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## Role of Capacity/Skill Development Trainings in Rural Livelihood: A Case Study of Hapur, Dang

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### Abstract

*Education has transformative potential if it is connected to people's life and their livelihood. And education has been seen as a means of developing capabilities, promoting employment potentials, and reducing poverty in rural communities. Reflecting upon those ideas, this study explained transformative role of capacity/skill development training on livelihood in rural contexts. There is no doubt, capable, knowledgeable and skillful youths have been playing change agent role especially in local levels. The study applied quantitative case study research methodology to test the significant relationship between study variables. Questionnaires, and key informant interview techniques were applied while collecting data information. Set of questionnaires were filled up with 108 respondents selected by using stratified random sampling methods. The study found significant role of capacity/skill development trainings on rural livelihoods. Further, skilled and capable youths are becoming human capital in the society and working for transforming social capital. They are also generating household economy by involving in income generate activities. The study concluded that capacity/skill development training program conducting in local level help to nourish knowledge, ability and develop vocational skills of male and female youths. And they are now playing transformative role in the society and achieving rural prosperity. Therefore, findings of the study can become fruitful guidelines to the policy makers and planners in local levels.*

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**Keywords:** Capacity development training, skill development training and rural livelihood.

### The Contexts

More than half of the world's population are still living in rural areas, where total population is expected to climb to over 8 billion by 2025 (United Nations [UN], 2013). Rural areas can be conceptualized differently, where human settlement and infrastructure occupy only a small share of the landscape, natural environment dominated by

pastures, forests, mountains and deserts. In Nepalese context, out of total 125 ethnic groups with 26,494,504 populations, majorities of them are living in rural areas and still facing poor service networking and living with vulnerable livelihood. However, in the past 15 years, interest in promoting and protecting economic, social and cultural rights has grown for securing right to take part in cultural life, to be free

from hunger that obstruct the full participation of everyone in economic and social life (UN, 2015).

Talking about rural livelihood, there are 3.8/5.4 million households (more than 71%) farming households (National Agriculture Census [NAC], 2011/12) and indigenous people (approximately 37% of the total population) lag considerably behind the national average in terms of economic advancement (Central Bureau of Statistics [CBS], 2011). Similarly, rural livelihood diversification is essential to change rural life through construct a diverse portfolio of activities and social support capabilities for survival and in order to improve rural life (Ellis, 1998). Rural people are practicing diversified livelihood practices like rural to urban migration, remittance, commercial farming and local business etc. DFID argued, sustainable livelihood can be achieved through high quality education, information, technologies and training, supportive and cohesive social environment, better management of natural, infrastructure and financial resources, and institutional environment that support multiple livelihood strategies (DFID, 2002).

Literature also suggests adopting an holistic view of the development of the rural space, preparing rural people for off-farm employment by building knowledge and skills capacity, understanding the complementarities of urban/rural linkages and developing partnerships with Non- Government Organizations (NGOs) and the civil society (United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] & Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO], 2003, p.52). Educational discourse on rural transformation was more focused on agrarian reform, modernization, state intervention, market liberalization and structural adjustment before 1990. But focused on empowerment and sustainable livelihoods in a broader context of poverty reduction strategy in late 1990 (Ellis & Biggs, 2001). Here is why, education has transformative potential if it is connected to people's life and their livelihood (Sen, 2005). Education has been seen as a means of

developing capabilities, promoting employment potentials, and ultimately reducing poverty of people in the rural communities (Atchoarena, 2006).

More so, capacity/skill development trainings are parts of vocational skills. Vocational skill development training is designed to enable participants from disadvantaged group like rural, poor and women for developing practical skills so that they can involve in income generate activities (Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training [CTEVT], 2011). In Nepal, CTEVT was established in 1989 assigning the roles of skilled development (Sharma, 2012). The vocational skill development training conducted throughout the country not only help participants to improve their quality of life through the gainful employment, but also supports to the social and economic development process of the country (CTEVT, 2012). And such types of skills affect economic development process of the country because it enhances earning, potential career progression and employability of the individuals (Bajracharya, 2010).

In this context, role of capacity and skill development trainings in sustaining rural livelihood in global and national contexts must give high emphasis. It is because it can be one of the strategies to transform rural life and livelihood, achieve rural prosperity and control rural to urban migration. Development stakeholders like local governance, I/NGOs, civil society, politicians, community based organizations and media are providing various kinds of capacity and skill development training to the youths in local level so that they can apply their knowledge and skills for sustaining their livelihood by involving in economic development activities. Even local governance mechanism has been implementing targeted budget program for inclusive development (Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development ([MOFLD], 2013). The guideline (Article No.10), has clearly mentioned at least 35% of total capital budget to be allocated for the defined targeted groups. As the provision of the guideline, at least 10% of

capital budget is to be allocated for the women empowerment and capacity enhancement. Out of the remaining 25% of the 35% budget, at least 10% is for poor and deprived children and 15% is for socio-economically deprived, backward and marginalized people (*Dalit, Janjati, Muslim and vulnerable communities*).

