



## Practicing of Religious Agenda in Nepal

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### Abstract

Nepal is known as multi religious nation, however, national population census 2011 and 21 notes more than 80% population as Hind. In this context the paper highlights the religious agenda of Nepal in terms of past, present and future. Main objective of this study is to analyze how religious agenda appears in politics of Nepal and why Nepal cannot follow the essence of secularism in practice. The study concentrate on the research question as how is religious agenda used to manipulate people to get political benefit and does there is connection between political system and religious belief practice. The study followed qualitative research design. Both primary and secondary data were used to fulfill the objectives of this study. Primary data were collected through in depth interview with religious leaders and politicians and secondary data were collected through library study. Conclusion of this study is based on both primary and secondary data. Overall analysis of the study showed that religious agenda is always been controversial in Nepal and it is used to manipulate people to fulfill the certain interest of rulers.

(Keywords: Religion, politics Nepal, Hinduism, Hindu and secularism)

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### 1. Introduction

The word term 'religion' is used to address the certain socio cultural system of particular community. The word religion was used in 12th century to address certain spiritual phenomena such as belief system or moral lesson. In the context of Hindu society the belief practice or a set of value system is connected with certain philosophy and given name 'Daharma'. Dharma and religion is almost similar but cannot use synonymous in the sense of practicing in contemporary society. The study focuses on religious agenda that has been practicing in Nepal since pre- historic period to know which very much related to English term religion and less concentrated on dharma practice by people for the welfare of the humanity.

Now, Nepal is known as home land of multi-religious where various religious communities have been living since long time ago. Hindus and Buddhists are the ancient religious community of Nepal, however, before arrived Hindu in Nepal animists were lived and they have no certain religious principle like Hindu and Buddhist. In this regards, Rishiram Adhikari notes, "In pre-historic time people worship nature and followed the rule of nature. They do not have the gods and demons typical of Hinduism, nor do they include the principles and ethical teachings associated with Buddhism." (3). It shows that there was no religious groups in Nepal before entered the Hindus from the south. Gopal is known as the first ruler of Nepal. It is believed that they were come from south and they followed Hindu religion. Buktaman the first king of Gopal dynasty and also has known as the first king of Nepal. He worshiped the lord Shiva and built the first temple of Pushupati Nath, one of the biggest temples of Shiva. Hindu Religion is known as the oldest religion of the word and it is believed that the religion is based on the philosophy of Veda, the oldest scripture of the world. Buddhist is the second oldest religion of Nepal introduced during the time of Kirant era. (800 BC–300 AD). Gautam Buddha was born 563 BC Lumbini and one of the disciple of Gautam Buddha king Ashoka Maurya(304–232 BC) ruled India came to Kathmandu during the time of 14th Kiranti king Sthumko( ). He got married his daughter with the princess of Nepal and established

Bihar in different part of Kathmandu valley. *Sthumko* recognized Buddhism as official religion in Nepal. After recognized Buddhism by the state Hindus were unhappy with the king and they tried to omit the king from power. Traditionally, Kirnati followed *Kirnat* which is neither totally based on Vedic ritual nor present practice of Hinduism. It is near to the animism. Some of the animists adopted the philosophy of Buddha and practice the in day to day life that latter develops as form of religion. People who had followed Vedic disliked the expansion of Buddhism made war in Nepal in the name of religion. In the war Nobody got victory but *Kirant* regime had ended in Kathmandu valley and Lichhavi regime began. Suryamani Adhikari notes ,” Lichhavi were devotee of lord Vishnu, one of the major god of Hindus who plays role to protect the living being , and established many temples lord Vishnu in different part of Kathmandu valley” ( 2). During the time of Lichhvi period there happened religious war between Hindu and Buddhist. The war had happened around 9th century. Adhikari mentioned about the religious war of Nepal as,” During the period of Lachhavi 8th century Shankarcharya came in Nepal and criticized the Buddhism” (67). This war had known as the great religious war of Nepal. These accounts show that Nepal has been facing religious conflation since the time of Kirant era; however Nepal has been adopting Hindu religion as the main religion of Nepal.

