

Impact of Domestic Political System in Foreign Policy of Nepal

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LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

I certify that this dissertation entitled “Impact of Domestic Political System in Foreign Policy of Nepal” was prepared by Deena Thapa under my supervision. I hereby recommend this dissertation for further examination by the Research Committee Department of International Relations and Diplomacy, Tribhuvan University, in fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of MASTER’S IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND DIPLOMACY.

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Prem Khanal

Supervisor

Date: February, 2022

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my original work and that it contains no materials previously published. I have not used its materials for the award of any kind and any other degree. Where other authors' sources of information have been used, they have been acknowledged.

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February, 2022

LETTER OF APPROVAL

ABSTRACT

This research provides precise knowledge of the foreign policy background in Nepal's different political systems. This research is directed toward the domestic constraints in achieving its foreign policy objectives, highlighting Nepal's political factors. The research is focused only on how the political system has affected the foreign policy of Nepal internally as well as externally. The dissertations explore the political domain of Nepal's political transition sphere, where the study from the time of unification to Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal now is portrayed. The political interest and opinion leaders often drive these political transitions.

Meanwhile, the dissertations compare and analyze the political periphery of Nepal, which is guided by the foreign policy objectives in achieving the national interest of Nepal. Political constraint is one of the major domestic factors that play a vital role in a state's foreign policy. A strong political system shows the strength of the state in the international arena. Whatever the political changes happened in Nepal, the core values remain the same. The preoccupation of the Nepalese foreign policy has been a significant factor in securing and safeguarding the sovereign independence character on Nepal. Despite the various political transitions, the basic tenets of Nepal's foreign policy remain untouched, where the stability of Nepal's non-aligned character meets with the principles of peaceful co-existence and the UN charter. Nepal realizes the importance of its foreign policy choices, which could achieve the national interest. Therefore, Nepal has always tried to maintain a cordial relationship with every state globally, especially the balanced relationship maintained with its two giant neighboring countries, China and India, from the unification era to till date.

Keywords: Foreign Policy, National Interest, Political Changes, Territorial Integrity

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CA	-	Constituent Assembly
EU	-	European Union
G. P Koirala	-	Girija Prasad Koirala
K.P Oli	-	Khadga Prasad Sharma
MOFA	-	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NC	-	Nepali Congress
SAARC	-	South Asian Association Regional Cooperation
SPA	-	Seven Party Alliance
U.K	-	United Kingdom
U.S.A	-	United States of America
UCPNM	-	Unified Communist Party of Nepal Maoist
UML	-	Unified Marxist-Leninist
UN	-	United Nation
UNMIN	-	United Nation Mission in Nepal

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Nepal is a relatively small nation than its two giant neighbors, India and China. Because of its immense diversity in geographical setting, religion, caste, language, history, ethnicity, and political features, it is unique from other nations. In the southern part, there is the mountain region that divides the Tibetan plateau from the plains of India. Nepal carries a great political history and significance in world politics. Also, politically Nepal has been through various transitions throughout the times.

Foreign policy of a state is the sole component that helps to achieve the national interest. Various internal factors play vital roles in influencing foreign policy. The country's political system is a significant factor as one can never ignore the chaos brought by an unbalanced political system. Without proper executions and administration of these political factors at the domestic level, the aimed foreign policy objectives cannot be achieved. Understanding the foreign policy objectives and the role of the political system are the major parameters of this research (Baral, 2018). Similarly, Nepal finds security dilemmas most of the time while choosing foreign policy decisions as it is located between two major powers of Asia.

The political system has always been one of the critical trajectories shaping Nepal's foreign policy. The political setting as a domestic determinant, while generating Nepal's foreign policy, depicts Nepal's strong position among other states. A robust political system represents the position of Nepal in global domination. Also, political stability flourishes the growth in the state. However, only having good political

stability in the state is not enough to have an effective foreign policy. Therefore, there are various internal factors that shape foreign policy of a country such as political accountability, geography, socio-economic, history, culture, technology, military, leadership and bureaucracy (Pradhan, 2007). Among all these internal factors affecting foreign policy and national interest, this study solely focuses on the political determinant that contributes to shaping Nepal's foreign policy and national interest.

The background of this study includes understanding foreign policy and the role of the political system in achieving objectives of the nation's interest. The primary focus of this study would be on the broad aspects of the political system in shaping Nepal's foreign policy, including the brief history of a state in the vicinity of political evolutions. The following is the background on the political setting and its impact on foreign policy.

According to the government of Nepal, safeguarding sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence, promoting economic well-being, and maintaining the prosperity of Nepal is the primary goal of foreign policy (Baral, 2018). Foreign policy is the strongest weapon to analyze the status of any given state. The stronger the foreign policy, the stronger will be a state. According to Joseph Frankel, "foreign policy contains actions and decisions, that includes to some appreciable relations between one state and others" (Bojang, 2018). However, the foreign policy demonstrates the various theories which show why states act the way they do, emphasizing the theories of realism, liberalism, economic structuralism, psychological theory, and constructivism (Frazier, 2019). Particularly, in a relatively small state like Nepal, foreign policy provides a greater potential for bargaining in the international system. So, one single factor does not define the foreign policy of a state. Panchsheel (the five

principles of peaceful existence), abidance of UN charter, policy of non-alignment, world peace, international law and regional arrangement are vital parameters while defining the foreign policy of Nepal. A state should have effective domestic foreign policy especially for a small country to survive internationally and maintain the balance of power.

Beyond the border, a state's foreign policy is determined by its strategies toward world peace, international pressure, international organizations, international affairs, and many more. However, a state's foreign policy is determined by historical background, geography, political system, cultural factors, and socio-economic system inside its border. Therefore, the domestic factor is considered an essential parameter that determines a state's strengths and weaknesses. The domestic factors of a country have the capacity to shape its image on an international platform. The occurring domestic issues portray the state and capability of its foreign policies outside the country. For any state, foreign policy is an extension of domestic policy which cannot be segregated from the internal political dynamics (Bhattarai, 2018).

Some of the SAARC countries like India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka celebrate independence from the United Kingdom where Nepal proudly shares cordial and warm friendship with the United Kingdom (Anupam, 2020). States are in a continual battle of attaining power, and in that case, Nepal also, at times, faces the pressure to save its freedom and sovereignty, especially when two powerful nations are the neighbors. Moreover, the foreign policy of Nepal is greatly affected by its political setting. A stable political system of a state means a country has an effective foreign policy objective, while an unstable political system creates a hindrance in achieving the national interest. Due to various transitions in the politics of Nepal, the political

system has been one of the biggest challenges in achieving the foreign policy objectives of a state. Nepal has faced a long decade of political instability, which has greatly affected foreign policy decision-making. With a frequent political transition, Nepal has been facing challenges in achieving foreign policy objectives. This transition is not a positive sign of attaining the foreign policy objectives as it shows serious instability at a domestic level. So far, Nepal is able to preserve its territorial integrity and independence since its establishment as a nation-state, which are the main foreign policy objectives till date (Mainali, 2017).

During the unification era (1768-1815), the late king Prithivi Narayan Shah tried to sustain a political stability and balanced foreign policy approach with India and China whereas Rana followed only a pro-British approach (Acharya, 2014). But contradicting the Rana regime and following the footsteps of King Prithivi Narayan Shah during Panchayat system (1960-1990) and democratic process (1990 onward) there was a visible consciousness in choosing foreign policy decisions as it was well aware that too much closeness to the both nations would cost Nepal freedom of policy choices as there was intervention by various international actors even to sort domestic issues on a national level. Nepal's unstable government and political changes have led to the intervention of external bodies in Nepal's domestic policies. As relatively small in nature Nepal has to make a wise use of its soft power persuasion and use strategically balanced foreign policies (Dahal, 2018). Maintaining a balance of power has been the top priority of any state today. However, Nepal is facing issues in reaching its national interest through foreign policy objectives due to ideological political differences.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

For a developing state like Nepal, survival and maintaining the balance of power in this anarchic world is the most basic goal to attain. This led to the question of how domestic policy matters when shaping Nepal's foreign policy? The national interest of a state is achievable through its correct implementation and visualization of its foreign policy goals. However, while doing so, various hindrances appear, domestic factors are one of them. The unstable domestic political factor not only bothers the domestic structure but also imbalances the foreign relation. The contemporary world is interconnected in its unique way. The world is becoming small and states are coming together through several corridors. Similarly, from the time of unification to Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, Nepal has always tried to share a cordial relationship with its neighboring countries, India and China. However, due to its complex and unstable political system the desired foreign policy goal often gets disturbed. The given thesis tries to find out the domestic constraints on the political level of Nepal that are hindering the foreign policy objectives and to what extent. It is often visible that external intervention in domestic matters is due to the weak internal political culture. The global practices and maintenance of diplomatic relations of Nepal's foreign policy is usually guided by the leader's personal objectives and desires (Jaiswal, 2012).

1.3 Research Questions

In shaping the foreign policy of a state, several domestic factors are to be considered where following questions will need to be addressed based on the domestic background:

- a. How did the political system of Nepal affect the foreign policy?
- b. What effect did political transition have on the foreign policy of Nepal?