The literature Incheon Declaration known as Education Framework 2030 also recognized education as the main driver of development. The declaration suggested teachers/educators to conduct transformative research agenda for transforming rural lives and sustainable development (UNESCO, 2015). Here is why, major intent of the study was to understand how local stakeholders are working together for sustainable livelihood, experiencing meaning of learning, creating new socio-cultural and economic structures and perceiving about civic virtues and a sense of justice (UNESCO, 2015). However, more focus was given to analyze the impact of capacity and skill development trainings in rural livelihood and transformative role of trained youths who have been supporting their family, society by involving in income generating activities in Hapur village. This study is very much justifiable to generalize the effect of capacity and skill development trainings in rural contexts. Therefore, findings of the study can become fruitful guidelines to the local level planners, policy makers and local politicians/intellectuals.

### **Theoretical Lens: Capability Approach**

The center ideas of capability approach focuses on the agency and judgment of individuals including their capability, responsibility, and opportunity. Raising human capability is good because it improves: the choices, well being, and freedom of people; their role in influencing social change; and their role in influencing economic production (Sen, 1985). Amartya Sen also distinguishes human capability approach from human capital. Human capital is important, as it refers to the agency of people in augmenting production possibilities. Yet human

capability is more important because it refers to the substantive freedom of people to lead the lives they have reason to value and to enhance the real choices they have. Education and training, for example, is crucial beyond its role in production; it is the most important role being that of increasing human capability and therefore choice (Sen, 1985). Again, Sen cites Adam Smith who links productive abilities to lifestyles to education and training, and presumes the improvability of each.

In this framework, I tried to explore capability approach in some detail, both conceptually and in terms of its empirical implications. I agree that if freedom is intrinsically important, then the alternative combinations available for choice are all relevant for judging a person's advantage from sustainable rural livelihood perspective. On the other hand, if freedom is seen as being only instrumentally important, then the interest in the capability set lays only in the fact that it offers the person opportunities to achieve various valuable states (Sen, 1982). From real freedom aspect, freedom gives more opportunity to fulfill expected desires of any individuals. Thus, having freedom means not being forced into some state because of constraints imposed by others. Similarly, from process aspect, freedom helps any individual's ability to decide to live with joy; however he or she may like and promote the ends that they may want to advance (Sen, 2009, p. 228). In my reflection, concepts of capability approach; functioning, freedom of choice, capability and well-being/development are basic grounds for human and social capital formation and household economic generation. To me, being capable means being a knowledgeable and skillful who can then play supportive role to the own family members and villagers. One can transform their social and economic relationship and foster the rural economy. It can ultimately transform livelihood of the villagers in local level and uplift rural development process.

### **Methodology**

This study designed under quantitative case study

research methodology. Case study research involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system, setting or context (Creswell, 2012). The study aimed to analyze influence of capacity and skill development training in livelihood of the local people in Hapur village. It is a specific or a complex functioning thing like; boundary and working parts and purposive social interactions (Stake, 1995, p. 2 as cited in Yazan, 2015). To explain relationships between capacity/skill development training and rural livelihood by understanding causes and outcomes of variables (Yin, 2003), I applied single instrumental case study for interpreting experiences of the respondents on the foundation of personal experiences and background (Creswell, 2012).

For this purpose, I selected 108 respondents by applying multi stage sampling method (Burton, 2007). In the first stage; 22, 86 total households of the case (Hapur village) has been considered as a theoretical population (CBS, 2011). In second stage, 178 male/female youths who participated in capacity/skill development trainings were selected as sample population. Finally in third stage, 108 trained male/female youths were selected as sample number for collecting primary data which is generated with 95% confidence level and 5% marginal error by using sample size determination formula (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). The random stratified sampling method was applied while selecting the respondents. Structured questionnaires were applied for data collection. Key informant interview was also conducted with role model youths and local intellectuals. This has explored participants' perspectives on researching issues, phenomenon or situation (Mason, 2002).