Hindus and Buddhists were harmoniously lived in Nepal during the Malla period because issue of religion did not become major agenda of the state. Muslims and Christians also entered Nepal during the Malla period. Since the time of Malla Nepal has become multilingual nation. Religious tolerance had seen during Malla period but that did not continue after unification. King Prithivi Narayan Shaha announced Hindu emperor. Guideline of Hindu scripture like Manu Smirti, one of the religious codes made by Manu, scholar of Hindu, took main source of state law. The traditional has been continued till the time of Rana regime. Janga Bahadur Rana, the first Prime minister of Rana regime, made the first written legal document “ Muluki En (country code) which was based on Hindu religious. Till the time of Rana regime Nepal officially and unofficially followed Hinduism and negated the existence of other religion.(Bohara, & Magar ,2014).

## 2. Theoretical Overview of the Main Concepts

Throughout the course of history, religious identity is one of the main issues among people living in Nepal. Religion has held a significant position in the development of civilization and the philosophical understanding of humanity. Even in the earliest societies, some form of religious belief existed, with individuals placing their faith in miracles, offering prayers to supernatural entities in the celestial realm, and making sacrifices to appease them. The Vedas, the oldest scriptures of Hinduism, contain hymns that extol the greatness of God. M. Gupta notes, “During the Vedic period, natural forces such as the wind, sun, fire, and water were revered through hymns and rituals, gradually evolving into the formal worship of divine images in temples through established religious practices” (17). In prehistoric period way of life is known as religion but that is not conditioned for long time. In historic period, religion was practiced as ideology of powerful person or ruler. The system of worshiping and regarding the nature was shifted and reached into the certain enlightenment or powerful idea. The practice created tussle among group of people that tussle was known as religious war and each group tries to justify themselves as justices. Such practice had also happened in Nepal and created contradiction on religious belief and practice. The practices are often manipulated to suit the interests of religious and political leaders based on their own ideologies. Sharma highlights the situation as, "Religious situation in Nepal may not be entirely clear; it is undeniable that Nepal has always been a land of devout individuals. The people of ancient Nepal were guided by religious beliefs, although it is uncertain whether they were part of a specific religious community" (34)

Nepal is known as the land of devotees where people are engaged to worship many gods and goddess. There does not fix religious belief in Nepal so that contradictions and conflict on religious practice has been going on. The report entitled, “Report on international religious freedom: Nepal” published by American foreign ministry through American Embassy of Nepal has published the situation of religious unjust of Nepal as:

As in prior years, human rights and minority religious groups expressed concern that the constitution's and criminal code's ban on conversions could make religious minorities subject to legal prosecution for actions carried out in the normal course of their religious practices, and vulnerable to prosecution for preaching, public displays of faith, and distribution of religious materials in contravention of constitutional assurances of freedom of speech and expression.(

Above documents show the serious religious disputes of Nepal that occurred due to unclear legal policy and practice on religion. Constitutionally Nepal had declared secular nation in 2006. The provision is continued in the constitution of Nepal 2015. The provision of secularism defined as, "Religious, cultural freedoms, including protection of religion, culture handed down from the time immemorial". The constitution guarantees that all individuals are entitled to freely profess, practice, and safeguard their religion. During the exercise of this right, the constitution prohibits individuals from participating in any actions that go against public health, decency, and morality, or that disrupt the public law and order. It also forbids the conversion of individuals from one religion to another or any behavior that could endanger the religious beliefs of others, with penalties enforced by the legal system. The punishment for inducing the conversion of another person, commonly known as "forced conversion," or engaging in any act that undermines the religion, faith, or belief of any caste or ethnic group, is set at five years' imprisonment and a fine of up to 50,000 Nepali rupees (\$378) according to the criminal code. Like that criminal code makes provision to punish to foreign too if he/she commit crime related to converse the faith. It shows that the practice of secularism is weak in Nepal, however, secularism has introduced in 2006 in constitution.

### 3. Methodology

The study followed qualitative research design to examine the religious issues in Nepal as outlined in various constitutions throughout history. According to Creswell qualitative research design allows for the analysis of situations based on interpretations derived from evidence gathered from secondary sources. Therefore, this study is based secondary sources of data obtained through library research. Such as books, journals, and legal documents like constitution and ordinances analyzed.

It is reviewed and analyzed different national population reports published periodically, constitutions promulgated in different time. The principal documents reviewed and analyzed for this study are as follows

**Table: 1 the Principal Documents**

S.N.	Documents	Date
1	Government of Nepal Act	1948
2	The Interim Government of Nepal Act,	1951
3	The Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal,	1959
4	The Constitution of Nepal	1962
5	The Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal	1990
6	The Interim Constitution of Nepal	2007
7	The Constitution of Nepal	2015
8	National population reports (Since)	1952 to 2021

Above-mentioned documents were taken as supporting document for this study and analyzed religious agenda based on these documents.