1.4 Research Objectives

The research objectives will help to lead the research questions that have been identified to have an impact during the various phases of political transition in Nepal. The specific objective includes analyzing the impact of political factors in shaping the foreign policy of Nepal. The research paper supports determining the contribution of Nepal's foreign policy in political changes and vice-versa. The given dissertation helps to understand the phases of the political situation leading to current foreign policy in Nepal. The political sphere of Nepal has always been a key determinant to influence foreign policy decision-making. Therefore, the influence of the domestic political system on Nepal's foreign policy decision-making process is considered one of the dissertation's general objectives.

1.5 Significance of the Study

There are many internal and external determinants affecting the foreign policy of Nepal. Among those, politics is one of the determinants that strongly influences the country's foreign policy. Therefore, this study has been conducted. Without political stability inside a country, influences on the world's affairs could be critical. Even a slight instability significantly impacts a country's foreign policy. Politics plays a vital role in making major foreign policy decisions as it also deals with national security issues. The political situation always includes government agencies, laws, and campaign groups / political parties that influence other groups or individuals in society. The head of the government often operates international decisions, and such decisions depend on domestic politics. Likewise, national leaders must play a systematic game between domestic and international politics. Before making a foreign policy decision, the head of the government is obliged to

fulfill domestic expectations and align the internal decisions. As the foreign policy is directly / indirectly affected by the political situation, this study aims to fulfill most of the relevant political events that impacted making foreign policy decisions from history till now. This study shows its significance as it can be a reference for those learners seeking to gain knowledge on various domestic political situations of the country that impact its foreign policy.

1.6 Delimitations

The foreign policy of Nepal is not shaped and affected by just its domestic constraints but also by several other external factors. This external factor could be the pressure from international organizations, unequal power distributions among the nations, international hegemony, and many more. Even at the domestic level, several other factors affect foreign policy, such as unwanted pressure from the think tanks, religious values, caste and ethnicity, changing mindset of people towards westernization, and many more. The proposed research will only limit its focus to one significant dimension of domestic factor: Nepal's political system in shaping Nepal's foreign policy. The research will determine how domestic political factors shape and influence foreign policy strategies. Though the foreign policy is equally important for every state, this research will showcase only information on how critical foreign policies are to a developing country like Nepal. The research only highlights how crucial role political decisions are in shaping Nepal's desired foreign policy objectives.

1.7 Organization of the Study

The thesis is divided into six major chapters. Chapter one, Introduction, provides the brief background and design of this research. This chapter also shows the historical background. Chapter two of the research is Literature Review and Conceptual Framework. This chapter reviews the ideas that support the given research and gives the bigger picture highlighting the central aspect of the dissertation. Chapter three, Research Methodology, talks about the resources that are used while doing the research. The primary and secondary resources used have helped make the research more effective. Chapter four is the Implication of Political Changes in Foreign Policy of Nepal. This chapter focuses on the political changes from the unification era to the democratic federal republic. Chapter five in the research is Analysis and Comparison. The fifth chapter analyzes and compares the various political trends and Nepal's foreign policy. The final chapter of the research is Summary and Conclusion, which summarizes and concludes the dissertation.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Shifting Dynamics of Nepal's Foreign Policy

With time Nepal's foreign policy is also gradually changing. The footmark of Prithvi Narayan Shah still guides the foreign policy of Nepal. Though there are many changes in today's foreign policy, the fundamental core is the same. Nepal's political situation was defined as "Nepal is a yam between two boulders" by King Prithvi Narayan Shah. The king chose the foreign policies very carefully and always tried to maintain cordial relations with the neighboring country, India, and China. Some of the significant foreign policies implemented by the king were maintaining a balanced relationship with India and China and maintaining strong military practices so that territorial integrity would always be maintained. Great friendship should be kept between the Chinese emperor and the emperor of the southern sea and focused on defensive fighting rather than offensive one (Acharya, 2014). Despite the challenges, the king provided some policies to save and stabilize Nepal. Later, those policies became the basis for today's foreign policies.

During Rana's regime, the government strongly supported Nepal's isolationist foreign policy and was relatively closed with British raj to its south. Nepal was formally recognized as a sovereign and independent state under a Treaty of Peace and Friendship signed in December 1923 between the two states (Muni, 1973). People were forced to abide by all the norms and rules that were set by the Rana government. Even though Rana ruling was able to bring stability to the fraught empire but was highly criticized for economic and religious excesses also for tyranny (Rana, 2017). Nation's foreign policy was very roughly handled as Nepal was not engaged in any

international platform during that period. There was a visible pro-British policy during the Rana regime. Nepal was not part of any international organization till then. Only Ranas benefited during those periods as they highly supported British raj. Their contributions are still visible in their assistance during World War I and World War II. However, things took a big turn when the British drew from India in 1947. The Ranas faced danger and had to face the revolution, and King Tribhuvan took over the throne by restoring the state's sovereignty. After that, Ranas strictly followed the policy of isolation during their rule.

The Rana Regime had to step down after the massive revolution in the 1950s, which led to new endeavors for Nepal, including changes in its foreign policies. It is also believed that Nepal and India shared a very special relation during this period time. The special friendship came with the democracy and interventions of India with the throne of King Tribhuvan. Nepal's new era began as Nepal entered into being part of the United Nations in 1955. Nepal took its stronghold on the five principles of peaceful coexistence. These five principles include mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equity, mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. Hence, the four long years of the post revolution time were characterized by the excessive influence of India on both the internal and external fronts of Nepal (Adhikari, 2000).

However, when the multi-party democracy was restored in 1990, the running Nepali Congress's running government took the first step to normalize the relationship with India. There were several visits from both countries during this time. Various treaties and agreements were signed to strengthen bilateral relations between the two nations. But this could not last for a long time as there was Maoist insurgent among

democratic systems (Mishra, 2005). The violent Maoist insurgent had a significant impact politically during those periods as many innocent citizens lost their lives in the battle between the two. In 2006, the political direction took the new direction as seven major political parties and Maoist came for consensus against the king where Delhi played a vital role as mediator for both the alliance and the 12-points peace agreement was held (Do and Iyer, 2012).

After 2006, the king stepped down from state power, forming the interim government. The interim government had to form the Constituent Assembly to promulgate the new constitution. Despite throwing the monarchy system from the country, it could not materialize the new constitution on time, resulting in a lot of foreign intervention inside the country and instability within the state. There are visible instances in the Nepalese political system that show how any state leaders have always shaped the foreign policies the way it is today. Their differences in ideologies have caused greater chaos in the policies at the domestic level and international platforms. The government launched a balanced foreign policy toward India and China, openly calling for a growth economy for investment in Nepal. A policy of good neighborliness and mutually beneficial relations has been formed and practically executed. Foreign policy is called a continuation of domestic policy. Long-standing political stability should also be reflected in foreign policy. Nepalese political parties and other interested parties should be officially ready to form a common foreign policy.

Since the 1990 to twenty first century Nepal has undergone the various changes that include, establishment of multi-party democracy parliamentary system, the long ten-year Maoist insurgency from 1996 to 2006 the 'royal coup' of 2005 brought by the

popular movement for the democracy in 2006 (Aryal, 2016). After that, the abolition of the monarchy from 2007 to 2008 took place. The Madhesh Movement in the terai part of Nepal raises the voices for equal rights of all the people living in the terai region. The promulgation of the constitution in the year 2015. There is political chaos from 2020 to till date (Gill, 2021). Even though various changes are made in internal politics, foreign policy's core values have been untouched. These political changes have brought out specific changes in the country's policies domestically and internationally, but what remains the same is the core belief of the foreign policy guiding Nepal.

2.2. Factors influencing the foreign policy

Nepal has gone through various political changes. However, various other factors influence foreign policy decision-making. Along with many major determinant roles of geography can be considered vital as Nepal lies on the two giant neighboring countries, India and China. Geography also has a more substantial influence since Nepal is a landlocked state. The country's geography also influences the political system. Nepal being a small landlocked country between two giants has impacted the structure of the political system, national interest, and foreign policy.

In the aspect of a state's territory, its geography and size of the population make a significant impact on its foreign policy executions. Geography is something more than topographical configurations or contracts of climate (Lacoste, 2012). The geographical factors of Nepal consist of its people, language, size, military aspect, location, and many more.

Geography contours state attitude as well as constraints political decision. In the present scenario, foreign policy of the state has been greatly influenced by

geographical features like growth in population, human immigration, energy and water supplies, food security, economic activities, and environmental issues (Adhikari, 2018). Geography being permanent and constant, has always affected the political dynamics of any state.

Location is one of the major components that affect the geography of the states. Geography often defines the strength of one state on an international platform. If a developing state lies in the sea portal, then the state geography undoubtedly sums up their bargaining power and foreign policy

objectives. It is often viewed that buffer states tend to adopt unique and special foreign policies.

