity of service provider the demand of the citizen could not fulfilled (Malena, Forster and Singh 2004, 13). For this service providers' capacity is required to manage and share information, consult and seek feedback from the citizens, and provide grievance mechanisms (McNeil and Malena 2010:202).

4.1 Mechanism of Social Accountability

Power devolution is one of the political or democratic mechanism to maintain social accountability. In decentralized governance system, the service providers have to work with the people within close proximity. By giving different participatory tools, citizens can influence the service providers to be accountable to their work. PRAN (2012) has identified different 21 Citizens' Complaints About Public Service regarding service quality, simplicity of service process, easily accessible, target group focus, relevancy of service,

promptness, transparent, accountability, proper use of reward and punishment, compensation, smooth flow of information, citizens' participation in planning/budget preparation, including M/E system. Employing such tools, public organizations' development activities and service delivery system can be judged by the citizens. Service provider's pro-active efforts can satisfy the service receivers which would also be helpful to involve citizens and stimulate pro-accountability processes.

A number of tools such as citizen charter, right to information, civic education, budget/public expenditure tracking system, Community Score Card (CSC), Citizen Report Card (CRC), Public Hearing, Public Audit, Participatory Planning and Budgeting, etc. are in use to map social accountability. The effectiveness of public services can be increased if these tools of social accountability are used by the citizens. With these tools, people's participation in local planning and budget formulation processes can be increased and citizens' rights and entitlements within the existing acts, regulations and procedures can be made more easily accessible. If this can be done, accountability and transparency would be enhanced. It also helps to apply 'Right to Information' into common practice and promote the rule of law.

The other common tool is Citizen Charter (CC) as a simple medium for the citizens to receive information about the services of a particular office. The CC is given as a service providers' public notice displayed to the service receivers. Generally, the CC mentions the types of services available, the service fee, and focal person for providing the service, the service quality, the duration for providing the service, the terms and procedures of service delivery and the remedy if the service is not available, etc.

4.2 Categories of Accountability

Robert Behn (2001) categorizes accountability as *accountability for finances* that focuses on financial accounting, i.e. how books are kept and how the money is spent. Likewise, there is also *accountability for fairness* as government and its officials should ensure maintaining ethical standards for applying rules and the regulations in a fair and equitable manner. In addition to these, *accountability for performance* is required that helps for fair treatment to involve the successful accomplishment of public purposes. So the service providers should keep in mind to maintain *legal accountability and performance accountability* where "legal accountability" involves keeping public officials respect the legal order while performing administrative tasks and building relations with society. One the other hand, 'performance accountability' involves the successful implementation of policies designed to benefit the public.

The periodic free and fair elections is the prerequisite for effective *accountability mechanisms* which would help to take into account the mandate of the electorate *(receptiveness)*, inform the public about what they have done while in office *(answerability)*, and then be judged by the people *(enforcement)*. James Fearon (1999) argues that citizens often consider their vote to be more for "picking the best person for the job" than about sanctioning or holding accountable past office. So, the *vertical accountability* mechanisms, like elections, that require government officials to appeal "downwards" to the people and also need to be complemented by *horizontal accountability* mechanisms such as human rights, *ombudsman,* independent electoral institutes, corruption control agencies, legislative investigative commissions and administrative courts. They may play certain role on public officials and agencies to public institutions that are specifically designed to evaluate, control and direct the behavior of other government officials (O'Donnell, 1999).

5. Analytical Framework

Social accountability is taken as dependent variable and tools used to ensure social accountability are considered as independent variable of the study. These include citizen charter, social audit and public audit of local government.

Social accountability ensures an obligation of service receivers to fulfill the right, voice and choice of principle (citizen). Political parties during election period express their choices and voices. Commitment of political representatives and employee, their proactiveness to deliver services, sensitiveness of actors for the need and aspirations of local citizens, priority given to the needy, marginalized and elderly people. In overall, citizens hold agents.

Independent variable	Dependent variable
Social audit	Effectiveness of Social accountability
Citizen charter	
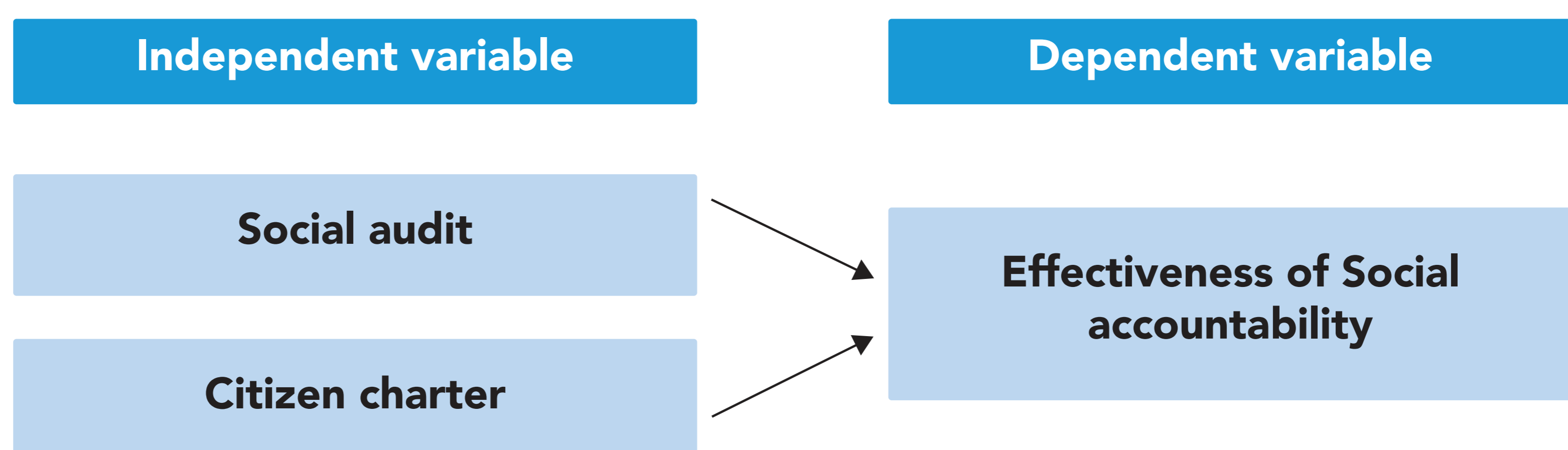
The assumption of the study is the mechanism of social accountability measures the level of social accountability at the local level. Citizen charter (CC) is likely to enhance social accountability at the local government level. Citizen's charter and social audit are taken as independent variable in this study. Social audit

means an assessment of activities performed throughout a year by a particular institution. Local government presents their performances before the public/ citizens for the local people to raise questions. The local government should give their answer about all their activities. Through this process, social accountability is enhanced at the local level. The assumption of the study is that citizen's charter is likely to enhance social accountability at the local government level. CC is one of the tools for ensuring social accountability. With the help of CC citizens know the procedure, concerned officers' related work, time, cost, and the necessary documents to be presented for demanding services. What matters should be included in the Citizen Charter are clearly mentioned in Rule 14 of the Good Governance Regulation of Nepal. However, citizens can still put forward suggestions based on any shortcomings seen during the implementation of the Citizens' Charter and the lessons learnt from such provision.

6. Methodology Research Design

Research design is the overall planning, structure and strategy of the study. According to Kerlinger (1983:300), "Research design is the plan, structure and strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions and to control variance. This research study is based on mixed methodology, combining both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

6.1 Population and Sample

This paper applies Non-probability sampling method. For the study purpose, two districts (Surkhet and Sindhuli) are chosen on the basis of their demographic situation, ecological coverage, rank of Minimum Condition and Performance Measure (MCPM) result. There is about 650 thousand population in both districts. Surkhet has more population than Sindhuli. In both districts, female population is more than that of males which correspond to the national average. Demographically, the ethnic groups in Sindhuli and Surkhet are 64% and 24% respectively. Sindhuli has comparatively less Dalit population than Surkhet, Surkhet is occupied by 50% Brahmins and Chhetris but only 23% in Sindhuli district. Even though both districts are in the hill ecological region, there is also variation in terms of human settlements, their culture and demographic indicators (See Table 1). The population of Surkhet is more educated than Sindhuli. These two districts have average Minimum Condition Performance Measurement (MCPM) value – as per Ministry of Local Development. Therefore, the two districts are selected on the basis of having similar factors as well as dissimilar factors. It is assumed that such heterogeneous indicators might be helpful to draw inferences on social accountability.

Table 1: Comparison of Sindhuli and Surkhet District

Variables	Sindhuli District	Surkhet District
a. Population (Number) Male (Number) Female (Number)	296192 142123 154069	350804 169421 181383
b. Caste and Ethnicity Ethnic groups (in percent) Dalits (in percent) Brahman/Chhetri (in %) Madhesi (in percent) Others	64 12 23 1 >1	24 25 50 1 >1
c. Literate (in number) Male (Number) Female (Number)	165389 90721 74668	233794 125511 108283
d. Literacy rate (in percent)	60.53	73.12
e. Area ((Sq.km)	2491	2451
f. Population density (Per sq.km)	119	143
g. Households (in number)	57544	72830
h. Rural Municipality	7	4
i. Municipality	2	6

Source: CBS, 2014

Altogether 11 rural municipalities and 8 municipalities are in these districts of which eight rural municipalities and 6 municipalities were selected randomly for collecting data (See Table 2).

Table 2: Respondents from each local body of Sindhuli and Surkhet

Name of rural/urban municipalities	Sindhuli	Surkhet	Total
Barahtal Rural Municipality, Surkhet	0	30	30
Bheriganga Municipality, Surkhet	0	32	32
Birendranagar Municipality, Surkhet	0	30	30

Name of rural/urban municipalities	Sindhuli	Surkhet	Total
Chingad Rural Municipality, Surkhet	0	29	29
Gurbhakot Municipality, Surkhet	0	30	30
Lekbeshi Municipality, Surkhet	0	30	30
Panchpuri Municipality, Surkhet	0	32	32
Simta Rural Municipality, Surkhet	0	29	29
Golanjor Rural Municipality, Sindhuli	30	0	30
Kamalamai Municipality, Sindhuli	63	0	63
Marin Rural Municipality, Sindhuli	30	0	30
Phikal Rural Municipality, Sindhuli	30	0	30
Sunkoshi Rural Municipality, Sindhuli	30	0	30
Tinpatan Rural Municipality, Sindhuli	30	0	30
Total	**213**	**242**	**455**

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Altogether 455 respondents are selected systematically. Those citizens who visited to get services from local bodies are requested to fill up the questionnaire. As per the number of service recipients, the interval of appointment of respondent differs in each Gaupalika and Nagarpalika. Both primary and secondary data were generated. The primary data were collected administering 455 questionnaires with 214 respondents in Sindhuli and the rest 241 in Surkhet. Socio-economic background of the respondents is given in the first part of questionnaire, and the second part focuses on the variables such as on social accountability, citizen's charter, social audit, public audit and performance of the local government. To substantiate questionnaire survey, interview is also taken with 25 mayors, deputy mayors, chairmen and vice-chairmen including the executive officers of the concerned sample local bodies. Similarly, secondary data such as budget report, social audit report, public audit report, profile and other progress report of surveyed local governments are also collected and triangulated while analyzing the data.

6.2 Characteristics of the Respondents

The characteristics of the respondents as given in Table 3 gives their socio-economic variables such as types of respondents, gender, religion, literacy, occupation and monthly income.

Table 3: Characteristics of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent
Types of Respondents	Ordinary Citizen	239	52.5
	Political Cadre	35	7.7
	Local Level Employee	74	16.3
	Ethnic Group	48	10.5
	Marginalized Group and Dalits	16	3.5
	Social Workers or Mobilizers	27	5.9
	Other	16	3.5
Gender	Male	244	53.6
	Female	211	46.4
Religion	Hindu	398	87.5
	Muslim	20	4.4
	Christian	19	4.2
	Buddhist	18	4.0
Literacy	Illiterate	26	5.8
	Literate	429	94.2
Occupation	Working	123	27.6
	Self-employed	105	23.5
	Unemployed	77	17.3
	Retired	9	2.0
	Student/house wife or home maker	132	29.6
Monthly Income	Up to Rs 10,000	142	37.3
	Rs 10001-20000	110	28.9
	Rs 20001-30000	107	28.1
	Rs 30001-40000	15	3.9
	Rs 40001 and above	7	1.8
	Total	**455**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Of surveyed respondents, there are about fifty percent ordinary citizens and rest of them belong to some other categories. They are slightly more males than females In the religion category, about 88 percent are Hindus and 12 percent which belong to Buddhists, Christians and Muslims. Similarly, about six percent

people are illiterate and 94 percent literate. In the case of occupational status of the respondents, 83 percent are employed and 17 percent unemployed.