### 4. Discussion

Legal documents such as constitutions, statutes, and executive ordinances play a significant role in compelling individuals to adhere to the religious beliefs prevalent in a specific nation. In the context of Nepal constitutional provision create the landmark for the religious identity of the nation. The constitutional provision outlines the structure that regulates the interaction between religion and politics in Nepal. This study explores the convergence of religion-driven politics and constitutional regulations.

#### Provision of Religion in Constitutions

Constitution is the main source of law and guideline of the nation so that constitutional provision is meaningful for implementing the agenda. In the context of Nepal constitutional provision play important role on implementing the religious agenda in Nepal. The first constitution had promulgated in Nepal in 1947 in the name of 'Government of Nepal Act'. The constitution mentioned the provision of religion in part (3) article (4) as:

By not violating the principles of public morality, in accordingly to the existing and new Act and rules to be made hereunder, is given fundamental rights to the citizens of Nepal that of Personal Liberty, Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Publication, Freedom of Assembly or Organization, Freedom of Religion, Equality before the laws, Cheap and Speedy Justice, Free and Compulsory Primary Education throughout the country, adult franchise, Right to Protection of Private Property. (3)

The constitution addressed religion as the fundamental rights of the people and included provisions to safeguard all religions. Particular religion has not been mentioned in the constitutions. Article (p. 42) sub articles (2) further justified about the provision of religion as, "Any proposal affecting the religious rites or thoughts of any caste or institution shall be deemed to have passed only if two-thirds of the members present and vote in favor on it"(2). The second constitution of Nepal promulgated in 1951 named, "The Interim Government of Nepal Act" with the establishment of democracy. The constitution is neutral and secular in term of religion. The constitution mentioned the issue in article 15 (1) as, "The Government shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, cast, sex, and place of birth or any of them"(7). Similarly, the constitution made provision of protecting people from beggary and proved equal right to all people who belong to various religions. In this regards, article 20 (2) highlights, "Nothing in this section shall prevent the Government from imposing compulsory service of public purpose, and in imposing such service the Government shall not make any discrimination on grounds only of religion, race, cast or class or any of them"(p. 22). The constitution established equality and did equal behavior among all religion. However, the situation could not go long time and new constitution promulgated in 1958 named, "The Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal". The constitution constitutionally declared Nepal as Hindu kingdom the preamble as:

Whereas His Late Majesty King Tribhuvan Bir Bikram Shah Dev, Father of the Nation and revered descendant of the illustrious King Prithvi Narayan Shah, adherent of Aryan Culture and Hindu religion, having led a Great revolution for the rights and welfare of His subject. (Preamble, 1)

It is indicates that the constitution of the kingdom of Nepal only given permission to Hindu king to rule in Nepal. Same matter mentioned in article (1) sub article (3) and insisted king to be Hindu emperor. Similarly, article (4) sub article (2) mentions the issue as, "In the application of general laws there shall be no discrimination against any citizen on grounds of religion, sex, race, caste or tribe"(p. 4). The constitution mentions rights to follow own religion in article (5) and states, "Every citizen, having regard to the current traditions, may practice and profess his own religion as handed down from the ancient times. Provided that no person shall be entitled to change his/her religion. "(p. 7). The provision discouraged people to adopt new religion and compelled them to continue old one. The constitution focused to control conversion. The Constitution of Nepal, 1962 was more rigid on the provision of religion and declared Nepal as Hindu kingdom. In this regards, Article (3) sub article (1) goes, "Nepal is an independent, indivisible and sovereign monarchical Hindu State. (2). The constitution has only given rights to rule Hindu king that mentioned in article (20) sub article (1) as "In this Constitution the words 'His Majesty' mean His Majesty the King for the time being reigning, being a descendant of King Prithivi Narayan Shah and adherent of Aryan culture and Hindu religion"(10). The constitution also followed the

provision of previous constitutions about rights to follows the religions in article (14) as, "Every person may profess his own religion as handed down from ancient times and may practice it having regard to the tradition. Provided that no person shall be entitled to convert another person from one religion to another"(12). Conversion is constitutionally restricted in Nepal. Issue of religion was mentioned in the Country code (1963). There had made provision of six years imprisonment if someone involved in the activities of conversion. The details are as follows;