Nepal's foreign policy behavior is highly limited to the geographical location, which often leads to a complex in the past which was 'imprinted' in Nepal's mindset (Biehl, 2020). As Nepal lies between two powerful nations, Nepal has to choose those foreign policies accordingly. Nepal has always been viewed through the lenses of balancing factors between India and China. Due to its landlocked nature, it was named as a "forbidden country" until the fifties and had to depend on other states for sea portal access solely. On the one hand, maintaining the balance between India and China has been a huge challenge to Nepal. On the other, its unique geo-strategic location has shaped and guided the foreign policy of Nepal. Though there is a huge challenge in maintaining balances between neighboring countries, this has also provided opportunities to Nepal as other states carefully choose their foreign policy toward Nepal. Saving the territory without any interference from any other state has always been the first concern of Nepalese foreign policy since the time of unification. Likewise, the geographical location of Nepal has higher transport costs attached along

with import delays and less third country import of products. The location has an impact on international trade. In the case of a landlocked state, the right to access transit is an essential factor. A state is entitled to get access to transit.

Among many other priorities safeguarding territorial integrity is the first and most essential factor which is indulged in Nepalese foreign policy. Therefore, location is an integral part of the geographical setting, which provides a higher potential to attain foreign policy objectives through sound politics in Nepal.

Size in geographical aspects plays a very keen role in choosing foreign policy objectives. Whether all the occupied land space is equally valuable, the larger size of the state brings a significant volume of prestige to its inhabitants. The bigger the size, the more significant the state's bargaining power. Nepal is often considered a sandwich between Asia's two most powerful states. However, along with its size, the presence of natural resources acts as a complement to one's foreign policy. Despite Nepal's small size compared to two large neighboring states, the natural resources like water for Green energy and geographical structure (plains, hills, and mountains) for Tourism promotion can play an essential role in attaining her national interests.

King Prithvi Narayan Shah has always realized the impacts of size while making foreign policy decisions which is why he always encouraged the defensive mechanism of fighting. The then king also focused on boosting the military forces to safeguard Nepal's territory and sovereignty as Nepal stands relatively smaller. Later, Ranas were highly close with the most powerful British during those periods. Moreover, after democracy and other political changes safeguarding territorial integrity has been the topmost foreign policy priority. Due to its small size among two giant neighbors, the international institute has always viewed Nepal as a buffer state.

Especially in Nepal's context, size has been an essential aspect as time as often India and China have tried to exploit their powers towards Nepal. A visible example was during the blockade of 2015 between India and Nepal.

Like location and size, the population of any state plays an important role. Not only do states need their population for settlements but also to enhance their power in the international arena. At the time of international conflict, a state should be able to provide adequate manpower outside its territory and provide security inside the state. Nepal has always been praised for its Bir Gorkhali soldiers, though small in size. During the unification period, King Prithivi Narayan Shah always emphasized boosting military strength. Also, in the Rana regime, massive military back-ups were sent for assistance during World War first and World War second. Many Nepali populations are sent to military forces outside Nepal for their assistance. Therefore, a strong and large population size adds up to foreign policy decision-making power.

2.3. Diplomatic Relation with other countries

The basis of foreign policies has roots in how cordial and friendly relations a country has maintained with other countries. Globalization is increasing, and it is challenging to maintain a balanced relationship with every nation globally as every state has its own national interest. Especially for Nepal, which has two growing powers, India and China, as its neighboring states, it is very challenging to maintain equal relations with every state. If proper policies are not implemented, it is not easy to maintain its balance while attaining its own national interest. For this, Nepal must have a sound and balanced political system that can make effective policies domestically and internationally. Due to the impressive term with other countries, Nepal has diplomatic relations with 173 countries as of February, 2022 with policy of amity and

cooperation towards the global community (MoFA, 2022). This vast community of states coming for diplomatic ties lies in the principle of cooperation and mutual interest.

Hence, building diplomatic relations with other states is how a government communicates with the foreign public to encourage information about its country's morals and principles, institutions and culture, and national goals and current policies. Nation-states participate in the most pluralistic organizational unit in the international system due to this agreement. A collective understanding allows one state to begin diplomatic ties with another comfortably. With common recognition of sovereignty, nation-states can utilize diplomacy to attain political goals.

2.4 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework of the research paper focuses on the interconnection between various entities like the foreign policy of Nepal driven towards achieving the national interest through the political behavior of a state. The framework shows that foreign policy is directed towards the national interest, whereas the domestic factor largely shapes national interest. The central element is that political factors play a crucial role in maintaining and obtaining the foreign policy goal of the country. The conceptual framework focuses on how important it is to have balance and equal interconnections between each entity as it shows if the balance is not carefully maintained at one point, it affects the overall aspect of foreign policies.

The Head of government is usually responsible for formulating a state's foreign policy. Foreign policy can achieve the national interest of a state. However, going through the micro-level, it is essential to have a balanced political system to make practical foreign policies objectives vital in attaining national interest. The conceptual

framework of the given thesis shows a deep study of how the unstable political system of Nepal has affected the foreign policies at various levels and why it is essential to maintain equal balance at every level.

The primary purpose of the research is to recognize the foreign policy practice by analyzing the political aspects and policy-making of Nepal's foreign policy from its unification era to the twenty-first century. The conceptual frameworks examine the approach of Nepali political tactics used to attain the country's national interest while formulating foreign policies. The conceptual framework also limits the area of study for the research from various external and internal determinants that plays a vital role in shaping the foreign policy decisions to only the political aspects of Nepal's foreign policy objectives.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is a phenomenon of systematically solving and analyzing the research problem. Choosing the correct methodology is an integral part of the thesis as it states how research is accomplished. Qualitative and quantitative methods are applied to address the research objectives of this thesis. For the qualitative methods, primary data and interview has been implemented. The interview would be set with the expert of foreign policy analysis experts. The qualitative data also ropes the quantitative data analysis and results.

3.1 Research Design

For the effectiveness of this research, historical-comparative analysis design and content analysis have been used. From different publications and peer reviews on the political changes in Nepal, the history and the political system have been considered the strong research design for this study. Various historical books have been used for the historical-comparative analysis. Besides government or institutional websites, such information has also been collected from different news/media, articles, and journals for content analysis.

3.2 Research Site

This research was undertaken at the library, office, and home. Most research was done through the web and books obtained from the university library. Some of the materials were obtained from the government institution and foreign policy departments. The fruitful interactions also took place with the government bodies and experts working in international relations and diplomacy.

3.3 Data Collection Method

There are various sources of secondary data collection methods such as books, articles, previous reports, peer reviews, organizational documents, national and international publications, websites, reports, journals review, newspapers, and available information. Similarly, primary methods such as information for the mentors and experts were also used while conducting this study. Many national and government publications have been used regarding domestic politics influencing foreign policy. Similarly, information on the history of political changes was also exemplified for a clear perspective on the impact on the foreign policy of Nepal.

3.4 Data Analysis Methods

For data analysis, content analysis has been the primary method and interpretation of this research, where various relatable sources are analyzed and examined. Thematic analysis has been used to identify patterns and themes in the proposed research through additional support such as logical reasoning.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues should be considered carefully while conducting research. In this research, the main ethical issue is related to proper referencing of work by other researchers while collecting secondary data. Other issues include access to the organization, confidentiality, and using relevant information about the organization. To address these issues, this research has cited all sources of previous research works used for literature review and secondary data for research. This research will carry out its survey in a confidential way, maintaining organizations' integrity.

CHAPTER 4: IMPLICATION OF POLITICAL CHANGES IN FOREIGN POLICY OF NEPAL

4.1 Foreign policy during Shah Dynasty

The foreign policy concept started with the grand vision of uniting the fragmented states and cities by Prithvi Narayan Shah, then king. Though the concept of non-alignment and peaceful co-existence was later realized as features of the foreign policy of Nepal, these policies were already reflected during the ruling of the king Prithvi Narayan Shah. The vision of expansion and consolidation came with various challenges along the path. The envisioned goal to expand and build the nation together came with the realization of safeguarding territorial integrity and preserving sovereignty. It was vital for the expansion and equally important to grow in socio-cultural aspects and economic development. On the one hand, King Prithvi Narayan Shah focused on uniting Nepal, whereas, on the other hand, colonial power was increasing in South Asia. Despite the fact that Nepal was surrounded by two big powers King Prithvi Narayan shah carefully chose the way of balanced relations with India and China by encouraging the defensive tactics and safeguarding the boundaries through the agreements and treaties rather than waging the war (Gauchan, 1986). During that period, East India Company developed an interest in trade with Tibet through Nepal. With the growing interest of the East India Company, the adaptation policy known as not giving room for their' interference in the domestic matter of Nepal was followed by the king to avoid intrusion. The policy of expulsion and exclusion was introduced by the king Prithvi Narayan Shah after the annexation of Kathmandu Valley where king believed that the country's profit would be taken by the firangis if timely actions are not taken against them and trade continues with white

soldiers (Aryal, 1966). Even in the period of extreme pressure from external factors and very low technological development king Prithvi Narayan Shah was able to promote diplomacy and adapt various foreign policies starting with the focusing on the preservation of the border boundaries but while doing so never provoke or attack the neighboring country in waging the war rather the king taught wisely to use the defensive method to achieve the national interest of the nation (Acharya, 2014). King Prithvi Narayan Shah's finest skills of negotiation, ability to make prompt decisions even in chaotic situations, skills of adaptation and rejection sometimes would also cause a massive impact on the kingdom. The foreign policy as forwarded in Dinya Upadesh (noble advice) evolved and has tried to show the path that Nepal should follow for sound and healthy foreign policy practice until the clash between Company and Nepal. In the 18th century, this is considered as one of big **achievements**. (Stiller, 1989). Unlike the twenty-first century, where technological growth was far beyond the imagination during those periods, king Prithvi Narayan Shah focused on and advised the growth and strengthening of the military forces to protect Nepal from foreign invasion and safeguard the sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Later, Prime minister Bhimsen Thapa continued the vision of expansion who is also known as longest Prime Minister from 1804 to 1837 (Acharya, 2012). Following the footsteps of King Prithvi Narayan Shah, Bhimsen Thapa focused on the expansion and creation of a strong military force in Nepal. The British East India Company was not convinced with the action by the Prime Minister which ultimately resulted in the Anglo-Nepal war in 1814-16 (Rose, 2061). Though the grip of the British East India Company on Nepal was rugged, Prime minister Bhimsen Thapa wanted friendly relations with other European states. However, the mission did not succeed. Bhimsen Thapa is considered a great diplomat during those eras. However, Bhimsen Thapa

could not realize the growing colonial power in South Asia and waged war with the Company. The war resulted in the loss of one-third of Nepalese territory.