### **A Case Study: Hapur Village**

Hapur village is located northern part of Dang District. At present, out of 13 sub metropolitan cities created by the government in new federal structure, the village is situated in ward number 11 and 12 of Ghorai sub metropolitan city (The Annapurna Post

Daily, March 11, 2017). However, it is situated from plain low land of valley to high hills and large Patan (pasture or high grazing land). Very few i.e. only ¼ land of the village situated in hilly region and remaining in plain and agricultural land. Tropical and sub-tropical and temperate climate can be found in Hapur village. Thus, Dang valley exhibits a pattern of two seasons: a cold dry season from October to March, a hot dry season from March to September. More specifically, extreme cold season falls in December and January and extreme hot season falls from May to July. In this area, maximum temperature falls to up to 40.5 degree Celsius and minimum temperature falls up to 0 degree Celsius. Likewise, average rain falls recorded as per minimum 1266.3 to maximum 1779.5 mm. The Hapur village is regarded as a one of the historically, religiously, and economically sound villages of Dang District.

This village is just seven kilometer far from Ghorai Bazaar which is one of the major urban centers of the district. Majorities of the local people produced main crops like wheat, maize, and paddy. They also produce vegetables like cauliflower, cabbage, tomato, potato, onion, garlic, runner beans, pumpkins, carrot, eggplant, bitter guard as well as meat and dairy products. Majorities of the local people have been living in rural areas as compared to urban dwellers. Housing structures can be seen in both typical traditional pattern and in modern pattern. Typical houses are made by stone, soil, wood, and roofs are covered by aluminum tin, cemented tiles and sedimentary rock plates and modern housing are made by cement and breaks by varies architecture model to adopt climatic variation. There are twelve educational institutions in the village. Electricity facilities and telephone services are available for all. It has both black topped and gravel road for transportation purpose. Hapur village at a glance (see in table 1).

### **Discussions of Findings**

Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom-

Table 1: Profile of Hapur Village

Title	Descriptions
Area	71,800 square kilometer
Population	18682 (Male 53.82 % and female 46.10 %)
Total HHs	A- 2286 HHs
Administrative center	Ward no 4
District center	Ghorai Bazaar
Main crops and products	Rice, Maize, Wheat, pulses and dairy or meat
Electricity, telephone & security	Available
Road Networking	Black topped , gravel and rough road available
Educational institutions	12[3 secondary, one l/secondary & eight primary]
Community Forestry	18 [3243 HHs User groups & 209.51 Hector land]
Literacy	67.45 [Male 56.89% & Female 48.3%]

**Source: Village Profile, 2016**

Aristotle. After involving in capacity/skill development training, local youths are realizing their capability and playing transformative role in the society. With this, trained youths are becoming active and interactive and improving their life and livelihood. By involving in decision making process in household and local levels, they are playing leadership role in the society. Further, by involving in income generating activities, they are also playing economic role in the society and mobilizing their earnings. More specifically, transformative role of trained youths on rural livelihood have been discussed under three different sections viz. human capital formation, social capital formation and household economy generation.

### Human Capital Formation

The central focus of development is people. People are thus, means and end of development. In this study, local youths who participated in capacity/skill development training are becoming means for transforming rural livelihood. From development perspective, this is a process of human capital formation. During the process, respondents have participated in various capacity/skill development trainings (see in table 2).

In fact, out of total respondents, majorities 59.25% were male and 40.74% were female. 37.03% respondents had completed lower secondary, 23.14% had completed secondary level education and 12.03%

Table 2: Capacity Development and Skill Development Trainings

S. No.	Capacity Development Trainings	Skill Development Trainings
1	Community health and sanitation	Tailoring and embroidery
2	Women empowerment	Agarbatti (incense stick), soap and candle making
3	Youth leadership and development	Goat farming and Poultry farming
5	Ethnic awareness program	Mushroom cultivation
6	Dalit capacity development program	Leaf plate and pickle making
7	Awareness raising program	Tunnel vegetable farming
8	Advocacy	Ginger, turmeric & dry food processing

Source: Field Survey, 2016

were illiterate. 48.14% respondents had 4-6 numbers of children and living with joint family system. Majority that is 91.66% respondents have strongly agreed that they have become capable and skillful after participating in trainings. Out of them, 31.48% respondents had participated in capacity development training, 29.62% in skill development and 38.88% in capacity and skill development trainings. Out of total, 74 respondents had participated in vocational training; only 48.66% respondents were involved in agro based and non-agro based activities with commercial purpose and remaining are applying their skills in household level. Similarly, 43.51% respondents' children were studying in institutional school. Majority that is 83.33% respondents shared that their self-esteem and social status has been increasing in satisfactory level. Chi square value of 0.059 also shows dependent relation between skill development training and involvement in income generating activities. Finally, studied variables related to human capital indicate that trained youths are not only improving rural livelihood but also becoming human capital. They are now benefited to self, society and nation (Colm, Walker & Wester-gaard-Nielsen, 2001). This situation indicate that little amount of investment in trainings has been producing human capital in local levels for sustaining rural livelihood.