Punishment to the people who were involved in conversion in the following way; No one shall propagate any religion in such a manner as to undermine the religion of other nor shall cause other to convert his or her religion if a person attempts to do such an act, the person shall be liable to imprisonment for a term of three years, and if a person has already caused the conversion of other's religion, the person shall be liable to imprisonment for a term of six years, and if such person is a foreign national, he or she shall also be deported from Nepal after the service of punishment by him or her. (Country Code (1963, 405)

Above legal provision continued till 1989. After the 1990's movement, a new democratic constitution was established. The constitution opened the gate to follow other religions except Hindu but there no option for people to choose new religion. The constitution had no clear vision and Nepal has defined as Hindu nation. Article (2) noted that, "The Nation Having common aspirations and united by a bond of allegiance to national independence and integrity of Nepal, the Nepalese people irrespective of religion, race, caste or tribe, collectively constitute the nation"(1). In the same line, part (3), article (12) and (12) also mentioned same provision and given equal opportunity to all religious community to expresses their views and opinions. Moreover, in article (19) made the provision of rights to religion that goes on:

Article 19 Right to Religion (1) Every person shall have the freedom to profess and practice his own religion as handed down to him from ancient times having due regard to traditional practices; provided that no person shall be entitled to convert another person from one religion to another. (2) Every religious denomination shall have the right to maintain its independent existence and for this purpose to manage and protect its religious places and trusts. (Constitution of the kingdom of Nepal-1990, 10)

Constitution provides equal opportunities to all people to follow their religion; however, legal practice is no different from the previous constitution. In article (4) sub article (1) and article (27) sub article (1) that goes on:

Article 4 The Kingdom (1) Nepal is a multiethnic, multilingual, democratic, independent, indivisible, sovereign, Hindu and Constitutional Monarchical Kingdom. "In this Constitution, the words "His Majesty" mean His Majesty the King for the time being reigning, being a descendant of the Great King Prithvi Narayan Shah and an adherent of Aryan Culture and the Hindu Religion. (Constitution of the kingdom of Nepal-1990, 2)

The provision highlights the manner in which the state authority in Nepal has prioritized religious identity, despite the constitution guaranteeing equal rights to all individuals residing in the country. The provision emphasized the importance of hind religion and established it as a key component of national identity. Religions other than Hinduism declined to adhere to the constitutional provision and instead called for the establishment of a secular state. The Maoist Civil war began in Nepal in 1995, sparked by the desire for a secular state. After the end of the Maoist civil war in 2006, the Interim Constitution of 2007 was established in January of the same year. The constitution abolished the tradition and adopted a new regulation in matters of religion. This new regulation goes against Hinduism and the Hindu monarchical system of governance. The constitution granted equal rights to every religious group and established the country as a secular state. In article (4) there clearly mentioned Nepal as a secular state, "Nepal is an independent, indivisible, sovereign, secular, inclusive and fully democratic State"(p.1). In the same line, the constitution mentions Nepal as multi religious nation. In this regards, Article (4) highlights, "Having common aspirations and united by a bond of allegiance to national independence, integrity, national interest and prosperity, the Nepalese people endowed with multiracial, multilingual, multi-religious and

multicultural specialties collectively constitute the nation"(p.2). Nepal has been officially recognized as a secular nation for the first time, granting minority religious communities the freedom to embrace and propagate their faiths. Article (23) notes:

Every person shall have the freedom to profess and practice his/her own religion as handed down to him/her from ancient times having due regards to traditional practices. But no person shall be entitled to convert another person from one religion to another and shall not take actions or behave that would create disturbances in other's religion. Every religious community in accordance with the law shall have the right to maintain its independent identity and conserve and manage its religious places and trusts. (Interim constitution of Nepal, 2007, 6)

The provision differs from the provision stated in the previous constitution as it paves the way for a new milestone in terms of land conversion. The constitution guarantees equal rights of freedom and equality to all individuals residing in Nepal, regardless of their religion.