The Sugauli Treaty in 1816 was the result of the war. Nepal had to submit the attainments west of the Mahakali river, which Nepal's boundaries were considered. Nepal was forbidden to embrace diplomatic relations with other states with the treaty rather than India. Nepal had to politically depend on the opinions of the British West India Company for domestic decision-making. Nepal had to limit its military expansion. Nepal lost Sikkim in the war. The British India Company obtained a greater interest in the Himalayan political development and wanted Nepal to remain quiet and adopt the frontier policy. The treaty also concluded with some positive aspects since the treaty Gurkhas were recruited into the British Indian army and were considered the bravest. However, the Company was unhappy with the influence of Bhisen Thapa in the internal politics and was removed out of the political scenario once and for all.

4.2 Foreign policy during Rana Dynasty

The path of unification came along with many changes and challenges, which were shortly followed by the Rana regime. The Rana regime also followed the path of the foreign policy of Prithvi Narayan Shah. In 1846 when Jung Bahadur Rana overtook all the state powers, no one thought this regime would have a long-lasting history of 104 years. Though king Prithvi Narayan Shah's Foreign policy was driven towards maintaining the equal balance between the powers in the north and south, there was a visible inclination toward pro-British policy in the system but aligned on conserving the sovereignty territorial integrity of the nation. Jung adopted the foreign policy almost out of helplessness. This is apparent in the conversation with the then British

Resident in Kathmandu, to whom Jung Bahadur was reported to have said, "*the British are a stronger power. Our relationship is like a lion and cat, the cat will scratch if it is driven to a corner, but the lion will soon kill the cat. You can force us to change our policy, you can take our country if it pleases you to do so*" (Muni, 1973).

British India was kept at the center of Nepal's external relations by Jung Bahadur Rana, which was evident by the support extended to British India during the Sipoy mutiny of 1857. Along with a strong army of 14000, Jung Bahadur went to British India to quell the mutiny, which rewarded Nepal back with 'Naya Muluk' (Banke, Bardiya, Kailali and Kanchanpur) that is considered as one of the most remarkable achievements in the foreign policy of Jung Bahadur which also successfully achieved the national interest (Hamal, 2002). The extended support of Jung Bahadur towards British India was able to achieve the trust of British India, resulting in the 1923 Treaty of Friendship between Nepal and the British government, which clearly recognized Nepal as a sovereign independent country (Mojundar, 1968). Jung Bahadur Rana frequently followed the interest of British India, even in the internal policy of Nepal. He kept Nepal wholly isolated from the outside world following the isolation foreign policy. To prove loyalty and sincerity to the British government, Jung Bahadur Rana offered military assistance whenever an opportunity arose. The visit of Jung Bahadur Rana was also the talk of the town during those periods as the prime minister broke the social taboo of crossing the sea to visit England. Jung Bahadur Rana was mesmerized by the administration, military, and social management during the visit to England. The visit to England was influenced to the extent that later orders were received from the British Governor-General in India (Jain, 1972).

On the northern side, Prime Minister Jung Bahadur Rana wanted to establish a grip on the Tibet side, making Kathmandu the main trading point for commercial interest. But during that time, there were boundary disputes between Nepal and Tibet in the area of Khasa, where both nations claimed Khasa as their part state. Nepal also wanted to capture the Kuti and Kerung territories, claiming that they had previously been part of Nepal. Because negotiations failed to resolve the issue, a conflict broke out between Nepal and Tibet in March 1855 (Shrestha, 2013). The conflict ended on March 24, 1856, when the "Thapathali treaty" was signed. The treaty required Nepal to return the Kuti, Kerung, and Jhunga territories it had gained during the conflict. Tibet promised not to levy customs duties on Nepalese products; Nepal agreed to assist Tibet in a foreign assault, and both sides agreed to deport offenders. The deal was thought to be beneficial to Nepal.

However, Jung Bahadur Rana was a man of great dignity and vision. Though the foreign policy adopted during Jung Bahadur Rana was complete isolation and pro-British, foreign policy scholars believed that it was the best thing the Prime Minister could do to protect the national interest where the rest of the world, especially South Asia, was growing rapidly in colonial power.

After the demise of Jung Bahadur Rana, the successors of Jung Bahadur Rana, Bir Shumsher, and Chandra Shumsher, followed the pro-British policy. British India knew how important Nepal was from the geostrategic location point. So, it was made sure that even after Jung Bahadur Rana's rule, authorities would follow the pro-British policy. Administratively, the policy of the British India Company was to monitor the peace in the Himalayan part, using Nepal as the external boundary between Tibet and British India. Also, using Nepal as the outer frontier would benefit China and the

USSR. The foreign policy practice of Ranaudip, Bir Shumshere, and the last Rana Prime minister was highly influenced by the pro-British policy. This is also evident in Nepal's military support and assistance to the British during world war first. Nepal was a strong ally on the British side.

When British rule came to an end in India shortly, the Rana regime also came to an end, and democracy paved the way in providing a new horizon in the politics of Nepal. The British were a great supporter of Rana. Hence, with the fall of the British India Company, Ranacracy also could not endure the wing of change and collapsed in 1951 (Upadhyay, 2017).

4.3. Foreign Policy during Interim Democratic

After 104 years of Rana's ruling, change was adopted in 1951 when king Tribhuwan came into the throne. This event was also vital as for the first-time democracy was introduced in Nepal. However, the taste of democracy only lasted for 18 months among the Nepalese citizens. There is visible evidence that King Tribhuwan followed the benchmark of Ranas as the king also pursued the suggestions and advice from the Indian side in both domestic and foreign policy. This evidence was backed up by the "special relations" held in the Delhi agreement from the kingship period of King Tribhuwan from 1951 to 1955, but, with the demise of king Tribhuwan in March 1955, king Mahendra came into rising with new hope for developments in the nation (Point, 2008). Unlike king Tribhuwan, king Mahendra followed the opposite approach to foreign policy, avoiding the one-sided foreign policy and welcoming the international prospect. Many changes and reforms were carried out during the Mahendra period in economic developments, social reforms, cultural behaviors, infrastructural growth, foreign policy behaviors, and many more. Nepalese foreign

policy got a turning point in 1955 when Nepal got admission to the United Nations. King Mahendra always had a broad vision for diversification and expansion of Nepal at international levels. To attain international recognition, King Mahendra followed "The policy of non-alignment with equal friendship with all" and the "Diversification Policy" (Rose, 1957). These policies aimed to achieve Nepal's freedom, foreign aid, balanced relations with two neighbors, political stability, and mainly to diversify the restricted foreign policy options. During this period, Nepal successfully established diplomatic relations with 22 new countries.

Various agreements and treaties were also carried out with the establishment of diplomatic relations during these periods. According to MOFA (2021), some of the significant events during those periods were: The extradition Treaty concluded with India in 1953, Koshi Agreement was held between Nepal and India on April 25, 1954, Gandak Agreement between Nepal and India on December 4, 1959, Treaty on trade and commerce between India and Nepal on September 4, 1960, and Peace and Friendship Treaty between Nepal and China in September 1956. According to Pradhan (1996), there was an Agreement between Nepal and China in 1956 regarding the Tibet issues and establishment of Consulate General in Lhasa and Kathmandu. Similarly, the economic agreement in April 1959 between Nepal and the Soviet Union provided Nepal with economic and technical assistance. Agreement between Nepal and China to settle the dispute regarding the claim of Mount Everest in May 1959 (Hamal, 2002).

However, this era is considered important in Nepalese foreign policy as the most significant events are marked in this period.

From UN admission to embracing diplomatic relations with many countries, this era has played a significant role in the foreign policy of Nepal to achieve the national interest. Multiple exchange visits between Nepalese high-level personnel and countries helped strengthen the relations and enhanced the international recognition of Nepal in the global arena.