6.3 Data Management and Analysis

Data were analyzed by using SPSS software. Out of 30 variables of citizen's charter, 7 variables were taken. Likewise, the factor analysis was carried out in case of social audit, performance of government and public audit. The social accountability is presented only in frequency table and percentage. For other variables, regression model was conducted to find out the relationship between and among the variables. Both male and female perspectives related to social accountability, citizen charter, public audit, social audit and performance of local government were presented.

7. Analysis and Discussion

7.1 Social Accountability

The local people and the authorities have close relationship in every stage of development activities and public service delivery. The local government has more responsibility and known as door to door government. The behavior of the local authorities, training and skills, job description, service delivery capacity and improvement in governance are taken into account as tools of social accountability (See Table 4).

Table 4: Social Accountability

Social accountability (Behaviour of local bodies of staff and their capacity)	Effective %	Ineffective %	Total
Personnel are skilled and trained	53	47	125
Personnel conduct duties as per their job description	54	46	125
Public service delivery capacity	30	70	125
Social accountability tools empower the people	49	51	125
Improvement in local governance	75	25	125

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 4 shows that the staff is skilled and trained in comparison to other organizations as 53% local staff were found to be skilled and trained and agreed

with the acceptance of local bodies training as effective to enhance social accountability. Average respondents, i.e., 54% agree that social accountability is effective while performing their duties as per their job description. Only 30% respondents agree with the public service delivery capacity increases social accountability while 49% people agree that social accountability tools empower the people. Over 76% respondents agree social accountability improve the governance, however, service delivery capacity seems to be poor compared to the provision of legal policy.

7.2 Correlation among Social Accountability and its Mechanism

The general assumptions of correlation between social accountability and its tools are positive (see Table 5). It means effectiveness of social accountability depends on the effectiveness of Citizen's Charter and social audit.

Table 5: Pearson's Correlation among Social Accountability and its tools

	Social accountability	Social audit	Citizen charter
Social accountability	1		
Social audit	.522**	1	
Citizen charter	.527**		1

**.correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2- tailed)

Source: Field Survey, 2018

The table above shows that there is positive correlation between social accountability and social audit, citizen's charter and public audit at one percent level of significance.

7.3 Social Audit and Social Accountability from Gender Perspective

The assumption of this study is that social audit process and activities which are conducted by the local government are likely to support ensuring social accountability at the local level. There was also Local Body Social Audit Guideline (LBSAG) 2010, which specified the process and methodology of conducting social audit. Questions after factor analysis regrouped into four factors such as presentation of annual progress, invitation to stakeholders, appointment of facilitator, and smooth discussion (see Table 6).

Table 6: Social Audit and Social Accountability from Genders Perspective

Variables	Male			Female		
	B	T	Sig.	B	T	Sig
Constant	21.408	8.562	.000**	15.347	4.846	.000**
Presentation of annual progress	.324	1.535	.128	.238	1.321	.191
Invitation to stakeholders	.192	.796	.428	.110	.561	.577
Appointment of facilitator for SA	.864	1.793	.076*	1.467	3.139	.003**
Smooth discussion during SA	.110	.338	.736	-.285	-1.187	.239
R square	27.6	-	-	45.6	-	-
Durbin Watson	1.876	-	-	1.682	-	-
F	7.326	-	.000**	11.248	-	.000**

**significant at 0.05 & *significant at 0.10

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 6 shows that there is no significant relationship between presentations of annual progress reports with social accountability from gender perspective. Both male and female perspectives do not have significant relationship between invitation to stakeholders and with social accountability and between smooth discussion and social accountability. Both of them have 27.6% and 45.6% of causal relationship. From Durbin Watson value and F test, both models are fitted.

7.4 Citizen Charter (CC) and Social Accountability from Gender Perspective

The assumption of this study is that implementation of CC is likely to enhance social accountability at the local level, which makes local governance more effective. Using regression model, Table 7 depicts the following results.

Table 7: Citizen Charter and Social Accountability from Gender Perspective

Variables	Male			Female		
	B	T	Sig.	B	T	Sig
Constant	17.161	4.711	.000**	14.532	3.703	.000**
Opinion expression & improvement	.367	1.577	.118	.288	1.232	.223
Goal is advertised through CC	.249	.727	.469	.663	2.186	.033**
Quality enhancement due to CC	.401	1.046	.298	.362	.947	.348
Inclusion of reform strategy due to CC	.286	.750	.455	.825	2.251	.028**
Dissemination of CC report cards	.268	.661	.510	-.615	-1.334	.187
R square	30.8	-	-	41	-	-
Durbin Watson	1.375	-	-	1.867	-	-
F	5.851	-	.000**	5.665	-	.000**

**significant at 0.05 & *significant at 0.10

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 7 shows that the opinion expression and improvement from male/female perspective is not significant. The quality of services delivered to the local people and dissemination of CC reports through media do not establish significant relationship with social accountability. However, there is significant relationship with organization's goal advertised through CC and inclusion of reform strategies for establishing significant relationship with social accountability from gender perspective. Both males and females show 30.8% and 41% of causal relationship. From Durbin Watson value and F test, both models are fitted. Local actors and service receivers including gender perspective claim that the social accountability is not ensured because of CC.

7.5 Social Audit and Social Accountability from Gender Perspective

The available resources at local level are mobilized by different stakeholders such as local leaders, local employees and local people for the benefit of citizens. For mobilizing the local resources, the local bodies as local government has to make and enforce rules, regulations and also issue the directives. For mobilizing local resources, it should maintain transparency so the local service providers could be accountable to the people.

Table 8: Social Audit and Social Accountability: Gender's perspective

Variables	Male			Female		
	B	T	Sig.	B	T	Sig
(Constant)	21.408	8.562	.000**	15.347	4.846	.000**
Warm welcome of participants and encouraged to express their opinion in mass gathering	-.085	-.338	.736	.474	2.692	.009**
Presentation of annual progress report and its dissemination	.324	1,535	.128	.238	1.321	.191
Invitation of all stakeholders including marginalized community to participated in social audit program	.192	.796	.428	.110	.561	.577
Appointment of facilitator for social audit program	.864	1.793	.076*	1.467	3.139	.003**
Smooth discussion during social audit program.	.110	.338	.736	-.285	-1.187	.239
R squire	27.6	-	-	45.6		
Durbin Watson	1.876			1.682		
F	7.326			11.248		.000**

**significant at 0.05 & *significant at 0.10

Source: Field Survey, 2018

The local plans, programs and policies should focus to address the needs and aspirations of the people. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the needs and expectations of the people so the local bodies can be accountable towards the citizens. To judge the performance of local bodies, social audit is helpful in examining the activities and performance of a service delivery agency with direct involvement and participation of a wide range of stakeholders. Social audit is not merely a financial audit of the organization or institution. To ascertain the application of social audit at the local level, 27 questions on social audit were asked. After running factor analysis, these 27 variables were divided into five factors such as welcoming the participants, presentation of annual progress report, invitation to stakeholders, appointment of facilitator and initiate brief discussion (See Table 8).

In female's perspective, there is significant relationship with warm welcome of participants and social accountability whereas the male's perspective seems

bit different. Both male's and female's perspectives do not have signification relationship between presentation of annual progress reports and invitation of stakeholder with social accountability. However, there is significant relationship between appointment of facilitators and social accountability from the gender perspective. On the contrary, there is no significant relationship between smooth discussion and social accountability. These models explain 28 and 45 percent of causal relationship. From the indicators of F value and Durbin-Watson the test also show the models are fitted.

7.6 Social Audit and Social Accountability

Social audit is a mechanism that evaluates the effectiveness of investment. The objectives of the public auditing is economy and use of resources in the right place. It is assumed that public audit makes sure of social accountability at the local government. There was more than a dozen of questions asked to the ordinary citizens. After running factor analysis, three factors were found (see Table 9).

This study found that there was no significant relationship with hanging hoarding board of the project with social accountability from gender perspectives. The male's perspective was that the projects were timely completed which helped to have social accountability at the local government. On the contrary, it was not found in female's perspective. However, the conduction of social audit at the project site had significant relationship with social accountability from gender perspectives. Both the models explain about 20.6 and 15.4 percent only. But, the Durbin Waston and F value is significant which shows the model is fit.

Table 9: Public Audit and Social Accountability: Gender Perspective

Variables	Male			Female		
	B	T	Sig.	B	T	Sig
(Constant)	20.596	7.823	.000**	23.151	7.095	.000**
Hanging hoarding board of the project	.289	1.310	.193	.069	.246	.806
Timely completion of the project	.657	2.299	.023**	.458	1.461	.147
Conduction of public audit at the project site.	.709	2.658	.009**	.877	2.773	.007**
R Squire	20.6			15.4		
Durbin Watson	1.822			1.535		
F	11.476			5.647		.000**

**significant at 0.05 & *significant at 0.10

Source: Field Survey, 2018

7.7 Performance of the Local Government and Social Accountability

As per Local Government Operation Act, 2074, democracy should reach up to the grassroots level, i.e. at municipality and rural municipality. The Constitution of Nepal Schedule 8, states local governments have to perform 22 activities. In addition, other 13 activities are also listed in the Act which are concurrent activities of all federal, state and local governments. In this backdrop 30 questions were asked to the respondents with regard to performance of local government and social accountability. While running factor analysis, these activities were grouped into seven categories (See Table 10). The assumption of the study was that the greater performance of local government may likely lead to higher social accountability.

Table 10 shows that R squire for male is 21.9 and for female 12 where as F value is 0.130 which is significant at the level of 0.05 and 0.01. In an interview with local government actors, they opined there was a lack required number of employees and also their level of motivation is low. On the other hand, employees' assessment toward elected representatives was that elected persons lack work experience. It is obvious that there would be high expectations from the people because of a new elected body after a gap of 20 years. Due to the lack of adequate local resource mobilization, the local government has to highly rely on central budget allocation.

Table 10: Performance of Government and Social Accountability: Gender Perspective

Variables	Male			Female		
	B	T	Sig.	B	T	Sig
(Constant)	19.603	4.258	0.000**	21.918	4.183	.000**
Very essential services (Toilet, drinking water, rooftop, cooking fuel, foundation of house)	-.407	-1.623	.108	-.187	-.817	.416
Accessibility of health and education services	.062	.265	.792	.016	.065	.949
Availability of health and education services	.237	.632	.529	.210	.592	.556
Drainage, road, peace and security etc.	.594	1.721	.088*	.375	1.095	.277
Vital registration and certification of family relationship	.899	2.048	.043**	-.024	-.057	.955
Readiness to serve citizen (Maps plus distribution of social security allowance)	.648	1.505	0.135	1.149	2.476	.015**

Variables	Male			Female		
	B	T	Sig.	B	T	Sig
Light and communication	-.759	-1.353	.179	-.504	-.866	.389
R Squire	21.9			12		
DW	1.747			2.039		
F	4.295		.000**	1.660		.130

**significant at 0.05 & *significant at 0.10

Source: Field Survey, 2018

The other factors including lack of local infrastructures, remoteness from the local headquarters lead to the poor delivery of the services. These factors lead to the poor performance of the local government which results in significant relationship with social accountability.

8. Findings and Discussion

O'Meally (2013) specifies six contextual domains such as political society, state–society relations, civil society, inter-elite relations, intra-state relations, and global dimensions which influence social accountability actions.

In the democratic government, social accountability of the service providers is taken as central. Mere abiding by the law is not enough as citizens should feel the delivery of justice. In this process, the citizens should participate in the local development and/or service delivery process. The more the citizens are aware and participate the more the local government officials are accountable. In this study, total 76% respondent also agree that accountability improves the governance, however, due to lack of strong legal measures the service delivery is not so effective. For maintaining social accountability, both the agents and the principals should have active roles. As Kabeer (2010) says the democratic and inclusive society is based on a social contract between a responsive and accountable state where mutual interactions between states and citizens is essential. Nepal's decentralization system is weak due to the feudalistic approach, i.e., the 'agent' or the service provider who often becomes reluctant to share power to the grassroots on the one hand and on the other, the demand capacity of the 'principle' that is citizens are also weak. However, Nepal's power sharing process by decentralizing the central power has been started since 1960s when *Panchayat* system was introduced. Every public office should have to publish the Citizen's Charter. Later, after 1990, for strengthening the local bodies' role improvements were initiated by making different legal measures including 'Local Governance Act 1999' and 'Local Governance Regulation

2000' (Law Book Management Committee 2000). Once the political system the Parliamentary Monarchical system was changed to Democratic Federal System. The government again enacted "Local Governance Operation Act 2017" (Law Book Management Committee 2017) which broadens the authority and power of the local bodies. As per this legal provision, for formation of local bodies is more inclusive which opens more opportunity to take part in the local development and delivery of service.