Various political parties like national Democratic Party (Rastriya Prajatantra party), Unified Nepal Party (Akhanda Nepal) tried to create huddle in the implementation of secularism and demanded to reestablish Hindu kingdom. The National Democratic Party prioritized this matter as the main agenda during the first constitutional assembly; however, the party did not secure enough seats to create pressure for the reestablishment of a Hindu kingdom. In the constitutional assembly's second election, the National Democratic Party secured a greater number of seats, establishing itself as the fourth largest political force within the assembly. At that time the National Democratic Party did not take interest to reestablish Hindu state and the party participated in government. In this context the constitutional assembly drafted the new constitution in 2015 with the principle of secularism. In article (4) mentions the provision as:

State of Nepal: (1) Nepal is an independent, indivisible, sovereign, secular, inclusive, democratic, socialism-oriented, federal democratic republican state. Explanation: For the purposes of this Article, "secular" means religious, cultural freedoms, including protection of religion, culture handed down from the time immemorial. (Constitution of Nepal,(2015), 1)

The legislation establishes Nepal as a secular country with diverse religious affiliations. The preamble of the constitution emphasizes the diverse religious identity of the nation rather than declaring it a Hindu state. The preamble of the constitution mentions "... multi-lingual, multi-religious, multi-cultural and diverse regional characteristics,"(p. 1). Article (3) also repeats the provision as, "All the Nepalese people, with multiethnic, multilingual, multi-religious, multicultural characteristics"(Constitution of Nepal, 1). The constitution endeavors to resolve the issue of state religion and cater to the needs of non-Hindu communities. It describes detail in article (26) about various aspects of religious rights as:

Right to freedom of religion: (1) every person who has faith in religion shall have the freedom to profess, practice and protect his or her religion according to his or her conviction. (2) Every religious denomination shall have the right to operate and protect its religious sites and religious Guthi (trusts). Provided that nothing shall be deemed to prevent the regulation, by making law, of the operation and protection of religious sites and religious trusts and management of trust properties and lands. (3) No person shall, in the exercise of the right conferred by this Article, do, or cause to be done, any act which may be contrary to public health, decency and morality or breach public peace, or convert another person from one religion to another or any act or conduct that may jeopardize other's religion and such act shall be punishable by law. (Constitution of Nepal, 10)

Constitutionally national identity of Nepal shifted from the Hindu religion to a multi-religious nation. Major political parties like Nepali congress, Nepal communist party united Leninist Marxist, and Nepal communist party united Maoist played important role to establish secularism in Nepal. However, the issue is still controversial Nepali congress.

## **Religion and Politics**

Nepal has historically embraced a diverse range of ethnicity, cultures, and religions, some rulers strategically labeled the nation as a Hindu kingdom, sparking political controversy. Shah dynasty claimed themselves as incarnation of god. The idea was embraced by the public for an extended period and was seen as the legitimization of monarchy. Monarchy portrayed it as a manifestation of religion. Nepalese people also adhered to this custom under the pretence of Hinduism. After completed the people movement II the monarchy and Hinduism both had removed from Nepal. Religious based nationalism ended with the provision of secularism. In this regards, David notes:

The decline of religious nationalism in Nepal makes it an interesting exception in a time where the tendency is for more assertive religious nationalism. This research has attempted to isolate a list of interdependent factors that may explain this decline in Nepal: being a fragile state, having a top-bottom religious nationalist structure, and experiencing a legitimacy crisis made it impossible to withstand the pro-secular pressure. A general hypothesis on the conditions needed for a shift from religious nationalism to secularism or from religious nationalism to secularism is also presented. (2)

Nevertheless, the prominent political party such as Nepali Congress is facing uncertainty regarding the matter of religion, with certain leaders attempting to garner votes through the exploitation of religious themes. Undoubtedly, Nepal is predominantly Hindu as over 80% of its population adheres to the Hindu faith. So, the agenda of establishing Hindu nation is very cheap and a simple slogan for the political parties. National Democratic Party tries to use the slogan to sustain political life of the party; however, other parties are also going to share the agenda.

Secularism emerged as a key political platform for the Maoists during the civil war, ultimately aiding the party in securing political control. Now Hinduism is slowly and gradually becoming the main political agenda of collecting votes from the Hindu people. Because of the number of Hindu population the religious agenda is becoming the main issue of gaining political power in Nepal.

### Religious Statistics of Nepal

After established of democracy in 1951, there began to mention of religion in the national population census. Before that only total number of population including males and females had mentioned. The following table shows the statistics of religious group since 1952 to 2021

Year	Hindu	Buddhist	Muslim	Kirant	Christian	other
1952-54	88.87%	8.59%	2.54%	-	-	0.01%
1961	87.69%	9.25%	2.98%	-	-	0.07%
1971	89.39%	7.50%	3.04%	—	0.02%	0.05%
1981	89.50%	5.32%	2.66%	—	0.03%	2.49%
1991	86.51%	7.78%	3.53%	1.72%	0.17%	0.28%
2001	80.62%	10.74%	4.20%	3.60%	0.45%	0.39%
2011	81.34%	9.04%	4.39%	3.04%	1.41%	0.78%
2021	81.19%	8.21%	5.09%	3.17%	1.76%	0.58%

Source : Population census 1952 to 2021

In 1952 only three languages had mentioned in national population census. After 1971 Christian religion has recorded and in the census of 1991 Kirant religion mentioned. Total population of Hindu has dramatically reduced between 1991 to 2001. During the period Hindu population decrease from 86.51% and reached into 80.62%, however, the number is constrain in the census of 2011 and 2021. Except other religions the number of Muslim population is increased.