4.4. Foreign Policy during Panchayat Era

Global attention was given to Nepal during the Panchayat period. The then king Mahendra's vision for foreign policy got further goals and objectives and focused on achieving the national interest of Nepal. BP Koirala's government was demolished in 1960. King Mahendra accused the council of being totally incompetent in preserving law and order in the country and of mishandling, corruption, and opposing the path of duty. King banned all the political parties in Nepal, stating that political parties failed to achieve the best outcome for Nepal. Even though the balance relation of both of the neighbors was the concentrated primary inequality was still visible. Hence king Mahendra adopted the policy of playing the China card to improve the relationship with China. Later in 1962, king Mahendra introduced a new system called Panchayati raj. A four-tier system of directly elected councils was constructed; a national guiding system was established and later dismantled, and class organizations were founded (Adhikari, 2011). The Panchayat era is also considered one vital landmark for national foreign policy as Nepal was elected as a non-permanent member of the UN security council in 1969 for the first time. During the time of 1960 to 1990, Nepal was able to learn from various nations, which resulted in diplomatic relations with various nations (Acharya, 2011). This period of political transition is considered vital as not only did Nepal develop diplomatic relations with many nations, but Nepal also encountered

growth and development across the countries. The significant agreement, treaties, and major events during this period are the construction of the Mahendra Highway is one of the major milestones achieved during this period which was possible by the support of the USSR, India, China, and the UK. This support during that time depicts how deeply rooted was the Nepalese foreign policy image, similarly to the State visit to China by the then King Mahendra. This visit proved to be beneficial for Nepal as both the government prepared the agreement for road and boundary. However, India strongly opposed the idea of this agreement claiming that the agreement would hinder the security interest of India. In 1972, the construction of Siddhartha Rajmarg was inaugurated by King Mahendra with the assistance of the Indian government. Apart from India, Nepal also procured military hardware and equipment from the USA and UK. Similarly, the removal of the joint army check posts on Nepal's northern border during the time of Prime Minister Kirti Nidhi Bista was constructed during this era (Rose, 1971).

While countries were engaged in the power play and balancing power, Nepal was focused on the diversification of Nepalese foreign policy during this time. Hence this was the era where Nepal fully advocated and portrayed the truest in the non-alignment policy and the peaceful co-existence. Nepal adopted the policy of political equidistance with China and India. Meanwhile, this political era focused its priorities on diversification rather than following an isolation foreign policy like the Rana Regime. Later, Nepal followed the footsteps of the Non-Alignment Policy, which was declared by King Birendra as Nepal a Peace of Zone (Acharya, 2014). One hundred fourteen nations supported the proposal, including China and Pakistan, while India, as one of the immediate neighbors, refused to acknowledge it. Even though the proposal

did not create a major milestone in Nepal's foreign policy, it has endured a major impact thereafter (Khanal, 2019).

4.5 Foreign Policy during Democratic Restoration Era

When the Peoples' Movement I took place on April 16, 1990, it overthrew the Panchayat system welcoming democracy for the second time (Hachhethu, 1990). With the restoration of multi-party democracy under the constitutional monarchy, the government immediately realized that now was the time to boost its relations with the neighboring countries, and Nepal took the intense turn for which it could attain national interest. Thus, Prime minister Krishna Prasad Bhattarai soon realized the void to be filled up for the national interest. Krishna Prashad Bhattarai's primary concerns were to improve the trade and transit agreement with India, to have an election by May 1991, and declaration a constitution that would prove the freedom guaranteeing the rule of law, a parliamentary form of government focusing on the constitutional order where Bhattarai could easily sense the unity and 'Peoples Power' growing in the state. Bhattarai's visit to India on June 8, 1990, proved to be fruitful for Nepal as both countries agreed on embracing the bilateral relations that had been hindered by the impasses of 1989-1990 (Acharya, 2014). Moreover, it was believed that Bhattarai's visit to India not only normalized the relations between the two states it also paved the way for an accustoming country's foreign policy that helped in changing the domestic political norms and values (MOFA, 1990-92). Though the official tenure of Bhattarai remained short, Bhattarai was able to make notable economic improvements, and the major outcomes that Bhattarai's visit to India was to put an end to one-year-old impasses created by non-renewal of trade and transit treaties, wide view on Indo-Nepal border points for the undertaking of things to and from Nepal, agreement

concluding that India would permit Nepal to export to India its productions free of duties and quantitative limit consisting not below 65% Nepali or Nepali-Indian raw materials. Similarly, both the states came to understand that Nepal and India would stand and obey and give full respect for the values of international law and behavior like those of sovereign equality, safeguarding territorial integrity, and peaceful means of disputes settlements.

Though the tenure period of Bhattarai was short, the major landmark of Bhattarai's tenure was the visit to India as a prime minister and also the visit of Indian Prime minister Chandra Shekhar visit to Nepal, which proved prominent in boosting the India-Nepal bilateral relations. Bhattarai's period as a prime minister was considered the "Period of Restoring normalcy" between Nepal and India, which lasted from April 16, 1990, to May 26, 1991 (Pradhan, 1996).

In 1991 Nepali Congress won the election under the leadership of Girija Prasad Koirala, and the party was able to win the majority in the Parliament. Soon after the election, G.P. Koirala prioritized maintaining friendly relations with both the neighbors India and China and also expressed the desire to make revisions to the Treaty of Peace and friendship. Nepalese foreign policy under Koirala stated the "clarity of thoughts, realistic vision, sincerity in attitude and reflection of national aspiration" and efforts for the creation of a secure, equitable, and peaceful international order (MOFA,1997). Apart from the basic fundamentals of Nepalese foreign policy NC government emphasized the human rights and democracy aspect of the development. G.P. Koirala signed the Tanakpur agreement on 5-10 December 1991, where certain discussions regarding the agreement were created stating whether it was an agreement or a treaty (Gyawali and Dixit, 1999). Later, this problem was

resolved when the Supreme Court sorted out the issue and confirmed that it was a treaty.

However, the basic beliefs remained the same in Nepalese foreign policy even when the Panchayat system was abolished, democracy was welcomed, and the guiding principle of foreign policy was mentioned in the constitution of Nepal. As per the constitution, Nepal's foreign policy should follow the non-alignment policy guided by the principles of the UN Charter, international law, the Panchsheel, and the value of world peace. The main scope of Nepalese foreign policy was "enhancing the dignity of the nation in the international arena by maintaining sovereignty, integrity, and independence of the state" (Baral, 2022).

'4.6 Foreign Policy during Era of King's Rule

On October 4, 2002, the then king Gyanendra successfully dissolved the running government of Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, mentioning not being able to hold the general elections (Kim, 2013). The authoritarian policies of authoritarianism were adopted where king Gyanendra assumed all the executive's powers. Under the king's ruling, the formation of three governments was promoted in the light of Lokendra Bahadur Chand, Surya Bahadur Thapa, and Sher Bahadur Deuba. Unfortunately, not many changes in terms of foreign policy were seen during their tenure, as the former government could not last long. However, during the meeting with the representatives of international development agencies on November 18, 2002, held in Kathmandu, Prime Minister Lokendra Bahadur Chand stated that the government wanted to boost the relationship of Nepal with its neighboring countries, India, China, and also with other friendly nations (Subedi, 2005). Similarly, almost after two years, on February 17, 2004, Prime Minister Surya Bahadur Thapa, on the

57th anniversary of the Nepal Council of world affairs in Kathmandu, mentioned that the primary objectives of Nepal's foreign policy are to protect the national interest of the nation which is highly influenced by the geopolitical structure, economic boundaries, historical background and other vital factors of Nepal. Later, the government formed by the Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba highlighted the promotion of human rights, democracy, and development and advocated for the rule of law. In the 29th session of the UN General Assembly held in September 2004, foreign Minister Dr. Prakash Sharan Mahat stated, "Nepal has faith in democracy, human rights, and the rule of law followed by peace and development of the whole nation. Also stated how people are more inclined to democracy and freedom today than ever before" (MOFA, 2016).

However, the foreign policy of Nepal had a severe setback on February 5, 2005, with the takeover of the then King Gyanendra Shah (Subedi, 2005). This takeover had mixed reactions from over countries. Some supported the king with warm gestures in the international arena, whereas most of the countries that believed in democracy criticized the decision made by the king. However, the king expressed the desire for friendship with every nation and was willing to collaborate for mutual advantage. However, the rising Maoist rebellion keeps hindering the smooth monarchic execution in the nation. Nepal sought support from various nations, saying that it was a domestic matter and that international support should be extended, as the then king Gyanendra stated in the African Summit held in Jakarta on April 22, 2005 (Whitfield, 2008). King showed that Nepal has faith in the Non-aligned movement and the United Nations Charter principles. King also requested many multilateral forums and UN bodies to draw attention to the growing chaos in Nepal due to moist movements. However, many democracies like the US, UK, India, and EU showed displeasure in

how the then monarchy was ruling the state. The EU even suspended much aid during those periods; there was interference in the military assistance by India and UK. Even though there was growing displeasure by one neighboring country, India, China, on the other hand, looked at the matter as a domestic matter of Nepal and did not interfere. Hence, at the China Institute of International Studies in Beijing held on August 17, 2005, the Minister for Foreign Affairs Ramesh Nath Pandey praised the relationship between the two nations, and the relationship can be named as an all-weather relationship that is free from any dilemmas and irritants (Marwah and Ramanayaki, 2021).