As per the 'Constitution of Nepal', promulgated in 2015, a number of citizens' rights are guaranteed and more authority is devolved at provincial and local levels. With the constitutional spirit and legal instruments for governing, the local government has been given more power to the local bodies. Such provision has opened up the citizen's participation in the planning process of the local bodies. In fact, the local development planning primarily starts from the Ward level – the lowest echelon of the Rural/Urban Municipality where the local citizens, users' groups, and civil society organizations including NGOs/CBOs participate and also often involve in implementation of local level plans. The new enactment has also made provision of stakeholders' participation in social auditing of the local development plans. On the contrary, it was not found in female's perspective. However, the conduction of public audit at the project site had significant relationship with social accountability from gender perspectives.

Social audit and citizen's charter are taken as independent variables in this study. Social audit is used for the assessment of activities performed throughout a year by a particular institution. Local government presents their performance before the public/citizens to raise questions and the concerned officials should answer them on behalf of their organization. Social audit is a mechanism that evaluates the effectiveness of investment. The objective of the social auditing is economic and appropriate use of the resources. It is assumed that social audit ensures social accountability at the local government. When analyzing the data, using factor analysis tool, social audit establishes significant relationship both from male and female perspectives.

In CC mechanism, it presents clear instruction about the process of service delivery, time taken and the charges to be paid including the focal person to be contacted. The detailed instruction is displayed on the wall painting or hording board in front of the office. the grievance redressal mechanism in the CC helps to take corrective measures in case of noncompliance of CC for service delivery. The presence of CC is expected for smooth delivery of services to the citizens if citizens use it as a tool to follow the process and also if the service provider takes its commitment of implementing the provisions of CC. When discussed about the applicability of CC, the study found that there was no significant relationship

with hanging hoarding board of the project with social accountability from gender perspective. Quality of services delivered to the local people and dissemination of CC reports through media do not establish significant relationship with social accountability. However, there is significant relationship with organization's goal advertised through CC and inclusion of reform strategies for establishing significant relationship with social accountability from gender perspective. Local actors and service receivers including gender perspective claimed that the social accountability is not ensured because of CC. Despite Rule 14 of the Good Governance Regulation clearly mentioning the applicability of the Citizen's Charter, due to the implementation shortcomings it does not contribute to social accountability. Citizens still are not able to demonstrate their 'right' to getting service as specified in the CC, but rather reluctant or hesitant to use their right due to lack of awareness about CC.

9. Conclusion

The public organizations should be responsible towards the citizens and their effectiveness and relevance should be reflected from the delivery of quality services. The service delivery should be based on the public law and should meet wishes, desires and needs of the citizens as people have the right to raise questions about the continued existence of such organizations. So social accountability is a mechanism that brings both service providers and service receivers at the same place. As social accountability requires collective efforts of service providers and service receivers in which citizens also can play their role to make state officials or service providers more accountable through social audit and citizen's charter. The rules such as the provision of social audit and citizen charter are expected to be helpful to provide opportunity to the people to ask questions with responsible local government bodies and officials regarding the usefulness of resources, application of rules and regulations, service delivery provisions, etc. The study shows that the quality of services delivered to the local people and dissemination of CC reports through media do not establish significant relationship with social accountability. While judging the application of social audit and citizen charter for maintaining social accountability at the local level such as in Nepal shows that the citizens still have confusion regarding the implementation of such mechanism for promoting social accountability at the local level. Despite the fact that accountability is essential to strengthen democracy, it takes time to bring it in practice. Thus, Nepal's initiation for strengthening local government through democratic exercise would be helpful with citizens' participation in the accountability process. Until and unless the situation of social accountability is not improved, the constitutional spirit will not be achieved. To make democracy functional in Nepal, the social accountability mechanisms needs to be improved more specifically.

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Challenges of Water Users' Association on Irrigation Governance: A Case Study of Bijayapur Irrigation System, Pokhara, Kaski, Nepal

Tara Prasad Kharel

Abstract

Knowing the irrigation governance is vital for understanding the sustainability of the irrigation system. Irrigation system not only consists of the physical structures, but it also consists of managerial system which is termed as Water Users' Association in irrigation system. So, this study has tried to provide a clear picture of the challenges of Water Users' Association of Bijayapur Irrigation System in irrigation governance. This study involved analysis of qualitative data obtained from field study and national legal system and policies as secondary data on the basis of common property regime in reference to the selected key elements of good governance. This study covers only two units of irrigation system, viz., Water Users' Association and irrigation development division. The result obtained from the analysis clearly shows the major challenges faced by Water Users' Association are autonomy, revenue collection and annual landslide in small section of the main canal. The challenge is more focused on administrative and financial autonomy. The system is not economically autonomous and contains structural and non-structural issues related to the management and governance of the system. Stakeholders have suggested the increase in the irrigation service fee along with shifting the paradigm of irrigation management transfer principle to co-operative model. Furthermore, this study also suggests forming a clear policy and legal provision for irrigation governance in the changed federal context.

Keywords: *Irrigation, Governance, accountability, autonomy, WUA*

1. Introduction

According to the Cambridge Dictionary (2016), governance is "the way that or-ganizations are managed at the highest level and the system for doing this". Elaborating its literal meaning, governance reflects the art or the system of managing any organization at optimum performance by taking its objectives

and or mandates as fundamental. Governance refers to the utilization of the available resources along with the allocation of the manpower in order to meet specific objectives. In such an understanding, governance is, not only limited to, the concept of the management.

Irrigation is considered as one of the important inputs for crop productivity which ultimately relates with the food security and health standards of the people. Irrigation Policy (1992) of Nepal also realized the pivotal role of irrigation in increasing agricultural production and productivity. It further aims to reduce poverty by increasing agricultural production and creation of rural employment. It is understood that Nepalese farmers have been traditionally investing in development and expansion of their irrigation systems in order to increase agricultural production for reduction of the food scarcity. The effective governance of the irrigation system contributes to the optimum output, hence, improving the crop production.

For any organization, the term governance is directly or indirectly related with the prevailing development practices, which is somewhat different from the concept of sociological studies, where development is used to distinguish the status of the local communities, based on the practices and traditions for governance of the organization. As irrigation water can be considered as common property, the governance of water is also based on the same reflection.

Recently, concept of "good governance" has been widely used all over the world. But the definition of good governance, which could be accepted the world over, has not come into existence. The term Good Governance was for the first time stated in 1989 in the World Bank's report on "Sub-Saharan Africa: from Crisis to Sustainable Development" (World Bank, 1989) as it emphasizes 'Accountability' at the heart of good governance.

The first United Nations Water Development Report (2003), stated water crisis as the crisis of governance and societies facing a number of social, economic and political challenges to govern water more effectively. Water problems, in reality, are very complex and cannot be solved easily without drastic reforms in the policy and development and inclusion of interdependent stakeholders in policy formation.

According to Pradhan (2003), there has been existence of the community based organization for irrigation management and development from the past. Furthermore, such communities have developed their own organization system, norms and values for governing the management of the water resources. Such norms and values basically contain equity and transparency as the main two characteristics of Farmer Managed irrigation Systems (FMIS). That these forms

of organizations existed in the past can be considered as the preliminary form of Water Users' Association (WUA) though such do not have any written formal constitution to note. Whereas Pradhan and Belbase (2018) argue that regulation of the operation and mainte-nance of state built and operated irrigation systems were carried by legal in-struments like *Sanad*[1], *Sawal*[2], etc. issued by the then Rana Rulers.

According to Sharma, Dongol and Khanal (2015), Adhi Khola Water Users' Association (AKWUA) was formed in December 1984 and registered at Sanjya District Office under the Association Registration Act, 2034 BS with the prominent objectives of uplifting the poor and landless farmers in the command area, it consisted of General Assembly as the highest decision-making body and all the shareholders as the assembly members.

When the Irrigation Policy 1992 was enacted, it emphasized the WUA for inclusion, participation and effective management of irrigation system as obligatory provisions of irrigation policy. In this regard, Pradhan and Bandaragoda (1998) stated WUA as self-governing, self-regulating and self-supporting organizations. They further stated WUA as important organizational unit to play a significant role in promoting participatory irrigation management. They further explained the users' participation in the management of irrigation systems which helps better in maintaining the irrigation infrastructure, mobilizing more resources for operation and maintenance of the system.

As irrigation governance focuses on design, formulation and implementation of water policies and practices, legislative provision and on roles and responsibilities of government sector or concerned bodies, civil society and the private vs. public sector about ownership, management and administration of water resources and services and the benefits there from, it is immensely important to study challenges faced by WUA in irrigation governance.

Nepalese farmers are mostly dependent on the monsoon which is uncertain. In areas where the rainfall is not adequate, irrigation is the most important input. In this context, Farmer Managed Irrigation System (FMIS) has been identified as the potential area where irrigation intensity can be increased with efficiency in short time (Ansari and Pradhan, 1991). Further, Pun (2000) states the priority of Government of Nepal for the development of irrigation facilities by promoting the people's participation.

Past studies by several scholars like Uphoff (1986) Pradhan (2003), Upreti (2006), Chhetri (2008) etc. have shown that most of the irrigation systems are

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[1]Sanad is an official order issued by the Prime Minister during the Rana Regime.
[2]Sawal is an official rule issued by King or Prime Minister during Rana Regime.

working satisfactorily but some are still ill performing because of several reasons related to financial, technical, environmental and organizational aspects. In this context, government agencies and non-government organizations (NGOs) have been trying to assist FMIS in their rehabilitation efforts. But as the FMIS has a specific nature depending up-on their geographical location and community, each agency followed its own pattern and policy.

Bijayapur Irrigation System (BIS) is located in Pokhara Lekhnath Metropolitan City of Kaski district with the source of water supply from Bijayapur stream and Seti River. This system has five branches. Although the exact date of the beginning of the BIS is yet to be known, it has a long history which can be proved by the *Lalmohar*[3]-document containing Royal Seal of Nepal, issued by the first Rana Prime Minister, Mr. Junga Bahadur Rana in 1850. Before the rehabilitation of BIS in 1956, according to the local people, there were two irrigation canals: Mathillo Kulo (upper canal) and Tallo Kulo (lower canal) from Bijayapur Khola. The canals were earthen and the dam was temporary.

Rana Prime Minister Shree 3 Mohan Sumsher ordered the agriculture council to carry out the feasibility study of the system but the commencement of the construction was delayed due to political reformation that took place in Nepal in 1951. In 1953, the government of Nepal took the responsibility to rehabilitate the system by an agreement with Indian Cooperation Mission (ICM) for the improvement of the system. Tallo Kulo was abandoned and the construction of the project was started in 1956 with semi-permanent type of diversion weir. Again, the canal was rehabilitated in 1983-1987 with the loan assistance from Asian Development Bank (ADB). In 1988, upon request from the farmers of Bijayapur, the District Irrigation Office (DIO) decided to allocate 2m3/sec of water to the BIS through 830m long feeder canal just upstream of the headwork of BIS. Now, year round (all season) irrigation service is available which has enabled the farmers to produce more grains in the limited plot of land.

After the rehabilitation of the system in 1987, DIO was responsible for the operation, maintenance and management of the irrigation system. But soon after the introduction of Irrigation Policy in 1993, water users were organized and registered a committee with the District Administration Office, (DAO) Kaski which became functional for one year only. Such committee was not in existence in BIS till 2001. Again, in 2001, DIO organized a water users' committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Ram Bahadur Thapa, which became effective and functional. Then the branch committees and sub-branch committees too

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[3]Lalmohar (red seal of assent) is an official decree during Shah Dynasty and Rana Regieme.

were organized. Now, there are three levels of users' committees: WUA, branch committees, sub-branch committees (including *tole*[4] committees).

In this regard, Bijayapur Irrigation System (BIS) is the one which has been selected for the study as it is fully dependent on government assistance for operation and maintenance. The BIS has several ups and downs socially, technically and economically as well since its rehabilitation during the Rana Regime till date. Similarly, the existing WUA is functioning but not as expected. Because of this, it is essential to study the challenges faced by WUA for effective irrigation governance.

The main purpose of this study is to explore the challenges faced by WUA of BIS in effective irrigation governance with the concept of good governance in center. In order to achieve this purpose, following research questions have been used in the study: i) How have the core concepts of good governance been practised by WUA of BIS in irrigation governance? ii) What challenges has WUA faced in irrigation governance? iii) What efforts have been undertaken by WUA to overcome the challenges? iv)How was the relation between the Irrigation Department and WUA of Bijayapur Irrigation System?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Common Property Resources in General

Rivers, lakes, ponds, aquifers etc. are considered as common property and there is no certainty of the same quantity and quality of water available every year because of many reasons. According to Martin (1986), water is a fugitive resource. Common property institutions are the most important means of regulation of such resources.