### Synopsis of the Main Research Outcomes

In practice Nepal followed the essence of secularism but legal documents forcefully identified Nepal as Hindu religion. Since the time of Junga Bahadur Rana, the first Rana prime minister of Nepal, legally Nepal is identified as Hindu nation and compelled people to follow Hindu religion and belief practice. After the end of Rana regime new constitution established in Nepal with the provision of democratic norms of accepting religion freedom, however, such provision could not implement in practice. Religious issue became the agenda of politics in Nepal because the number of Hindu people is in majority and each of the political parties and administrative leaders work in the in favour of Hindu people. Such hidden politics of religion is still practicing in Nepal because there is provision of celebration Hindu festivals as major festival, government provides regular fund to celebrate carnivals and festivities based on Hindu myth and legend. More than that some political parties like National Democratic Party and Shiva Sena parties denied the constitutional provision of secularism and demand of Hinduism as national identity. Leaders of ruling political parties like Nepali congress, CPN (Communist party of Nepal) united Marxist Leninist, CPN Unified Moist also officially involved into the celebration of Hindu festival and tries to capture of sentiment of majority Hindu people. In the democratic history of Nepal religion become the main agenda of politics so that all the constitutions promulgated in Nepal directly or indirectly accept the dominance of Hinduism and neglect the essence of secularism. Majority of the Hindu population compelled to CPN unified Maoist to adopt middle path on religious issue, however, the agenda of secularism introduced in Nepal by the then CPN Maoist during the time civil war

### **Conclusion**

Nepal is officially recognized as a secular and multi-religious country according to the law, yet data from the national population reports in 2011 and 2021 indicates that over 80% of the population adheres to the Hindu religion. The provision of Nepal being a secular nation was accepted by major political parties such as Nepali Congress, Nepal Communist Party, United Maoist, and Nepal Communist Party United Leninist Marxist, as stated in both the Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007 and the Constitution of Nepal 2015. The provision of secularism was opposed by the National Democratic Party in constitutional assembly and became political agenda, however, the agenda is not so strong among public.

At the time of making constitution of Nepal 2015 India, a neighboring country of Nepal, and the ruling party Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) have strongly opposed on the matter of secularism. Major political parties made secularism as a political agenda and abolished monarchy on the ground of the agenda. Through analyzing political development of Nepal and constitutional legal provision on religion it is found that religion is not only social and cultural agenda in Nepal. It is one of the major political agenda and tools to rule over people. National Census shows highest number of Hindus so that political parties of Nepal try to use the sentiment of hind population, however, the practice is not seem fruitful and believable among people. In this context, new political power may introduce in Nepal with religious and social agenda. The party may lead religious conflict between Hindu and non- Hindu that it will be the main problems in the future. Thus, political parties should be conscious about the religious issue in Nepal that may go out of control due to support of BJP of India.

### **Limitations, Implications, and Further Directions of Research**

The study focused on the issue of religion in the context of Nepal which is one of the debatable issues of politics. There are various issue related to religion, however, the study is limited to the issue why secularism cannot implement in Nepal although Nepal has constitutionally declared as secular nation in 2015. The issue raised in the paper has discussed by using qualitative research methodology and interpreted the document that makes religion as debatable issue in both politics and practice. Issue of religion is debatable in south Asia the issue plays important role to maintain peace and harmony in Nepal because Nepal one of the multi religious nation of south Asia. The conclusion of this study provides an understanding about secularism in Nepal because the ongoing discussion about religion has become a divisive topic in Nepali politics, potentially jeopardizing the country's peace and unity. As a result, the outcomes of this study are crucial for promoting peace and harmony in Nepal, whether through upholding the current constitutional provisions or by reinterpreting it. For the further research



researchers can be study in various issue related to religion such as 'religion as source of conflict and turmoil in Nepal' or 'Religion as tools for political success in south Asia: In the context of Terai belt of Nepal'.

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