Nepal was viewed as having great interest and concern by the rest of the world during this period even though the then government stated that everything was done to achieve Nepal's foreign policy objectives. Democracy, freedom, and human rights had direct and indirect effects on the international level during those times as political chaos was increasing inside Nepal. Despite the tremendous political imbalances inside the country, Nepal still managed to develop diplomatic relations with five more states. However, the continued interference by the Maoist in the internal development and executions had a significant effect on Nepal's foreign policy during this period.

4.7 Foreign Policy during Democratic Republican Era

The second mass movement took place in 2006, where many political actors and people participated (Osterman, 2006). This movement was carried out for nineteen days until King Gyanendra restored the parliament. This occurrence is considered vital in Nepalese politics and foreign policy objectives as it carries a series of significant changes in Nepal. The significant changes brought by the events are Nepal was declared as a secular state, the end of long royal entitlements, the harmony

between moist and SPA led government with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement that was commented to the peace and democracy of Nepal, an interim constitution was adopted, CPN-M has welcomed into legislature parliament, the event mark the end of violence and CPA dealt with various social and economic reforms were made after the fall of the monarchy. Policies were implemented to end the ongoing discrimination based on gender inequality, class, ethnicity, religious values, cultural aspect, Dalit, an indigenous group of people, minorities group of people, backward Madhesi citizens, and other socio-cultural factors.

In 2007 the UN mission in Nepal (UNMIN) was created to regularly monitor the management of arms and armies (Riaz and Basu, 2007). In Jan 2007, the interim constitution was mentioned as secularism and republicanism but not federalism. However, the Madhesi people were not satisfied with this adaptation, and soon a Madhesh movement was passed out by the Madhesi people living in the Terai region of Nepal. The protest was carried out, so the restructure of the interim constitution and amendment was to be made for the federal points. The protest believed that federalism would provide more excellent political representation for the marginalized Madhesi group of people. Later, after the second Madhesi movement, the amendment was made.

On May 28, 2008, Nepal was declared the Federal Democratic Republic, where Maoist emerged as the largest party in the constituent assembly (Thapa and Sharam, 2009). Hence, for the first time after 240 years,' the monarchy was successfully abolished. The President was appointed as the head of the state, and Prime Minister was responsible for heading the government (Hachhethu and Gellner, 2010). The Maoist formed the government with CPN- Unified Marxist-Leninist (UML) and the

NC and other newly emerged Madhes grounded parties. Despite differences between the political leaders and their opinions, the constituent assembly achieved many improvements so that new democratic constitutions would be promulgated. However, due to growing political differences on various contentious subjects, such as federal provinces form of government, the CA was unable to achieve the task, and the natural termination of CA was mandated in 2012. Therefore, in November 2013, the political leaders agreed to set up a timeline of one year to complete the constitution's writings.

However, 2015 witnessed a devastating earthquake. The earthquake left bad experiences causing several infrastructural damages and the loss of life to thousands of people in Nepal. The terrifying earthquake brought a sense of urgency to complete the constitution. The major three political parties, UML, NC, and UCPN-M, with the Madhesi party, decided to complete the constitution as soon as possible. In 2015 September, the constitution was finally promulgated along with various protests by various groups of people (Dahal, 2017). Women groups raised their voices for citizenship rights, and Tharu and Janajati groups had their issues. 2015 is also essential in foreign policy prospects as there was a blockade between the Indian and Nepalese border (Upreti & Subedi, 2019). Although the government of Nepal was accused of the blockade Indian government, the Indian government has denied the accusation stating the blockade was done by the Madhesi protests. Later the issues were sorted out with the same emphasis on boosting the relationship between both states. In January 2016, the constitution was amended so that a higher level of inclusion could be achieved (Upreti and Subedi, 2019). According to the new constitution, the election of the President and the Prime Minister has been successfully achieved as per the law. The election was conducted in 2017 after the constitution that witnessed the NCP as the ruling party at the federal levels and in six

provinces out of ten. However, due to growing party disputes, NCP could not make the last longer impact and split in 2017 as UML and Maoist center were independently present. In June 2017, Sher Bahadur Deuba was elected as the prime minister of Nepal for the fourth time. However, after a year of the election, the UML leader Puspa Kamal Dahal was elected as the new Prime minister 2018 (Thapaliya, 2019).

From 2020 to 2021, the government was under political crisis as there were many political disputes among the parties in Nepal (Singh, 2021). There was a frequent struggle for power between the major parties. The power struggle led to the dissolution of parliament by Prime Minister K.P Oli twice. Even though the President approved the dissolution of the parliament, it got denied by the supreme court. After losing the vote of confidence by KP Oli, Sher Bahadur was appointed as the new prime minister of Nepal (Ghimire, 2021).

Though the political situation after 2006 remained disturbed for a long time, the foreign policy objective remained unharmed by the changing government (Olsen, 2017). The foreign policy reports generated by MOFA over the years show Nepal's insistent in global peace, maintaining balanced relations with both the neighboring with changing times, the basis for regional cooperation remains the same and even more strong, Nepal is continuously engaged in building the multilateral relations, timely formulations of policies, development in diplomacy and Nepali diaspora are noticeable.

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS AND COMPARISON

5.1 Concept of Foreign Policy

In the twenty-first century, the concept of foreign policy does not only limit its focus on building a relationship with various nations; instead, more priority is given to promoting global peace, cooperation, and harmony. It could have never imagined that the concept of foreign policy would evolve from just a power struggle to much bigger pictures such as human rights and freedom of people with changing dynamics. A state's foreign policy, in general, is the creation of its interaction with another state. Because this interaction only occurs at the international level, it cannot be overlooked when examining the foreign policy of any state. Foreign policy decision-making comprises several steps and multiple actors. It is essential in a state's international affairs.

According to Beach (2012), "*Foreign policy is both the broad trends of behavior and the particular actions taken by a state or other collective actor as directed toward other collective actors within the international system. Foreign policy actions can be undertaken using various instruments, ranging from adopting declarations, making speeches, negotiating treaties, giving other states economic aid, engaging in a diplomatic activity such as summits, and the use of military force*".

Globalization is at the peak of the contemporary world where every state is co-related and in some way dependent on each other. In such a scenario, the primary goal of every state's foreign policy is to protect their political independence and territorial integrity by promoting within the framework of world order what is considered national interest, including economic welfare, national development, as well as security, and defense (Shah,1875). No matter how big or small, how strong or weak,

every state will prioritize the creation of a strong foreign policy through which national interest can be achieved as much as possible. However, unlike big and strong states, weaker states are most vulnerable to the power play of bigger powers. In the international system of anarchy, attaining maximum powers by state, self-help, weak and small states are the most exposed actors in the system. Foreign policies are those that all state governments generate in order to deal with other state governments to pursue the interest of the states at the domestic as well as the international level (Beasley, 2013)—but creating foreign policy is not as easy as it sounds because several factors are involved like domestic factors and international factors that have direct and indirect effects in policymaking. Also, to analyze the political structure of one's state, it is very important to view the international political structure. A state can never ignore the international political impact.

From the long history of Nepal's foreign policy, Nepal's foreign policy was kept within the epicenter of the central authority's powers to the decentralized government in the present. Though the various changes have occurred within the nation and its government, the dominating structures to attain and safeguard the sovereign independent character has always remained constant. All the political parties and governments stick to this basic belief of Nepalese foreign policy while promulgating new policies in the state. This method advocates the permanency and solidness of Nepal's non-aligned character filled with the values of peaceful coexistence and UN deeds. The geopolitical situations, cultural ties, historical experiences, idea of national identities, and opinion toward Nepal's external veracity has helped shape Nepal's foreign policy.

It is equally important for Nepal to go through the lenses of international politics because Nepal is a relatively smaller nation between two of its giant neighbors. As per the Ministry of Foreign Affairs documentation, bilateral relations outline the long-standing historical, cultural, traditional, and religious links that exist between Nepal

and India. It goes on to say that Nepal-China ties have always been positive and amicable. It argues that Nepal's connections with India and China are multifaceted and that both China and India assist Nepal in various ways, including economic, informational, military, and other operations (MOFA, 2016). Also, due to its complex geographical setting, it is always wise and suggested for Nepal to use neutral diplomatic practices. Suppose the political leaders develop the correct and appropriate policies while keeping the geo-location situation in the middle. In that case, this could prove to be a great opportunity for Nepal, as it is a landlocked nation and will always have to depend on other states to use the seaport. It is also not arguable that the foreign policies toward Nepal of India and China are based on their national interest. Nepal has encountered direct or indirect interference by either of the states in its domestic issues in several events. Due to this, keeping neutral relations and choosing a wise foreign policy is very vital and in the best interest of Nepal.

While going through Nepal politics through the lenses of international politics is vital to understanding why Nepalese political leaders choose a specific foreign policy decision from the very beginning the way they are today. During the unification era, King Prithvi Narayan chose to keep balanced relations with neighboring countries.