The concept of "common property" has played a socially beneficial role in natural resources management which contains two dominant conceptual models: a capitalist model and a socialist model. The capitalist model argues about the degradation of common resources and suggests privatization as a viable solution whereas the socialist model explains about economic poverty caused by inequity in the distribution of resources and prefers collectivization or nationalization of public resources as a viable solution.

For many neoclassical economists, population growth has exerted pressure on common resources thereby creating the Tragedy of the Commons (Hardin,

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[4]*Tole* is very small community in rural area especially residing within same geography either sharing or separated by a common road.

1968). Their suggestion for the proper solution of the overexploitation of common resources is to make such resources private (Runge, 1985). But the socialist model does not accept population as the principal cause of the tragedy of the commons. According to them, overpopulation does not cause tragedy of the commons as each can children contribute economically as agriculture labor at an early age and continue to do so throughout their lives (Hecht, 1985).

Furthermore, when previously locally controlled resources have been nationalized, it is proved to be less effective and efficient than controlled by those directly affected (Curtis, 1991; Ascher, 1995). State ownership and control over the public resources did not necessarily overcome the problem of common property resource management. This can be explained with an exciting example of nationalization of forest resources in Nepal. Nationalization of forest resources did not solve the problem of deforestation (Feeny, 1990).

2.2 Management of Common Property

Norman Uphoff (1986) distinguishes five kinds of natural resource management, such as forest management, rangeland management, irrigation water management, watershed management, and soil conservation or cropland management and also distinguishes methods of management of these resources by the involvement of different organizational options.

He further illustrates that the management of common property resources depends upon the types of social structure of resource users and the nature of re-sources to be managed. According to him, User groups' association (Water Users' Association) can manage water resources better than others because users are geographically delimited and resource can be distributed with some precision, according to Uphoff (1986).

2.3 Common Pool Resources and Common Property Resources

Common-pool resources are sub-sets of public goods which can be used by many people at once and it is difficult to exclude the users from the use of such resources. There is obvious presence of free riders in common property and this issue in common property management is prominent. Common-pool resources, in long run, are potentially subject to congestion, depletion, or degradation pushing them beyond the limits of sustainable yields (Blomquist and Ostrom, 1985). Ostrom argues that collective action for Common Pool Resources management will be long enduring and successful under different conditions (Ostrom, 1990).

According to Ostrom (1990), "the term common pool resource (CPR) refers to a natural or man- made resource system that is sufficiently large as to make

it costly (but not impossible) to exclude potential beneficiaries from obtaining benefits from its use".

According to Bromley (1991), common property regime represents private property for the group of co-owners and is a private property in a sense that there is exclusion of non-owners. Further, the management group has the right to exclude non-members, and individual members of the management group have both rights and duties with respect to use rates and maintenance of the property owned.

2.4 Irrigation Management

According to Yokoyama, and Shrestha, (2005), farmer managed irrigation system (FMIS) have been a focus of external assistance in Nepal irrigation sector since the late 1980s. Despite of their productivity remaining low and at subsistence level due many reasons, according to DOI, there are some 620,000 ha of FMIS in Nepal including those constructed by DOI and transferred to WUAs, accounting for 55% of the country's irrigated area, and 23% of the net cultivated area.

The amazing number of successful reconstructions of farmer organized irrigation systems in the Philippines and in Nepal demonstrates to the potential for improvement of these systems (Pradhan, 1989).

Ostrom (1992), has discussed the property rights to water are often physically manifested in the weirs used on irrigation systems to allocate water to channels serving particular farmers.

In the past, various forms of traditional organizations existed throughout the country for the management of the water resources. The prevailing legal provisions and policies do not officially recognize those because the existing policies require the formation of the specific water users' association with the elaborated constitutional arrangements. Such organizations are mandatorily needed to be registered with the government for all the water uses (as irrigation, drinking water and small hydropower). The water resources policy presumes that the registered water users' association manages water in a better way. But most of these organizations are formed and registered simply as a prerequisite for receiving government assistance only.

Uprety (2006) writes as there will be technical and institutional sustainability of the public irrigation systems under management transfer only if the water users are actively involved in the process right from the very beginning for which the implementation of promotional activities are in a more socially inclusive manner. Institutional efforts by the government and other responsible organization would be equally important pre-requisite for such sustainability.

2.5 Good Governance in Irrigation Management

Mythological evidences prevail describing the presence of good governance in ancient Nepal. The governance of Gorakha King Ram Shah can be considered as basis for evaluating the government in present time (Riccardi, 1977; Dahal, 2001). The historical king of Kathmandu Valley, Pratap Malla, is also credited for his good governance system in history of Nepal (Pyakuryal and Suvedi, 2000). According to Becker-Ritterspach (1994), there were three large water supply systems governed properly during historic times (Lichchhabi period) in Kathmandu Valley. These systems were the canals from Budhanilkantha to core area of Kathmandu city, the Tikabhairav canal to supply water to the ponds of Patan (Lagankhel) and the Bageswori canal which fed Bhaktapur water system.

In the first United Nations Water Development Report (2003), it is stated that "the water crisis is essentially a crisis of governance and societies are facing a number of social, economic and political challenges on how to govern water more effectively".

Pradhan (1989) opines that the government should undertake the construction of large and medium size irrigation projects and water users' association will be responsible for the construction of field channels where the government will subsidize the capital cost recovery of the project.

Ostrom (1992) argues "design principles" based on the empirical evidences for long-enduring self-organized irrigation systems. According to her, "design principle" is a key element that helps for accounting the success of any institutions for sustaining the physical works. Furthermore, long-enduring irrigation system is that which has been in operation for at least several generations. The components of good governance such as transparency, equity, rule of the law, participation and accountability have been well covered by Ostrom's design principles.

Ostrom (1992) further argues institutional design as the process of developing a set of rules that users in the process understand, agree upon, and are willing to comply with, is the most important consideration in any irrigation development.

2.6 National Legal and Policy Level Provision in Irrigation Governance

Irrigation Master Plan (1989) - This focuses on the importance of the involvement of water users' groups in the development and management of irrigation projects by stating the importance of the participation of the beneficiaries in all stages of the project design, implementation and full responsibility in the operation and maintenance. Furthermore, it planned for participatory management of irrigation project and resolved the issue of sustainability by the provision of the ISF.

Water Resources Act (1992) - It focused on the importance of the development of institutional representation of the water users in all stages of irrigation management, including formation of a water users' association (WUA) which has to be registered for its legality. It also defined WUA as an autonomous corporate body with perpetual succession with the prospective that the institution exists, but persons may change according to requirement and tenure.

Irrigation Policy (Revised in 1996 and 2004) - This policy provided the guidelines for WUA. Similarly, it provisioned the transfer of the responsibility of operation, repair and maintenance of the systems developed by the government to the WUAs. The provision of sustainability, social inclusion and feeling of the ownership of the irrigation system has clearly been stated.

Water Resources Regulation (1993) - This regulation furthermore emphasized the mandatory provision of the WUA in accordance with the Irrigation Policy. There is also the mandatory eligibility provision of WUA for registration.

Irrigation Regulation (1999) - This regulation has clarified the roles and responsibilities of the WUA, transfer of ownership of irrigation and its management, process of collecting irrigation service fees.

2.7 Water Users' Association (WUA) for Irrigation Governance

Lam (1998) explains irrigation as a series of complex socio-technical processes and the governance and management of irrigation systems often involves high degree of uncertainties like capricious weather, rugged topography, the large size of infrastructure, and the normally large number of appropriators. According to him, individuals in the system be continuously involved and engaged in system governance and management to deal with these problems effectively.

Similarly, Lam (1998) expresses that "the governance and management of irrigation systems cannot be fully understood apart from the broader institutional setting in which these systems operate. According to him, the local institutions are of major importance for effective irrigation governance and management.

Chhetri (2008) also explains that the institutional arrangements are made by the (local) people in order to manage the vital and scarce water resource. Similarly, Pradhan (2003) in his study also states that the community has developed its own organization system (WUA), norms and values for governing the water resources based on equity and transparency as the main two characteristics.

3. Methodology

3.1 Approaches of the Study

The approach used in this study is mainly based on qualitative research which aims to explore feelings, perception and experiences via naturalistic inquiry in real world setting inductively through human interactions more closely (Limb and Dwyer, 2001). The challenges faced by the WUA cannot be quantified as per the requirement of the quantitative study. Challenges of the WUA are basically expression of their feelings and practical experience of the members in the committee. As the study is primarily based upon the challenges faced as concerns of good governance practice in irrigation governance, the qualitative approach will be best suited. Such qualitative research can be conducted through different strategies as ethnography, grounded theory, phenomenology, narrative inquiry and case studies (Creswell, 2003).

3.2 Research Design

Case methodology has been selected as an appropriate research design for this study considering purpose, research question and theoretical framework. In this study, the collected data were analyzed and interpreted semi-automatically using Excel (transcribed text coded into spread sheet) to answer the principal research questions and satisfy the objectives of the study, within the theory of common property. The logic behind this is subject of study is case specific and irrigation is considered as common property with multiple use and probability of presence of free riders.

3.3 Theoretical Framework

Martin (1986) considers water as fugitive resource. He further opines that regulation of such resources requires common property institutions. Furthermore, he explains, in any irrigation organization, a farmer can be thought of as an owner and a manager of such common property. The group has vested rights to the water in the source and the amount that members can use is regulated by the organization.

Pradhan (1989) also treats water as community property. According to him, an organization is designed for acquisition of water, mobilization of manpower and local resources to operate and maintain the system, distribution of water in equi-table basis in an irrigation system.

Uphoff (1986), considers organizational structure of irrigation organization in the four basic sets of the activities viz. decision-making and planning, resources mobilization and management, communication and coordination and conflict resolution. Further, he adds if all these four sets of activities occur accordingly,

mentioned in their legal provisions of the organization, irrigation organization is formal.

But Ostrom (1990), argues about the prevalence of the appropriation and provision problems in any common property resources. Again she suggests the solution of such problems by individuals of same irrigation system.

3.4 Conceptual Framework

The main elements of good governance in studying irrigation system can be summarized as transparency, decision-making process, programs and activities, access to information, budget, participation, need identification, planning, accountability, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, benefit sharing and corruption. This study was based upon analysis of these elements of conceptual framework and to find present condition of relation between water user's association and beneficiaries in the regime of common property.

| Common Property | → | Irrigation Governance | ← | Good Governance |

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

3.5 Source of Information

According to Baxter and Jack (2008), case can be individual, organization, program, and process that we want to analyze. So, considering the purpose and research questions, in this study Bijayapur Irrigation System was considered as the whole population and WUA and Irrigation Development Division were selected as case and unit of the analysis were members of WUA and bureaucrats of irrigation development division as interaction of these units are purely responsible for the management and governance of the system and their role can make difference in the governance.

Eisenhardt (1989) reveals random selection of cases is neither necessary nor preferable. Purposive sampling techniques as argued by Merriam (1998) has been used in this study. According to Crabtree and Miller (1992), a sample size of six to eight can be used for homogenous samples. Hence, two cases namely WUA and Irrigation Development Division with 7 units of analysis has been used in this study. WUA – 4 members,   Irrigation Development Division – 3 members (Division Chief, Site engineer and administrator).

3.6 Tools and Procedures of Data Collection

To gather necessary information, both primary and secondary data collection methods have been used. Primary information has been collected from WUA members and Irrigation Division using open interview technique considering

the purpose and research questions of the study. Interview schedule was prepared with open guiding questions which have been translated in the local language (Nepali) to increase the credibility.

3.7 Data Analysis

Collected data were transcribed and codified using Excel spread sheet. These data were edited to detect error during which confusing and ambiguous data were removed from the list of analysis. Immediately field transcribng and editing were done to minimize error. All data obtained from primary and secondary sources were arranged in logical and concise order and explained in detail using qualitative measures.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Good Governance in Bijayapur Irrigation System

The fundamentals of the membership in WUA is land ownership and permanent residence in the command area. The discussion further revealed that there was prevalence of *Jimidari*[5] System in the study area before the commencement of Lands Act 1964. Jimidari system is by and large related with land revenue collection, In Jimidari System, a large area of the land was given to a person as Birta (tax-free-land) and people residing on such land were collectively ordered by the owner (Jimidar). Such birta holders were also equipped with administrative and judicial rights over the command area. The rules and procedures of the BIS were guided and ruled by such Birta holders previously. Furthermore, their interest in irrigation management directly relates with the revenue collection from those cultivated lands.