### **Social Capital Formation**

Social capital deals function of neighborhood's relationships in any particular communities that uplift group participation or collective cooperation (Kawachi, 1999; Ponthieux, 2004). Accordingly, trained youths are maintaining social harmony and socio-cultural integration in Hapur village. Blending with the literature of Coleman (1988), trained youths are viewing social relationship from sociological approach and maintaining socio-cultural environment, subject to norms, rules, and obligations. They are advocating against caste based discrimination, gender violence, and early marriage and illiteracy. It can be analyzed that they are thus, fostering social capital and working for maintaining social networks, social connectedness, trust, reciprocity, sense of identity

and norms. In fact and figure, out of total respondents, 34.25% respondents are playing leadership role and 38.88% are planning to play in near future. Majorities 88.88% respondents expressed their satisfaction with mutual relationships among villagers. And 62.03% respondents argued that caste discrimination and untouchability are decreasing as local youths are practicing inter caste marriage.

Similarly, majority: 94.44% respondents are members in community based in/formal organizations. Out of total, 44 female respondents, majority- 90.90% respondents are members of mothers group and saving groups. Majority: 54.15% respondents were found active in decision making process in household and social levels while mobilizing economic resources. They are seeing social relationship from economic approach and becoming self-interested, becoming independent individuals seeking to fulfill their goals (Coleman, 1988). Finally, studied variables related to social capital indicate that trained youths are also playing social and political role in the society. They are now advocating for mobilization of youths in commercial farming activities for the betterments of rural livelihood. They are also creating demand for capacity/skill development training program with development stakeholders. Majorities of the respondents have good relationship within a group of people (bonding), strong external connections (bridging) and relationship with those who have power (linking) social capital (Winter, 2000).

### **Household Economy Generation**

The process of human capital and social capital formation has been fostering economic well being of the people in Hapur village. Therefore, human capital, social capital and economic capital are determinant factors for transforming rural livelihood. Thereby, access to new knowledge and skill development, income generating opportunities, credit facilities are considered essential for economic well-being of the rural people. Respondents of the study are creating self/employment opportunities and playing economic role. They are managing and

mobilizing sources of income and financial income. Most of the respondents that are 45.37% have 5-10 ropani farming land in which 75% households are following agriculture based occupations. Majorities 65.74% respondents are producing food grains for 9-12 months. By involving in income generating activities, majority of respondents (51.34% ) are earning NRs. 1,50,000-2,49,000 and 48.66% respondents are earning 2,50,000-4,50,000 NRs annually. 75.92% respondents have saving account in local cooperative and bank. 82.40% respondents were investing 4,000- 12,000 NRs monthly for child education. Correlation between income and investment in child education was found 0.249. Likewise, 38.3% respondents were keeping income and expenditure records. Skewness value of income 0.939 and expenditure 0.482 shows that income and expenditure of the households are normally distributed. Most (49.07%) respondents have 35,000-80,000 NRs credit loan who were investing in commercial farming. Studied variables related to household economy generation indicate that due to the outcome of capacity/skill development training youths are generating and mobilizing household economy for improving rural livelihood. Role of skillful youths have been influencing social change economic production, which is gist of capability approach (Sen, 1985).

### **Conclusion**

Capacity/skill development training program implemented in Hapur village has played significant role for transforming rural livelihood. Awareness level of local youths including Dalit and marginalized who participated in capacity development trainings increased and they are now advocating against social/cultural stigmas. Youths who participated in skill development trainings are involving in agriculture and non-agriculture based income generate activities and mobilizing local resources. They are supplying their products in rural hinterland and urban centers for generating household economy. They are not only supporting the livelihood of their family members but becoming motivational sources for

others as they are playing social, economic as well as political role in the society. No doubt, trained youth are becoming human capital for the society and they are establishing social relationship among themselves and others. They are creating social and economic capital in the village. Therefore, the study comes up with conclusion that after becoming human capital, trained youths have been experiencing their knowledge and skills practically in their own village and creating productive socio-cultural and economic structures and working for sustainable livelihood. To conclude, trained youths have been playing transformative role in Hapur village due to efforts of local stakeholders who implemented capacity/skill development training program in local level for improving rural livelihood.

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