Meanwhile, the political transition after the fall of the Rana Regime can be considered the benchmark for Nepalese foreign policy. 1951 to 1990 was a golden era for Nepalese foreign policy (Khanal, 2019). Nepal faced various political transitions from absolute monarchy to democracy. Different political leaders and their opinion brought changes in the system and shaped foreign policy differently during their courses. Various infrastructure developments were carried out during this time. Nepal embraced diplomatic relations with more than 90 countries around the globe which is an excellent achievement for Nepal. The core value of the foreign policy was given more emphasis as a policy of non-alignment, and peaceful coexistence was kept the priority during this period. Apart from the UN membership during this time frame,

Nepal expanded its focus on various regional organizations. Hence, the aftermath of the Rana ruling is marked as the beginning of an era in Nepalese foreign policy as diversification and identification are at their peak. The successful and skillful execution of King Mahendra in the execution of the Nepalese foreign policy has helped to stabilize the regime and strengthen the foreign policy objectives. According to the Interim Constitution, the foreign policy is guided by the same unique guideline that has guided Nepal's foreign policy since the early 1950s.

5.2 Political transition's impact on Foreign Policy

Every nation has its way of conducting foreign policy within a state. The state practices its political system and theories that influence its foreign policy. The actions that today's state is engaged in achieving nations' interests are like maintaining a balance of power, fighting the struggle for survival, and focusing on nations' sovereignty. Similarly, every state consists of actors and leaders responsible for making the foreign policy, and leaders must make effective policies that benefit the nations and can attain the foreign policy objectives. While talking about Nepal from the very first, it has tried to maintain neutral relations with every state globally, mainly focusing on maintaining bilateral and multilateral relations with the states. While doing so, it is often seen that with a changing political system, various political parties have often sought help from other states to sort out the internal issues at the domestic levels. Also, in the case of Nepal, it is visible that from the time of unification to till now, various political leaders and governments came with their visions and mission. It has been common for political leaders and elites to seek support and opinion from external sources in Nepal since the mid-19th century (Thapa, 2011). The changing political scenario has often played a vital role in formulating policies at the domestic and international levels. Going through chronological order, from the time of unification to now, Nepal's foreign policy has encountered various ups and downs. Hence, the given thesis tries to analyze the various political transitions and the foreign policy objectives of each changing government.

Table 1: Different Political System with Political Interest and Foreign Policy**Objectives**

Political System	Political Interest	Key Foreign Policy
Shah Regime (1768-1815)	Expansion of borders and economic interest	Exclusionist Approach
Rana Regime (1846-1951)	Continuity of Rana Rule vs Democracy	Pro-British and Isolationist
Interim Democracy (1951-1960)	Sustenance of new found democracy	Non Alignment Policy, Special Relationship with India until Tribhuvan, Diversification Policy during king Mahendra
Panchayat (1960-1990)	Abolish democracy to establish panchayat system	Non Alignment Policy,
Multi-Party Democracy (1990-2002)	Period of Restoring normalcy with India	Non Alignment Policy, India Centric Policy
King Rule (2002-2006)	Gain support of foreign nations for direct monarch rule	Non Alignment Policy
Democratic Republic (2006 onwards)	Declaration of Federal Democratic Republic	Balanced Relationship

Source: (Compiled from Hamal (2002), Pradhan (1996), Khanal (1996))

During the time of king Prithvi Narayan Shah, the struggle for maintaining the balance of power and struggle for survival was the state's primary interest. Though the concept of foreign policy was not well documented during those eras, kings could always sense the shadows Nepal as a state could face if proper balance with neighboring states is not maintained and strong policies are not adopted. The noble advice from king Prithvi Narayan Shah has been the basis of today's foreign policies. With expansion there were conflicts with the East India Company and Tibet. The conflict was Nepal's border expansion with the East India Company and economic

interests with Tibet. Prithvi Narayan Shah took the approach of a balanced relationship with China and India. The then king Prithvi Narayan Shah did not allow any external factor to interfere with Nepal's domestic affair and followed the exclusionist approach. Nepal maintained cordial Foreign relations with British India, Tibet and China during those eras. As per Mahesh Chandra Regmi (1995), a nation's foreign policy, including state affairs, was determined by the then rulers that depicted the economics drives and political inferences. However, the exclusionist policy by the then king Prithvi Narayan Shah was followed strictly, giving no room for foreign interference in the nation's domestic affairs. Jayaraj Acharya (2014) the book accurately addresses the five major elements in the foreign policy of Prithvi Narayan Shah like unification of nation, military build-up, careful relationship with neighbors India and China, balance between offensive and defensive approach and creation of national economy.

When Jang Bahadur Rana took absolute power Nepal's foreign and diplomatic relations were limited to the British Empire. Unlike king Prithvi Narayan Shah, who advocated for balanced relations with India and China, Rana regimes only chose to keep close ties with the British Empire. This change of ideology and perception from balanced relation policy to isolation policy was thought to be in best interest for Nepal by Rana rulers during their ruling as the colonization was rapidly increasing in the south Asian part of the world. Various infrastructural developments and decision making were also carried out during the Rana regime. But these decision making were highly influenced by the interference of the British Empire in the state. There was a restriction to embrace friendly diplomatic relations with other countries except for the British Empire. Jang Bahadur Rana adopted an isolationist foreign policy later followed by all the subsequent Rana prime ministers practicing the pro-British

strategies. However, Nepal could keep its sovereignty and independence because of Rana Policy.

After the fall of the Rana regime for ruling the state for 104 long years, the country witnessed a new political transition. India apprehended influence on the restored monarch and Nepali political parties. As part of the British Himalayan Frontier Policy, newly independent India sought to portray Nepal as a vigorous member of its domain of influence by reminding the Indian parliament of its interest in the safekeeping of Nepal (Baruah, 2020). Hence, the foreign policy of Nepal till the death of King Tribhuvan is viewed as greatly influenced by the Indian curiosity. But sooner after the demise of King Tribhuvan, Mahendrs Bir Bikram Shah ascended to the throne as the new monarch in the year 1955 (Acharya, 2021). First general election for parliamentary democracy was held in 1959. Democracy was welcomed in the country with the newly elected Prime Minister of Nepal B.P. Koirala from the NC party (Levi, 1959). King Mahendra had an approach and element of a right statesman and vision to drive Nepal's foreign policy in new directions. This vision took Nepal to the admission UN membership in 1955, one of the major milestones on Nepal's foreign policy. Politics and political parties were flourishing during this period with democratic spirits. Nepal embraced diplomatic relations with many states. Koirala as the first democratically voted prime minister has hugely impacted Nepal's foreign policy. Koirala followed a non-aligned, independent, and balanced foreign policy, and planned state visits to neighboring countries India and China (Dahal, 2018). Mahendra and Koirala moved Nepal's foreign policy and global dealings into a much more balanced and non-aligned direction, while using foreign policy to raise Nepal's pride.

But before democracy could grow in the bigger picture King Mahendra demolished the democracy system stating that it is not best suitable for a country like Nepal. However, the spirit of non-Alignment policy was maintained, special relationship with India was maintained until Tribhuvan and diversification policy was adopted during king Mahendra. Hence, the king introduced the party-less Panchayat regime by expelling every political party from the state (Khadka, 1993). But the Indian government led to disapproval with the decision taken by King Mahendra. This unexpected royal coup trembled the friendly relation between India and Nepal. Some Indian politicians even thought of this move by Nepal as an anti-Indian step (Pant, 2018).

But unlike its southern neighbor China chose to stay silent in the domestic changes made in Nepal. Hence, it is often debated that the foreign policy of China to Nepal appeared to be realist whereas the Indian government chose the exact opposite tactics unlike China during the era of King Mahendra. The Panchayat system of the government was totally in control under the umbrella of monarchy. The decision taking authority and power was solely with the King either in foreign affairs or any decision to be made at the domestic level. Whether big or small, every foreign policy issue has to be approved by the king first. Even the foreign affairs ministry was running the king's go-ahead signals before making any changes in the foreign policies. Despite much criticism, it turned out to be a suitable course of action for the period to maintain the territorial integrity, sovereign equality and independence of Nepal, and balance between the strength of both the larger powers that King Mahendra used to pursue an independent foreign policy (Khanal and Poudel, 2021). However, foreign policy during this period remained stable and was able to flourish as various treaties and agreements were followed. The non-aligned approach and balance assisted King

Mahendra and Nepal to take the welfare from superpowers in promoting the success and dignity of Nepal.

With the restoration of the multi-party democracy system followed by the People Movement I of 1989, the state saw tremendous political changes. The period of restoring normalcy with India was the first step the political leader took as India-Centric policies were adopted (Singh, 2008). With the changes brought in Nepal, the foreign policy encountered the basic geo-economics and sociocultural ground reality. Similarly, the foreign policy of Nepal was still driven by the same guiding principles and territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence preserved. Nepal's foreign policy could be more supported if political parties in Nepal project uniform external policy.

The communist Party of Nepal-Maoist hurled a 'People's War' in 1996 against the monarchy and running government (Pettigrew, 2013). With the launch of 'People's War' the political chaos was increasing and the violent activities across the state followed the movement. Extending our relations with our immediate neighbors, promoting economic diplomacy, expeditiously dealing with long-standing issues like the Bhutanese refugee problem, revision of the 1950 treaty with India, and separation of the border with India were the foreign policy priorities of the Surya Bahadur Thapa government, as elucidated by then Foreign Affairs Kamal Thapa while speaking at a national seminar on 'Dimensions of Nepal's Foreign Policy' in Kathmandu on August, 1997 (Hamal, 20002). The elections were held in 1999 after the expiry of the tenure of the House of Representatives for the new one where Nepali Congress got the majority and the government was led by Krishna Prasad Bhattarai (Thapaliya, 2019). However, no new foreign policies were introduced.