After the promulgation of Irrigation Policy 1993, as per national campaign of WUA formation in Agency Managed Irrigation System (AMIS) in order to reduce the operation and maintenance liability of the government, District Irrigation Office (DIO) Kaski had initiated to form the WUA in Bijayapur Irrigation System. Now, the rules, regulations and constitutions were made under the consensus of the WUA Assembly. It is also called as general assembly. The meeting of general assembly is organized generally once in a year. The constitution identified that such assembly is responsible for the formulation of the policies/regulations, approval of annual income and expenditure, annual plans and programs, election of chairperson and other executive members, making the decision on the issues or agenda raised, evaluation of the previous year's plans and policy implementation etc. Furthermore, the general assembly also acts as the guide to the executive committee for the physical development,

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[5]The Lands Act, 1964 stated Jimidari as a system of collecting the revenue under the law and depositing, or causing to be deposited, such revenue with Government of Nepal, by making agent in different names including the *Kipat* system.

discussion on financial auditing (report). This also guides the preparation of the long-term plan, formulates the necessary amendments in the constitution. As the general assembly is formed by the participation of the water users, it is accountable to-wards all water users and is also transparent and predictable.

The general assembly forms the executive committee containing 11 members. The executive members are selected from among the general members of WUA by using the sovereign right of users. Such executive committee is accountable to both the general assembly and water users as well. The formation of executive committee is inclusive, transparent, and predictable and follows the rule of the law. This committee has the basic functions of dealing with the day-to-day functions of the organization on behalf of the water users. The constitution has mandatory provision of including at least 2 female members which also has certain quota basis for each branch based on the proportion that ensures the representation from each branch canals. This committee remains for 2 years and can be again elected from the assembly. Water users hold the right to ask questions related to canal maintenance, water distribution, resource collection and mobilization and office management. All seven units of analysis agreed doubtlessly that the representatives of WUA are accountable towards the farmers.

The major functions of the executive committee are to use the directives and decisions made by the assembly, implement the policies and plans passed, responsible for the distribution of water on the basis of equity among the water users, appoint *Dhalpa*[6] and *Katwal*[7], prepare programs, progress and financial reports. Not limited to what has been stated earlier, it also has the mandate to organize the sub-committee in each branch level for the decentralization of the power and authority and rights and also to identify the issue or problems at the local level and solve them. All these activities are carried out transparently, according to executive members. The transparency in BIS is maintained by keeping all activities open to the concerned public or organizational stakeholders. Transparency is also maintained during the election procedure of the executive members and their terms and conditions. All seven units of analysis agreed that BIS is transparent as guaranteed by the constitution of WUA.

WUA also consists of ranked committees like assembly, main, branch, sub-branch committees etc. So, the transfer of rights and useful power based on the condition and need is required. The transfer is carried out from assembly to sub-branch committees successively. WUA is an autonomous organization

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[6]*Dhalpa* or water guard is called locally for the person appointed with responsibility for operation of irrigation system or canals.

[7]*Katwal* (the messenger) is the person who is responsible to transfer and circulate the information (message) to public (water users) related to operation, maintenance and management of irrigation system.

within the command area ruled by the elected representatives of the farmers and has the independent right to make policies, rules and implement them within the command area for the operation, management, maintenance and development of the irrigation system. It helped to decide in the favour of and benefit of the local concerned stakeholders. It also helped to solve the local level conflict that used to arise during the distribution of the water for irrigation. All units of analysis equally agree on the proper practice of decentralization in BIS.

The meeting of the executive committee is held on a regular basis and all the agenda and decisions are recorded properly in the minutes which latter should be signed by all the members present during discussion and decision making time. The main essence of this is that the decision is made on a consensus basis not by the majority, as practised till date. This ensures the proper participation and accountability of the committee members. Such process and procedures lead to the predictability in WUA. Predictability in WUA means the condition in which executive members perform their duties and responsibilities based on the objective, policy, rules and act in the same way in their behavior, attitude and action. It helps to guarantee the policy, rules and procedures of WUA are in the users' benefit and also helps to ensure that the organization does not discriminate among the users and treats all in equity and justice. All four units of analysis of WUA agreed that predictability is present in BIS but units of analysis from irrigation development office disagreed on this fact, according to them, sometimes, their activities cannot be predicted that might be aroused due to some break in the communication channels. Apparently, the practice of equity seems lacking, as per discussion, but all units of analysis strongly believe that there is an "increasing trend of practice of equity" in BIS during recent times.

According to the constitutional provisional, the chairman asks the secretary (member secretary) to call the meeting of the executive committee and general assembly when required. The constitutional provision of the Chairman, Vice-chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and members helps to designate the proper role of each member to implement on the basis of the characters of good governance.

The constitution of the WUA acts as the major source of rule of law for WUA on which the rights and duties of each member is described and preserved. It de-limits the members of the WUA to conduct and conduct activities within the legal boundary and procedures where an individual is neglected by his/her personal power and is bound by the legal provisions. The rule of the law has been, according to WUA president, established by each members of the WUA. For this, each member identifies whether the required legal provision exists or not in the constitution and bylaw and act for its proper implementation, if it exists. During discussions, all units equally agreed and expressed that there is presence of rule of law in BIS.

The sub-committee represents the members only from the branch-canal command area. These committees are mainly formed for dispute resolution, water distribution and implementation of the decisions, policies, rules and regulations formed. These committees are accountable to both the main committee and water users. The main committee is accountable to both water users and the as-sembly.

The participation in the WUA plays a very important role in irrigation governance which includes active participation in planning, decision making, policy formation, management, supervision and monitoring and evaluation. This has been maintained by the formation of general assembly, WUA main committee, branch committees and sub-branch committees etc. According to the president of WUA of BIS, there is inclusive and active participation of WUA in each and every aspect. This fact has been partially agreed upon by other units of analysis of BIS.

Besides of such committees, there is the existence of *tole samitis* (committee) which are formed for better decentralization. The information is conveyed from the main committee with the help of the *katwal*. In short, there is the presence of all the characters of good governance in BIS. The complete organizational chart is given in Figure 1 below:
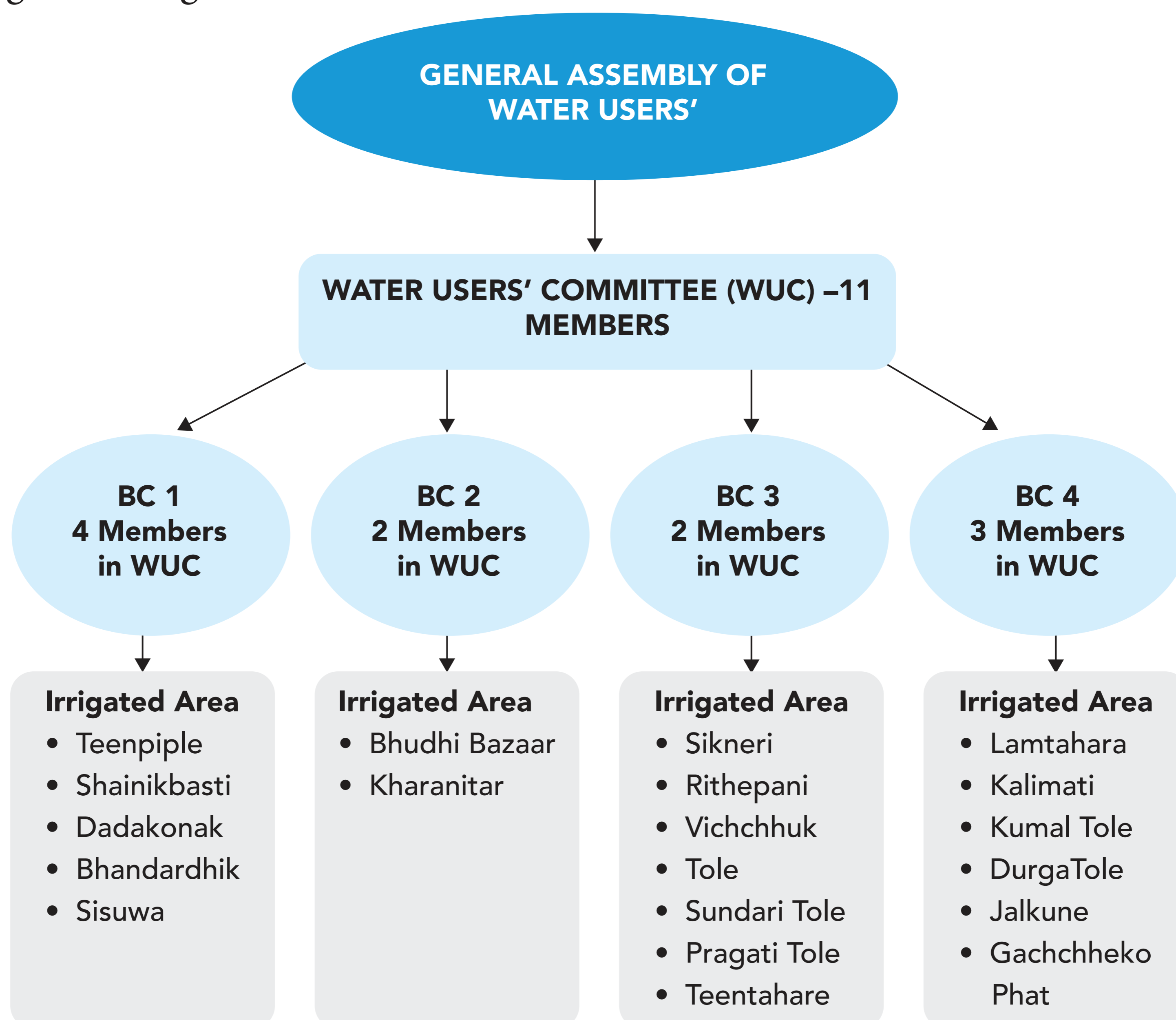
Figure 1: Organizational Structure of WUC

4.2 Challenges Faced by WUA

4.2.1 Autonomy

Water Resources Act (1992) defines water users' association as an autonomous and corporate body having perpetual succession. The constitution of WUA of BIS also supports it as WUA having autonomy. The autonomy of WUA, in this study, has been expressed in terms of political economy and economic autonomy. The discussion with members of WUA and executives of irrigation development division revealed that WUA of BIS carries political autonomy whereas it does not entertain economic autonomy.

The WUA is autonomous for drafting or amending the constitution, making rules, operation and maintenance of the canal and distribution of the water as well. It is independent to nominate / elect members in its executive committee. Furthermore, it enjoys autonomy for making sub-committees, deploy *Dhalpa* and *Katwal.*

From the economic point of view, WUA is not completely autonomous. It has the right for determining and levying the Irrigation Service Fee (ISF) among the users. But it does not deserve the right to make complete budgeting required annually for the operation and maintenance of the canal.

The members of the WUA express they do not enjoy economic autonomy as the annual budgeting and planning is carried out by the division and budget is allocated according to its system. Similarly, the remuneration cost of Dhalpa and Katwal is also the sole responsibility of the division. They only have right to determine and levy the ISF. But, on other hand, the chief of division denies it completely. According to him, WUA is economically autonomous. It enjoys au-tonomy for the collection of revenue (ISF) too but their constraint is WUA is not self-sustainable and it requires huge chunk (around 90% of total annual budget) of annual budget as a grant from Irrigation Department. Because of this, WUA enjoys partial autonomy.

4.2.2 Revenue Collection (ISF)

The only source of revenue, except government grant, for annual budgeting of the WUA of BIS is levy or Irrigation Service Fee. The ISF part is the crux of the issue for the functioning of WUA. This system was supported by the Irrigation Department for a long time and still is supported by the Irrigation Department. During Irrigation Management Transfer (IMT), WUA was strengthened. However, as mentioned in this paper earlier, that an ideal WUA has to be self-regulating, self-governing and self-supporting. To a greater extent, self-regulating and self-governing aspects were ensured. However, it

absolutely failed in the self-supporting aspect. The annual rate of ISF at present is only NRs. 40 per *ropani* (i.e. NRs. 800 per hectare) which seems to be very low. As per the document, total irrigated land (command area) of BIS is 1280 hectare. With this area at 800 rupees, the ISF collection has to be 10,24,000 rupees per year. It is reported that they can collect only 200,000. It is only 20% of the potential collection. The chairman and vice-chairman of the WUA jointly claim that ISF, also called *panipot*[8], collected annually in the present time is around Rs. 2,00,000 only whereas its annual budget required for operation and maintenance is around Rs. 50,00,000.

The total ISF collected is distributed into four sections. 30% of ISF is provided to the person who collects the ISF, 10% is reserved for operation cost of WUA office, 10% is paid as government tax and remaining 50% is allocated for the operation and maintenance of the respective branch committee from where the ISF is collected. So, there is only Rs.100,000 remaining for O&M (78rupees / hectare). However, the O&M amount expected is 50,000,00. This will be 3906 rupees /hectare. However, this will is one of the highest O&M cost of an irrigation system, it seems obvious, as per both members of WUA and irrigation de-velopment division, about 50% of the annual budget is required for regular maintenance of the short section of the main canal where regular destruction occurs due to landslides during the monsoon (locally called Rato Pairo) because of its soil and geographic structure.

WUA members collectively claim, which has also been validated by chief of the Irrigation Division, that ISF collection is becoming more complicated in recent times. They agreed that there has no other source of revenue other than government grants and ISF. Most of the urban irrigated land, including nearby Pokhara-Kathmandu highway, is fragmented by land plotting for residential purposes. Because of this, it is difficult to identify the landowners. If the landowners are identified, then mostly either it is found to be leased to second party or they claim they are not using water for irrigation purposes. Similarly, the remoteness of the landowners also adds to the constraint in irrigation service fee collection.

4.2.3 Participation

Participation of the users is another challenge of WUA. The number of users participating in the maintenance of the system decreased significantly because of many reasons. This might be due to the involvement of the user's family members in income generation alternatives other than agriculture. The understanding

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[8]Panipot is irrigation service fee levied for irrigation facility.

of the users that the maintenance of the system is the responsibility of the government not theirs is another reason for low participation. Similarly, users of head regions get irrigation water very easily and participate less in maintenance (*jhara*[9], called locally).

Similarly, members of WUA work voluntarily and they do not receive any allowances in regular meetings. Such members are mostly involved in other professions like government or private jobs. Because of such, it is difficult to allocate time for involvement in planning, design and implementation of the policies. This is also causing lack of monitoring of ISF resulting in low revenue generation.

4.2.4 Policy

The interaction with members of WUA and Irrigation Development Division clearly revealed that the challenges are also posed due to unclear policies related to water use. Fragmented policies in different acts and laws make irrigation governance complicated. The recent restructuring of state into three levels of governments (federal, provincial and local) also increases the challenge towards irrigation governance. The Constitution of Nepal 2015 has clearly mentioned the role of provincial government in irrigation but related legal provisions are yet to be framed. This is further causing the WUA legal constraints for practising autonomy.

4.2.5 Other Challenges

WUA members also have been facing many technical and managerial challenges for the governance of BIS. The major trouble is faced during the maintenance of the canals. As per field observations and discussions with the stakeholders, it was found that a portion, 120m, of the main canal requires regular annual maintenance because of the landslide caused due to red soil and unresolved ge-ographic structural problem. They locally called it as *Rato Pahiro*. According to both WUA and Irrigation Development Division, about 50% of the annual budget is required for regular maintenance of that short section of the main canal.

Landowners sell their land, mostly in urban areas, to second parties without paying due ISF to WUA. The record of due amount, as claimed by WUA members, is neither found in Pohara-Lekhnath metropolitan city, nor in respective ward offices and not even in the land revenue office. Such poor record system also caused the landowners to disregard their obligation to pay *panipot*.

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[9]Jhara is labor contribution from each households using irrigation facility during irrigation system maintenance.

They stated many other minor challenges related to technical and structural issues which are not discussed in this section as per the purpose of the study.

5. Solutions Identified

Taking consideration of the above mentioned challenges, the solution of such, through discussions with WUA and Irrigation Division, can be suggested as structural, non-structural and cooperative model of Irrigation System Management.

5.1 Structural

According to WUA and Irrigation Division, annually 20,00,000 to 25,00,000 budget is required for the maintenance of the *rato pahiro*. A permanent solution to this could be RCC or steel suspension canal instead of concrete canal through government intervention in due consultation with Irrigation Division and WUA is best structural solution. This helps to save a huge chunk of the budget that can be used for the expansion of the command area and proper maintenance of the system in the places required. Alternatively, it also helps to reduce the O&M cost/hectare.

5.2 Non-structural

In non-structural solution, there are two different versions of the solutions. WUA members prefer for the provision of *panipot* similar to land tax. They argue that while transferring the ownership of land by land registration system, if the clearance of panipot is also confirmed and if found not cleared, transfer is kept pending, then it will be easier to collect ISF which helps to increase the revenue. However, this solution increases the WUA's income but does not offer the economic autonomy of the WUA.

The more convincing solution is offered by Mr. Tulasi Ram Bhattarai, former Chief of the Irrigation Development Division, Kaski. According to him, WUA should run itself on a co-operative model. He claims that this provides them to gain economic autonomy. The plan he is interested in initiating is described in the sub-section below.

5.3 Cooperative Model

First of all, the irrigation service fee should not be based on land area cover. It should be linked with the volume of water used. This ultimately helps to increase ISF revenue. The relation of ISF with volume should be found and implemented. This also helps to levy *panipot* to the users using water for non-

irrigation purpose like in building construction. He further adds, after this the provision of *panipot* similar to land tax can also be planned and implemented to assure 100% ISF generation from the command area. He said that the command area contains 20,000 ropanis (1280 hectares) of land. If Rs. 5000 per *ropani* is collected from each user as initial share, it will be Rs. 10,00,00,000. This will be enough amount to make WUA economically autonomous. This capital can be used to operate a cooperative within the command area. Then agriculture equipment and machinery like tractor, harvester etc can be purchased by the co-operative. Such equipment and machines can be leased to members at a nominal fixed rate to the users. The barren land left by users due to any reasons can be cultivated by the cooperative paying nominal fee to the owner. This ultimately helps to increase agriculture production. The problem of market can be solved by the Irrigation Development Division by creating a market chain. The cooperative also increases the ownership of the users. He further adds, the state or province should make joint project of hydropower and irrigation agreement for the existing system or any new system.

6. Conclusion

Irrigation is one of the important factors affecting the agricultural production. This is also directly related with food security, GDP, sustainability, health etc. Good governance of irrigation system directly affects the functioning of the irrigation system. Bijayapur Irrigation System has a long history and passed by several interventions from the Government of Nepal and other development partners. This is mixed model of FMIS and AMIS which can be a model irrigation system of the middle hills. Irrigation water cannot be considered as private/commercial property. Rather it can be considered as common property re-source. The CPR characteristics of irrigation water make governance and man-agement of the system more challenging and complex. However, the elements of good governance has been sufficiently practised in BIS, it is facing several challenges due to which it is not actually acting as an autonomous organization. The challenges faced by WUA can be resolved either locally by the proactive initiation of WUA itself or by the national or provincial policy level intervention. If the current model/principle of Irrigation Management Transfer (IMT) can be changed into cooperative model, it can become completely autonomous and self-sustainable.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author hereby declares having no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper in printed or online form.

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Inclusion of Women in the Bangladesh Police Service: Institutional Concurrence or Professional Compromise?

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Abstract

Only a couple of years back, we hailed the propitious news of 21 gallant female officers being awarded with 'Bangladesh Police Women Award 2017'. How wonderful it felt to witness women accomplish and triumph in a profession which was and still is considered the male domain. People were awestruck and were left to discuss the marvelous success they had achieved. The satisfaction of patting their backs and chanting the mantra of women employment and empowerment nevertheless draws a sigh, if we once look at the numerous challenges and the bumpy road these women had to tread on their journey to success. Even though women were encouraged and advised to take up careers that were considered "female-friendly", for instance, teaching, nursing and medicine However, with time, women have come out from that defined character, stood beside them in times of dire need and proved otherwise. They proved that, given the opportunity and platform, women can excel in areas that are thought to be inappropriate and improper for them. This paper therefore is an attempt to explore the challenges faced by the female police officers in Bangladesh Police, a profession very new to Bangladeshi women and a road less taken by them. The study is based on rigorous content analysis. The available primary and secondary sources were analyzed and few mid-level female police officers were interviewed through the snowball method. The paper finds that the female officers face many challenges like social barriers, cultural dilemma, and male domination, politicization and lack of basic workplace facilities.

Keywords: *Inclusion, Women, Bangladesh Police, Institution, Professionalism.*

1. Introduction

The inclusion of women police officers is quite a recent phenomenon in Bangladesh. The first female officers to be appointed in the Bangladesh Police was in 1974 when 14 female officers were appointed to the Special Branch in the

non-cadre rank. In recent years, this number has gone up showing promising careers of women in police, although studies suggest that the number is still not enough. As of March 2018, the number of women employed in the Bangladesh police force was 11,767. Out of them 80% i.e., 9247 female officers were recruited in the last nine and a half years (BSS, Dhaka 2018). Yet, it is upsetting that the female police, however, still represent only 6.66 per cent of the total police force that consists of 198, 653 police (BSS, Dhaka 2018).

Twenty-one gallant female officers were awarded with the 'Bangladesh Policewomen Award' in 2017, and it was surreal to witness such accomplishment and triumph in a profession which was and still is considered the male domain. People were awestruck and were left to discuss their marvelous success. The satisfaction of patting their backs and chanting the mantra of women employment and empowerment nevertheless draws a sigh, if we once look at the numerous challenges and the bumpy road these women had to tread on their journey to success.

This paper therefore is an attempt to explore the challenges faced by the female police officers in Bangladesh Police, a profession still quite new to Bangladeshi women and a road less taken by them. The paper sought to understand whether and how the police as an institution has adapted and accommodated the female officers not only theoretically but also practically. The paper looks into the various aspects of policing as a profession and as an institution and how women are thriving, with or without institutional compliance and cooperation.

2. Methodology

This article attempts to use the concept of decoupling to understand the discrepancies between policies and practices in the Police and where the policies that are apparently non-discriminative for all the officers apply to the newer addition of female officers to a rather male-centered profession.

The study is based on rigorous content analysis. The available primary and secondary sources were analyzed, and few mid-level female police officers were interviewed through the snowball method and the findings were analyzed and used to understand the policy stand regarding the women police personnel in the Bangladesh Police.

3. Objective of the Study

This study intends to look at the changes brought about, and the changes required to institutionalize the paradigm shift of the police profession in a country like Bangladesh, with the inclusion of female officers. The study investigates the

different steps and initiatives taken by the institution ever since female officers joined the service, so as to analyze if the problems that are stated by the female officers are addressed and if so, to what extent. The paper also looks into the process of this incorporation and also the adjustments and amendments in the practice of the institution as well as to find out if and how inclusion has changed the character of the Bangladesh Police (in rank and file), organization (organization culture, quota for women in top positions, non-discrimination in terms of placements in key positions), challenges and tensions (from women's perspective, and service delivery).

4. Policing Profession for Bangladeshi Women: An Overview

Because of the pre-conceived notion on the fragile, delicate and tender nature, the ancient society gave women the role of a caregiver, comforter and companion. Even though women were encouraged and advised to take up careers that were considered "female-friendly", for instance, teaching, nursing and medicine, they have come out from that defined character, stood beside men in times of dire need and proved otherwise. They proved that, given the opportunity and platform, women can excel in areas that are thought to be inappropriate and improper for them. Police service is undoubtedly a tough profession and it's only natural for a society like ours to prevent its women from joining such a force. Surprisingly, they are doing well and gaining reputation. Certainly, the recruitment of women was crucial for the institution, in various ways such as role concerning law enforcement, patrolling, attending women detainees, conducting body search of women, investigations etc. Nevertheless, an institution such as the police force must have undergone normative, cultural and functional alterations to combine and cope with the recruitment of women or so we can only assume.

Administered directly under the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Bangladesh police is the key law enforcement institution of the country, which is entailed with the grave responsibility of maintaining peace, order and stability in the country. The head of the Bangladesh Police is the Inspector General of Police (IGP), under whose command Bangladesh Police is divided into as many as 25 different branches. The recruitment in the Bangladesh Police Service can differ based on what designation one is applying for. There is also a provision for direct entry. Recruitment is conducted in the following three tiers:

- In the rank of Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP)
- In the rank of Sub-Inspector (SI) or Sergeant
- In the rank of Constable

For the rank of the Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) applicants who qualify in the extremely challenging and competitive Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examination and opt for Police cadre are appointed. After the appointment, they must undergo a year long training at the Bangladesh Police Academy as Probationary ASPs. Next, they have to undergo a six month orientation as a probationer at the district level, after which they are finally receive appointment as full-fledged ASPs in different units.

For the rest of the two ranks, namely Sub-Inspectors and Sergeants, candidates are selected and appointment made centrally by the Police headquarters. Sub-inspectors have to pass through a rigorous one-year-long training in the Bangladesh Police Academy as Outside Cadet Sub-Inspectors, while Sergeants undergo a six-month-long training course with the rank of Probationary Sergeant. The lowest tier of the service is Constable, who are recruited at the district level. Before joining the service and working in the field level, they are given a six-month-long training in the Police Training Center.