On 1 June 2001, a horrifying event took place in the state where the whole family of King Birendra was murdered inside the Royal Palace in Kathmandu (Hutt, 2017). King Birendra's brother Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah succeeded to the throne after the royal massacre. But on October 4, 2002, King Gyanendra dissolved the presiding Sher Bahadur Deuba government stating of not being able to conduct the general elections (Maharjan, 2008). King acquired all the decision-making power by forming the three governments under the tenure of Surya Bahadur Thapa, Lokendra Bahadur Chand and Sher Bahadur Deuba again. But no major changes were made in Nepal's foreign policy during this period as the government could not last very long. In March 2003, the dominant forces in Nepal formed an alliance, completed the 18-point Common Minimum Program and launched a campaign against the autocratic monarchy (Milson, 2016). Since then a three-way power struggle between the king, the main parties and the Maoists has controlled Nepalese politics. Nepal's foreign policy underwent a major change with the takeover of King Gyanendra on February 1, 2005. The government then led by the king was dominated by the world's major powers and democratic institutions. Critics for its focus on firming ties with non-democracies. Many states still oppose the King's decision, as the King mentioned in the statement "Nepal wishes to be friendly with all people and is continuously prepared to cooperate for the shared good" (Bhandari, 2012).

Nepal's politics took a twist on April 24, 2006 after the People's Movement (Shah, 2008). The success of the popular movement put an end to the royal system. The whole international community welcomes the restoration of democracy and wishes for lasting peace in a democratic Nepal. However, Nepal was declared as the federal democratic republic in 2007 because of the series of instability brought up in the domestic politics of Nepal as the royal coup, disapproval of the king's actions by the

political parties, India supporting the actions of CPN Maoist, teamwork between the various parties (Gobyn, 2009). 2007 witnessed the end of a two-century-old reign of monarchy after the Interim Constitution of Nepal was delivered (Hachhethu and Gllner, 2010). According the Interim Constitution of Nepal, the foreign policy would remain to be directed by the similar golden guidelines that had been guiding Nepal's foreign policy since early 1950's. However, in the immediate aftermath of this seismic shift, Nepal's foreign policy, including domestic matters, shifted to favoring Indian interests at the expense of other members of the international community. This was most likely due to India's significant role in getting Nepali political groups and the CPN Maoists collected and supported their movement against King and his actions. This course of actions changed with time. From implementation of the Interim Constitution of 2007 to the promulgation of the Constitution of Nepal of 2015, the foreign policy of the undeveloped republic mainly focused on maintaining the balance between two immediate neighbors India and China (Breen, 2018). The new constitution promulgated in 2015 gained the immediate attention and popularity in the global arena. But India on the other hand showed dissatisfaction in various provisions mentioned in the Constitution which resulted in the trade embargo imposed by India blocking trade routes to Nepal that is internationally against law as Nepal is a landlocked country. During this hard time, the K.P Oli led government took support from China and strengthened Nepal's relation with China by signing a Trade and Transportation agreement that allowed Nepal to use various transit facilities through China to carry out international trade. Aftermath of the constitution of 2015, foreign policy of Nepal was diversified by focusing from the immediate neighbor to interaction with the international community. Nepal's relation with other international communities was invigorated, and relations flourished among various levels. Many

countries extended Nepal's help to reform and rebuild after the devastating earthquake. Nepal played an active role in the global arena as a result Nepal was elected repeatedly in 2018 and 2020 in the United Nations Human Rights Council for reflecting the non-aligned, independent and peaceful nature of Nepali foreign Policy (Pande, 2021).

CHAPTER VI: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Nepalese foreign policy has seen drastic changes with each change in the political system inside Nepal. It is believed that the past reflects the present. Likewise, the foreign policy and the core value of the foreign policy in Nepal are images from history. From the phase of unification to federal democratic Nepal, Nepal has held a strong grip in the international arena. Nepal embraced diplomatic relations with other countries and has tried to expand cordial relations with every nation. It can never be ignored that the political trajectories impact the foreign policy development of Nepal.

This political transition has always gathered global attention, and Nepal has often been described as a country in transition since there have been radical political changes since the unification period. These political changes have not only played in reforming the structure of Nepal but also have made radical changes in the socio-cultural, economic, and domestic policy aspects of Nepal. From the period of absolute monarchy to the democratic republic, Nepal has entered into an era of globalization, focusing on attaining foreign policy objectives. These objectives aspire to achieve economic growth and political stability and maintain its balance of power in the era of globalization. But before entering into globalization, Nepal has won the long battle in preserving its foreign policy objectives. In 1950, Nepal entered into a period of modernization after the fall of the Rana regime (Singh, 2004). This modernization welcomed democracy and openness in the political order. New thoughts, ideas, and leaders with a great vision started emerging across Nepal. Development was at the heart of modernization.

The modern foreign policy of Nepal can be studied in two major aspects. The first is the strategic foreign policy of Nepal that mainly limited its focus and priorities to the

development of military intensity. The core objectives of the strategic foreign policy objectives are the protection of territorial integrity, sovereignty, and independence. The second major aspect of Nepalese foreign policy is the political aspect of Nepal. Thus, the following dissertation has limited its priorities to the political aspect of Nepalese foreign policy goals.

Nepal has held the act of balancing, which resulted in the maintenance of territorial integrity and independence of the state. Even though various political changes were carried out, sovereign equality is always at the heart of Nepal's foreign policy. The foreign policy of Nepal has been able to enhance the state's image in the international arena through strong policies, goodwill, non-alignment, and perspective on regional and global affairs, attaining the support and cooperation from the countries, either big or small or powerful, weak. Nepal's foreign policy objectives are to follow national interests while being involved with the external world. However, securing the domestic need through the international corridors is one of the major objectives of Nepal's foreign policy, for which various political parties often negotiate and are engaged in international forums.

The dissertation has included the various political transitions from unification to till date. The major impact the political transition has brought in the development of foreign policy objectives, how the changes in the politics have created chaos in the country, and how leaders have shaped the foreign policy objectives according to their self-interest. There were many political transitions in Nepal, and the continuing changes followed these transitions in the political parties and leaders. These elites followed their viewpoints on foreign policy decision-making. Some leaders had pro-Indian foreign policy objectives, and some followed the Chinese intervention in the

domestic foreign policy. At the same time, many tried to follow the diversification and identification of foreign policy objectives. These political leaders have often asked for foreign assistance while dealing with domestic foreign policy matters. These initial foreign policy help has often affected Nepal's external foreign policy decision-making.

During the Rana regime, the Rana ruler followed the isolationist foreign policy and limited its relation with the British Raj. After the fall of the Rana regime, the People's Movement led by the Nepali congress dismantled the Panchayat regime. However, this era successfully gave birth to modern Nepalese foreign policy. Nepal's foreign policy has embraced the international society warm-heartedly. From the time of UN admission to the twenty-first century, Nepal has taken the United Nations very seriously. Nepal lacks a strong military strategy like many developed nations, and it has sought it as an important parameter to maintain peace nationally and internationally. Nepal has contributed to the peace-keeping operations, and Nepalese soldiers have attained high respect and image as loyal, efficient, and impartial. Due to the landlocked nature of Nepal, it has to depend upon other states for trade and transit. Hence, from the restoration of democracy in Nepal after 1990, Nepal's assimilation towards the globalization process has been emphasized further. Various concepts like globalization, conception, and liberation have been promoted ever since. Nepal has been introduced as a responsible member of the global community. Moreover, the respect for the value of human rights, freedom, justice, and regard for human dignity has made Nepal a unique and growing member of democratic nations. The foreign policy of Nepal has brought the spirit of cooperation and harmony among the other nations in the international arena.

Nepal has emerged at a new level of awareness of the international society after the restoration. Increased diplomatic relations with other states growing openness of all the political leaders have shaped a better image of Nepal internationally.

However, political parties are an essential element of representative democracy. Political parties shape states' foreign policy and are often heard directly or through interest groups. But there is, time and again, intervention from neighboring countries has often hindered the foreign policy choices in Nepal. The political leadership in the formulation of foreign policy decision-making should be clearer, firm, responsible, and inspiring. Balanced relations with every nation should be considered. Leaders should always analyze the challenges Nepal faces during the formation of strong foreign policy. The political leaders should focus on expanding relations outside the world, strengthening foreign policy, persuasion of national interest, reforms of diplomatic institutions, effective bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, the impact of globalization, and focusing and regional cooperation. The foreign policy of Nepal should have a positive tune with the process of globalization, concepts of liberalization and privatization, concentrating on openness and participation in the multilateral and global fora along with political decency. Though Nepal's foreign policy has gone through many ups and downs, the basic elements remain the same. Hence, the dissertation has focused on the political specific while formulating the foreign policy objectives.

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