Considering how the South Asian culture and society works, the rather late entry of women in the police service is understandable. Women first joined Bangladesh Police in 1974, when fourteen women police officers were appointed to the Special Branch, of whom, seven were at the rank of Sub-Inspector, and the rest were constables (Ahmed, 2019). It took another two years for female uniformed police officers to be recruited and it was in 1976 that fifteen women officers joined the Dhaka Metropolitan Police. And after ten years, in 1988, it was not a surprise to see only one serving woman officer as Assistant Superintendent of Police who made it through 6th Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examination (Ahmed, 2019). It was in 1988, when four women joined the service through the 7th Bangladesh Civil Service Examination, and the number rose to a simple 8 in 1999 and they were appointed through the 18th Bangladesh Civil Service examination (Ahmed, 2019). A breakthrough was achieved on 18th May, 2009 when Hosne Ara Begum was appointed as chief officer of a police division in the capital Dhaka, for the first time in the history of Bangladesh (Gomes, 2009). Another milestone was achieved when on 21st of June in the year 2011, an all women Armed Police Battalion (APB) was created as the 11th battalion of this force (Ahmed, 2019).

5. Theoretical Framework

The first and foremost condition of change is to accept it. Change is inevitable and hence, to cope with change, it is imperative to take measures and steps that assist in amplifying the positives and the potentials that change has to offer. Institutions are diverse and therefore, Institutionalism comes in different

facets as discussed by authors and researchers. New institutionalism goes much beyond the formal structure and highlights developing views and ideas from a sociological view of institutions, how they interact and how they affect the other institutions in the society. The institutional theory delves into the more resilient aspects of social structure and taking into account the structures, including schemes; rules, norms, and routines that become recognized as authoritative guidelines for social behavior (Scott, 2005).

Organizations often adopt policies or adhere to policies that are well beyond their implementable capacities. In any organization, the structural elements are bridged together even though there remain institutional flaws where violation of rules, lack of implementable decisions, uncertainty and problematic efficiency and lack of co ordination co exists (Meyer and Rowan, 1977:343). Institutions often adopt policies as a pretense to reach up to the external expectations or requirements, but hardly implement those within the organization and the practice is otherwise called Decoupling. (Meyer and Rowan, 1977) Such policies are mostly symbolic ones to show that the expectations or requirements regarding the organization are met (MacLean, Behnam, 2010). Decoupling allows institutions to please those who they are answerable and accountable to, it allows organizations to content stakeholders and all of that without jeopardizing internal dynamics.

In a world where change is inevitable, institutions are expected to change their structures, renovate their practices and promulgate new policies in order to adjust and accommodate the change. However, this is when decoupling becomes most relevant as to understand where those policies undertaken in order to address the global changing environment and adapt to the competition are actually implemented or just kept limited to the boundaries of the hard-bound policy books.

6. Bound by the Badge but Bend by the Barriers: Women Police and their plight

The initiative of creating employment opportunities for women in different sectors regardless of existing taboos is laudable. The Government of Bangladesh deserves praise for its sincere efforts to empower women and open the doors that were so far closed. Having said that, it is also important to create an environment where working in such professions is comfortable. For basic humanitarian causes, a congenial environment is significant.

In our interview with some of the promising young female police officers of the country, we were enlightened by their experience and their journey. They shared

their problems, which are either untold or unheard of. Some of these problems were similar to the ones that were derived from the excellent survey work on female police officers by the Commonwealth Human Rights Commission. Some basic problems faced by the women police are:

6.1 Training and Learning

Bangladesh Police has a six-month-long training which is conducted at the Bangladesh Police Academy, at Sarda in Rajshahi, where male and female police officers go through rigorous physical and tactical training. The training has been modeled as the same for both genders ensuring no discrimination on any ground. While we can look into this in a positive perspective of treating a female officer on equal and similar grounds as that of her counterpart men, there is also no denial of the fact that her biological construct demands some exemptions. The training at Sarda is indeed a very competitive and physically challenging which the girls are passing out with flying colors. Having said this, it is undeniable that menstruation can be very uncomfortable and unavoidable.

One of the respondents noted that- *"During menstruation women feel comfortable with cotton dark color cloth but during training, we have to wear a uniform that makes me hesitant"*

It has come to be known that female officers are given a 3-day exemption from training for the menstruation cycle. But respondents opined that, female bodies do not act on mathematical terms and hence often times 3 days is not enough. According to respondents, the level of physical strain and pressure that one has to undergo during the training might cause health hazards. Then comes the other aspects of training. It was pointed out that, the institution fails to provide other necessary training which is as much important for the police career as physical and tactical training. Lack of training on computer, driving and English language which are considered basics of learning keeps most female officers in a major disadvantage. Most of the junior level women officers cannot operate the computer due to the lack of computer training. To be selected for the United Nations mission an officer must be proficient in English. But, unfortunately, most of the junior lady police do not speak English which becomes a hurdle for better posting and training and UN missions.

6.2 Less Trust on Women Police

Trust is an important issue of governance, especially in Bangladesh Police. There is a crisis of trust on the women police. Most of the senior officers are not confident on the capacity and intelligence of the women police. Male senior officers suspect that the lady officers are unable to handle any heinous crime.

As a result, they are given duty on handling women criminals, escorting VIPs, writing a general diary. But the scenario is different for women cadre offices because they are given field duty without gender biases. One of the respondents ranking ASP said: "We have to prove our capacity to be trusted." There is another aspect that women are not given training on crime management and investigation due to the lack of confidence on them.

While visiting one of our respondents for the interview, we came across an interesting fact that our respondent was the first-ever posted female officer in the post that she currently held. That post is the security in charge of the Secretariat which is a very critical and crucial one. On the one hand, this is inspiring and on the other, it is alarming! In a survey by the Police Reforms Program (PRP) in 2011, 55% of male police officers said that women police officers were not as effective as their male counterparts in preventing crime, and almost 40% felt they were not as effective at investigating the crime. About 70% of the women police officers claimed that the junior male officers are not loyal to them even they do not respect senior women officers.

6.3 Denying Leadership Positions, Promotions and Critical Postings

This problem was identified by the Commonwealth Survey as well as shared by our respondents. The female police officers have come to believe that, it is because of some inherent physical traits and limitations that women officers are not promoted duly. The female officers are avoided when it comes to leadership and strategic positions and postings. Only a handful of female officers make it to the top and to postings that are lucrative in the service. Our respondents opined that less deserving male colleagues and even juniors are handed over position instead of considering equally qualified and serving females officials. Posting of women officer in a backward place makes the female police officer more vulnerable. Most of the time women officers are not posted in Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) because the pressure of duty in DMP is more than in any other police station. A respondent stated that it was because there was scope of corruption in DMP, so male officers didn't want to miss the opportunity of posting in the DMP.

And for the sake of better postings, political connections, networking and liaison are common amongst the male police officers. Female officers who are not apt in such skills are deprived and denied of rightful postings and promotions. The problem of separate barracks is another notable one. Most of the police stations have no separate barracks, which is why the postings of female police are restricted to certain areas and posts. Despite qualifying, they are often deprived of posts that fit their skills and career goals because of the accommodation

problem. For women who seek postings in locations without women's barracks, they often have to rent their accommodation, which is greatly burdensome on a small salary. (Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative 2015).

6.4 Shocking Cases of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a malice of a male-dominated society. As opined by a respondent of the police service, cases of sexual harassment occur mostly in the lower tier of the service, amongst the constables. More than 10% of constables faced sexual harassment. A common form of harassment is that male police personnel spreading rumors to defame the women police. Even some Officers-in-Charge of police stations indulge in spreading rumors. There are malpractices of male police personnel sending inappropriate messages to female colleagues repeatedly and passing comments on the uniform of the female officers. It strikes a major question of how poorly police as an institution is failing to institutionalize the inclusion of female officers. One cadre officer quoted *"Sexual harassment is less in the cadres. Senior cadres are respected. Only cadre level officers command respect"*. She added that uniform gives her more security. She never does any duty without wearing the uniform because uniform makes her more secure when she is in the office or field duty. While the entire country looks up to the police to bring to justice sexual offenders, it is indeed shocking that female constables are themselves victims of it.

7. Pressure of Balancing Family and Work: Challenge of Balancing Family Obligation and Work

A women's role as a mother wife and daughter is paramount but not particularly limited to these, However, in a tough profession like the police, the women are prepared as officers from the very first day of their training. They are indoctrinated with the belief that they are officers serving the nation and in charge of its law and order and there is no gender to this profession. Having said that, it is fruitless to deny that women have other gender roles as well, which leads to expectations and obligations towards family and friends. These often create conflicting situations for female personnel while maintaining professional requirements and family responsibilities.

Different postings from time to time compel police officers to move around with family, which in the case of female officers is challenging as husbands seldom want to leave their job and follow the wives to her posting. It is not just a conjugal issue but also a social stigma. which is why policies related to similar postings with spouses and other government service has made co-location of the spouse as relevant and required.

7.1 Over Duty (more than 8 hours)

According to Section 22 of the Police Act of 1861, it states that every police officer shall be considered to be always on duty. But the majority of Inspectors (83.3%) and Sub-Inspectors (59.5%) said they felt it was hard to be on duty all the time. In Dhaka, 100% of the Inspectors, 84.6% of Sub-Inspectors and 66.7% of Assistant Sub-Inspectors felt it was hard to be on duty all the time (Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative 2015). Most of women police from all ranks work more than 12 hours per shift. The difficulties of working long hours and often being uncertain about the length of shifts create problems for balancing life for women police. Hardships increase with limited infrastructural facilities like lack of toilets/rest and prayer space, vehicles and transport.

7.2 Inadequacy of Basic Facilities

Most police stations lack the basics of separate washrooms, restrooms, prayer rooms, transport and accommodation. In the police force, respondents opined that problems regarding these basic facilities are acute in the lower tier of the service. A female officer is provided with separate washroom, prayer room, and transport for her duty. But unfortunately, the lower tier female police, such as constables cannot avail such facilities. They are rarely seen to have separate transport facilities and have to share with male police constables in crowded vehicles like a minibus or Leguna*.

Discrimination is seen in the issue of motorbikes for female police to perform her duty whereas a similarly ranked male officer is allocated motorbike. Female constables and personnel of similar ranks fail to find proper bathroom, restrooms and prayer rooms in their duty areas, and at many times, share barracks with male police. The separate prayer rooms which is religiously mandatory is absent in most of the police stations.

In addition, another crying need of the female police officers is the absence of day care facilities. The provision of day care not only allows an officer to provide care for her child while working but also boosts the level and sincerity towards work, because then she can solely be involved in her work and not have worries about her babies. At present, in Bangladesh, many government and private institutions have day care facilities.

It should be noted that, while Bangladesh Secretariat has a Day Care Centre, the headquarters of Bangladesh police surprisingly has no Day Care Centre - one of the senior women police officer regrets.

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*Local term for a public transport converted form a small pickup

7.3 Lack of Gender and Anti-discrimination Policy

So far, the Bangladesh police force has not developed any comprehensive gender policy for the female officers. Though the various problems associated with female officers and those that are faced by them in service had surfaced long before, the authority turned a blind eye to those for quite a long time. It is now that gender policy is in the drafting phase.

8. Initiatives taken by the Bangladesh Police at the Institutional Level

One of the striking aspects that came out from the study is the unavailability of any particular policy paper for institutionalizing female police officers into the system. There is no separate policy guideline as to how the Bangladesh Police should attend to the rather new and different problems and issues should there be any, with regard to women officers on duty. A hard and fast policy guide at an institutional level is required to motivate the female officers and make them aware of their duties, as well as the benefits and privileges they can avail due to their gender role and how the Bangladesh Police should ensure equal participation and involvement of female police officers in the professional arena. However, even though a defined and designated guideline and policy stand is missing in pen and paper, instances and examples showed that the police as an institution is very much eager and sincere in institutionalizing this recently developed paradigm shift of recruiting female police officers into the system. Some of those points have been discussed in this paper. Formation of the Bangladesh Police Women's Network (BPWN) and International Association of Women Police (IAWP) are commendable steps towards giving female police officers a proper network. Many of the institutional level commitments are being materialized through the active involvement of these organizations. The support and motivation of the Bangladesh Police towards these networks show how it is involved in the change process.

The BPWN helpline network has opened a new platform for the female police officers. This helpline is active to coordinate and strengthen the network among women field level police. The BPWN, in association and support of the Bangladesh Police, arrange different seminars and training sessions on the gender issue, computer, driving, English speaking in order to develop the professional skills of Bangladesh female police force. The recent initiatives of organizing the women police award 2016 and 2017 are also commendable steps to motivate more women to join the force. The Bangladesh Police, in order to make its female officers prepared to compete with their male colleagues, have recently sent few 0f them to India for commando training. This shows the institution's sincerity and initiative to make its female police officers more competent and capable.

Whereas previously, the female officers were only posted in the cities and mostly for desk jobs, the practice is gradually diminishing.

The Bangladesh Police initially restrained from giving tough and risky assignments to its female officers. But to make them more efficient officers and to treat them equally, two contingents of women police were sent to UN Peacekeeping Mission. Day care facilities being one of the biggest concerns of female officers, the government had tried to incorporate this facility at the Rajarbagh Police Line. DIG Fatema Begum in her interview to one of the national newspapers, opined that even though the existing infrastructure was not favorable for women to a great extent, despite the hurdles, female officers are working efficiently alongside their male colleagues (Mizan, 2017).

Despite the anarchic situation in the country, women police were deployed in containing violence on streets side by side with males, and they were performing their duties with competence. This on the one hand upholds the courage of our female officers and on the other shows the institution's growing trust on female police officers to tackle and face emergency situations. However, several high female police officials said though now over 5,000 women police were working in the force, most of them were being posted in metropolitan areas as infrastructures in police stations outside the metropolitans were hardly suitable for women police (Rahman. M.,2013).

9. Analysis and Discussion

The above-mentioned problems or obstacles are the daily occurrences for a female police officer in our country. Female police officers are facing and fighting these hurdles every day and even so, they seldom speak about it. Or, there is very little discussion or noise heard in the outside world. But why is it so? Women have strived and fought hard to make their places in professions which were previously closed to them. Therefore, they often are not vocal about their problems and challenges lest they are labeled unfit and incompetent. Whether or not, these hurdles are spoken about, these are very much existent and calls for proper attention and action.

Now, the first and foremost question that comes to mind is, whether the institution is concurrent on this issue, whether Bangladesh Police is actively trying to address and mitigate these problems? Or, it is the female police officers who are rather heading towards a professional compromise? The major formula for an institution to function efficiently is to make its personnel, regardless of gender, feel comfortable with their position and stand in the institution itself. Decoupling as defined earlier should not be a superficial solution, however, in

many cases it is evident that the police as an institution is decoupling to create an image of non-discriminative and progressive one, whereas there remain several discrepancies between the policies and practices. It falls on the institution to create a platform so that those who belong to it feel the sense of belongingness and are confident about the role they play. The police as an institution should undertake policies that address the problems of its female officers and practice those policies sincerely.

The lack of institutional concurrence and cooperation is making the female officers feel insecure, and hence, there arises a concern of professional compromise amongst many female officers. The uncomfortable yet unavoidable realization of "since this has been a man's job for quite a while, I should also perform equally and exactly the same so as not to give away my weakness" is getting embedded in the minds of many promising female officers. Because a man is doing it, hence I must do it. This is what drives the motivation of a female officer to undertake risks and avoid debacle, to face inconvenience yet not be called unprofessional, is it yet another step extra that women in every profession take to proves himself deserving and competent? However, there is indeed a significant role that the institution must play to better the working conditions and to avoid discrimination for these young officers. In this regard, the institution has to go through a tussling process. It should reform its practices and add value to the institution itself. Whatever or however gender-sensitive policies are formulated for its personnel, if the institution fails to implement those or keep those as just ornamental pages in a book, the female officers would continue to suffer. Many a times it is seen that institutions undertake policies which are overachieving, overbearing, impractical and over-ambitious, by doing so, such institutions create a facade of ideal scenario whereas, in actual practice, they hardly implement or practice their own constructed polices. This is called decoupling and is one of the glitches of the theory of institutionalism. Now, if we question whether Bangladesh Police service is experiencing the same phenomenon, the answer is quite arbitrary. Bangladesh being a very male-dominated nation because of its traditional norms and culture is still quite liberal about the female participation in few fields like journalism, police, policing and so on. Taking orders and lead from a female superior still bothers Bengali men especially in the rural areas, hence the institution's policy of recruiting women is a big challenge in itself, to add to that, making the institution of police ready for such a massive changes and making it work-friendly and habitable for the female officers also would be a brave doing. While women in our country are still not education-wise and health-wise tough enough, there also remains existing taboos in the society which resist such image of women altogether. Such taboos and stigmas lead to many offences, insolence and indecency against

female officers. These can only be addressed if the police as an institution deal with such situations in a stern manner spreading the word that a police officer is a police officer be it male or female. It falls completely on the institution to infuse the idea amongst the male officers that female officers are their colleagues who stand on equal grounds as them. Moreover, it is also the responsibility of the institution to give female officers enough discretion and power so that they are respected and feared throughout the country and even in the remotest of areas.

Though a complete policy guideline for female officers is still in the drafting phase, the institution is seen to taken various steps like posting women in important positions, posting women in challenging and risky zones and assigning them with significant terms. These show that women in the country are gradually becoming more of a part of a system, which is after all that is deserved from the institution. The provision of sending female officers to the mission is also a sign that the institution is being supportive and trusts their leadership. As far as providing facilities is concerned, the institution has made separate washrooms and restrooms with provision for women officers' *namaz*. But it is also true that these are not sufficient especially in the remote duty areas.

Now the above-mentioned problems are very vivid ones in the life of a female police officer and these problems have cropped up ever since the first day females have been recruited in the service. Nonetheless, the institution is seen to be very casual about meeting these dire needs and necessities of the female officers. Despite these problems being an obstacle to a female officers competency and capabilities, the institution is found to decouple the issue. The police as an institution is found to show its sensitivity towards the female officers, but the question arises as to whether that is only a show. When it comes to taking measures and steps to decrease the hurdles these officers are facing, the institution seems to be reluctant and heedless. This is resulting in a huge compromise on the part of the female officers, a professional compromise that is thereafter limiting their potential. The institution is not concurring to the growing needs and requirements which are becoming even more acute and visible with the increase of female officers and other ranks recruited each year. The number of female police officers is increasing but the institution is not taking sufficient steps to actually accommodate them, assist them and acknowledge them, as a result, professionally the female officers are settling in for however they are treated professionally, which is in fact a matter of deep concern.

10. Concluding Remarks

Twenty years into the new millennium, we are still hung up on the issues of gender bias, gender equality and gender discrimination! Female police officers were very much the need of time, the recruitment of girls into the service, therefore, was not just another fad or "gender equality" agenda, but it was very much a requirement and a necessity for the institution itself. Therefore, the fact that female officers are a part of the system now and they should be treated justly and their perspective and problems are very much the system's own, should be realized at the earliest. Bangladesh Police as an institution therefore should concur and cooperate with the officers and help them thrive. Undoubtedly, there will be new issues and perspectives that will crop up while a progressive change is underway, and the institution should do its best to address and accommodate them in order to enjoy the benefits of change. Otherwise, with an increasing number of female officers entering the service but having to undergo professional compromise because of the institution's lack of empathy and efficiency, the worst sufferer will be the system itself. In order to make the Bangladesh Police function more efficiently and uphold its previous glory and valor, co-existence and cooperation of both male and female officers is the only possible equation.

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Book Review

Gender Mainstreaming in Politics, Administration and Development in South Asia

Istiaq Jamil, Salahuddin M. Aminuzzaman, Syeda Lasna Kabir and M. Mahfuzul Haque (ed)

Krishna Menon

Introduction

Gender Mainstreaming in Politics, Administration and Development in South Asia edited by Ishtiaq Jamil, Salahuddin M. Aminuzzaman, Syeda Lasna Kabir, Mahfuzul Haque and published by Palgrave Macmillan is a book that has all the makings of one of those volumes that is going to be cited in all future writing on the themes of gender mainstreaming and development in South Asia in particular, but also within the larger arena of South Asian politics as well as feminist politics. The book represents the best of South Asian scholarship on the region – in the sense that it is collaborative and seeks to address thematic issues that are while being circumscribed by the nation-state also able to sidestep the frame of the nation state. Politics in South Asia is characterized by an overwhelming presence of the nation-state, this makes the possibility of discerning thematic overlaps and continuities very difficult. It is in this context that a book such as this should be welcomed.

The book has contributions from Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, India and The Maldives and thus has a wide scope and range. As the editors remark in their opening note that gender mainstreaming despite being on the global state since 1995 s part of the Beijing Platform for Action is still beset by a number of problems- both theoretical and empirical in terms of organizational lacks,

implementation of policies and legislations and participation by women – among many others.

The strength of this volume lies in its approach- to look at gender mainstreaming from a policy and governance perspective- all the chapters engage with critical and important aspects of politics and administration-from the vantage point of gender mainstreaming- for instance the chapter on Gender Budgeting by Prof. Aminnuzzman is a very exhaustive study of the policies introduced in Bangladesh in 2008 and yet the author notes that because of the absence of a sound framework of gender analysis there still remain glaring lacunae in allocation and prioritizing of funds.

Yet another notable feature of this book is its ability to span both the national and local levels – Mizanur Rahman and Sangita Dhal both engage with the impact of gender mainstreaming at the micro levels and produce new and significant knowledge about emerging leadership in rural Bangladesh and the possibilities and limitations of empowerement by participating in e-governance in the state of Odisha in India.

Elections, which form the bedrock of politics and government formation in South Asia, is a set processes and institutions that provide to scholars and analysts a very good entry point into understanding the sociological complexities of a given society. Who votes, who does not, why not, how do they vote- these are not mere psephological questions but as Sanjay Kumar's very perceptive analysis demonstrates it shows us about the shifts in power and the nature of social transformation underway in India. R L Muriass draws our attention to the kind of interventions possible in the funding of election processes in response to the commitment to gender mainstreaming. The theme of employment is dealt with by Syeda Kabir as the author examines the proverbial glass ceiling and the glass cliff that women in Bangladeshi public administration are at the risk of falling off from. The Maldives finds a representation in this volume in the contribution by Mohamed Faizal with reference to the participation of women in paid work and employment. Legal structures that govern property rights in Bangladesh an d sexual and reproductive health rights in Pakistan as detailed by Jinat Hossain and Samreen Shahbaz respectively draw our attention to the centrality of the questions of women's autonomy and agency. The chapter by Janethri Liyanage and Kamala Liyanage is an eloquent and forceful reminder of the need for substantive equality- their description of gender based sexual harassment on higher education campuses is very close to the experience of most women in this region- thus while in India for instance there is near gender parity in access to higher education – almost 47%, yet many women continue to experience higher education as a space of exclusion, marginalization and humiliation and of course sexual violence and harassment (John 2019).

Why is there this gap between the formal and the substantive?

A book such as this urges us to ask what is it that we mainstream when we mainstream gender (Bacchi 2006). There are broadly two answers- one is to think of gender as a fixed category that is descriptive - this leads to a situation where gender as a term often becomes a stand in term for women. The other way of deploying the term gender while thinking about gender mainstreaming is to think of gender as a complex set of relationships of power that result in specific forms of inclusion/exclusion. We need to think of gender as a verb as gendering and not as noun alone. Or else, gender mainstreaming would simply be a professional project that needs to be executed well, sidestepping the interrogatory tone of feminist engagement that actually does not spare even itself.

In other words, severing gender mainstreaming from the uncomfortable peg of feminist politics creates a new governmentality (Graham Burchell 1991) that reduces feminist insights into a complicit partner in the regulation and control and ordering of populations around the world, without invoking the emancipatory and egalitarian ethos of feminist politics (Mukhopadhyay 2017).

The focus on South Asia is very significant; the nation-state in our part of the world is more often than not an important accomplice in establishing the regimes and structures of *unfreedom* and inequality. On the one hand, to sidestep the nation-state is in itself therefore, a gesture of defiance here. On the other hand, it is a reminder of the fact that while the global, the regional and the local might intersect at some points, but one cannot be collapsed into the other as feminist governance has often been accused of doing. Global prescriptions and international formulations tend to homogenize people's experiences; the reference to South Asia in the title therefore is reminding us of the historical, economic, socio-cultural and geographical specificities of this region, while of course admitting to the hierarchies that exist here.

There is a growing realization that the States in this region have made gestures and taken initiatives that are in the nature of responses to feminist demands, without actually tackling the questions of structural inequality.

There is however no need for dismay, because feminist knowledge has never been known to exist or emerge on its own, it has always had deep roots in feminist politics. This bond is what will nourish the creation of knowledge both about people and about governmentality resulting in constant questioning and re-configuration, instead of depending on knowledge created by the structures of power, feminist knowledge needs to speak truths to power. Transnational feminist networks could and indeed are using traditional and modern means of networking to share this knowledge in partnership with other democratic and progressive movements.

Information for the contributors

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- The title should be in appropriate size.
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- Abstract: Authors must supply an abstract of around 250 words in total.

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