



(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



Harmony in transformation: A comparative study of communist -Led social sector progress in two local governments of Makwanpur, Nepal

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Abstract

Progress or development is the result of various elements. It is very difficult to align the development with particular causes. Communist led social sector progress is the need of society to analyze the results from the various perspectives. This study aims to find out the effects of communist led social progress in the Local Government of Makwanpur district. A cross sectional study with 2 random communist led LGs has been chosen and performed this research. A mixed method approach applied with KII and FGD tools were applied for the analysis, research conducted during Jan-March 2023.

The data illustrated that the role of communist led government has increased the awareness of power of speech, empowered to make a decision and solve the problems in the community levels. The development progress and other basic parameters are strongly associated with local participation and increased inclusion approach. The right approach is more in the ground and community lead government has taken considerations to the people with low-income range and poorest in the society more in priority. A change in development approaches as well as the participation of various sectors and people's involvements are ongoing practices in the surveyed LGs. A number of social benefits and other privileges are the evidences of the study areas. However, the political factors and various role of community has also created a stage of conflict that is issue for the all sectors and creating a challenge in the coming days. A situation of equally treated from every perspective and high empowerment and a community lead development learnings are the common findings of the study, inclusion in development has increased.

Keyword: Communist Transformation; Development; Awareness; Right Approach; Empowerment; Inclusion.

1. Introduction

In many ways, Nepal's ongoing political transformation can be seen as the continuation of processes that began in the middle of the twentieth century (Joshi & Rose, 1966). Drawing on inspiration and support from the Indian independence movement, Nepali democracy activists allied with the exiled king, Tribhuvan Shah, and in 1951 led a successful revolution against the autocratic Rana regime, which had ruled Nepal for the previous century (PMO, 1946). Shortly thereafter, King Tribhuvan issued a royal proclamation calling for the election of a Constituent Assembly and the establishment of multi-party democracy. The manoeuvrings of those opposed, as well as inter- and intra-party disputes, led to the postponement of parliamentary elections until 1959, and plans for a Constituent Assembly were scuttled. Instead, a commission appointed by King Mahendra, (Nepal news, 1955), Tribhuvan's son, drafted Nepal's first constitution, which he promulgated prior to the parliamentary elections in 1959. The Nepali Congress (NC), which had led the anti-Rana movement ten years prior, won more than two thirds of the seats in the 1959 elections.

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The Communist Party of Nepal (CPN), founded by Pushpa Lal Shrestha in 1949, was already an important opposition party, along with other monarchist groups. Despite its majority, the Nepali Congress-led government struggled to secure political stability. Under the pretext of restoring law and order, King Mahendra removed the Nepali Congress government, arrested its leaders, and used his authority under the constitution to employ direct rule in December of 1960. Two years later, Mahendra promulgated a new constitution, which ushered into existence Nepal's 'panchayat democracy'. (Whelpton, 2005; Shneiderman et al., 2016).

The Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-M) is an ideological heir of the Communist Party of Nepal, established in 1949. In the Nepali context, Maoism was to a large extent defined by principles of insurgent military strategy and continuous revolution. Prior to the establishment of the CPN-M, such principles had been adopted by the then-Communist Party of Nepal (Marxist-Leninist), and were first manifested in the Jhapa Movement of the early 1970s. The forerunners of the CPN-M, the CPN (Masal) and the CPN (Mashal), held similar convictions and also believed that Chairman Mao Zedong's death had led to a counterrevolution in China. They felt that the capture of the state was possible only by starting the revolution at the village level and organising the peasants. When the Nepali Maoists, at the time a comparatively small radical group, began the 'People's War' in 1996, their fundamental understanding of the route to state power was similarly founded. (Subedi, 2016).

The young party activists led the most significant faction to emerge from the split. "Towards the latter half of the 1960s and early 1970s, the Communist movement in Nepal also developed its extremist sections. The Chinese cultural revolution and the rise of Maoists in India who came to be known as the Naxalite influenced their rise" (Muni, 2004). Mohan Chandra Adhikari, Chandra Prakash Mainali, and Radha Krishna Mainali established the NCPs Koshi Regional Committee in Nepal's south-eastern area. They founded the Jhapa Organization, an underground guerrilla force influenced by the teachings of Charu Mazumdar, the architect of West Bengal's Naxalite rebellion. However, in 1971, their operations were put to an end by the Nepalese army's successful counter-insurgency campaign, which resulted in the deaths of many of their cadres. The guerilla campaign in Jhapa was a complete failure, prompting an in-depth self-critique within this group, resulting in a fundamental distrust of 'imported' political dogmas and a renewed concentration on developing a unique Nepalese road to socialism. The organisation eventually created the Nepal Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist), abbreviated MALE, in 1978 and embarked on a long-term plan of establishing and merging a statewide network of clandestine party cells. MALE, like many other communist organizations, initially opposed the referendum as a hoax, but later reversed its position and became an outspoken backer of the multi-party system movement. Throughout the 1980s, the young MALE increased in prominence, eventually eclipsing the older generation-led pro-Soviet NCP-M. MALE was by far the most powerful and organized wing of Nepal's communist movement by the decade's close (Thapa, 2022).

Jana Andolan's victory brought the autocratic Party-less Panchayat System to an end, and additional concerns arose. The leadership must be cognizant of public opinion and the voice of the people. The political elite was incognizant of the newborn democracy's specific needs. To feed the vast majority of the impoverished in remote and rural areas, Nepal, a semi-feudal country, required a massive reengineering of its socioeconomic structure. But someone frequently exploited it as a pretext for intraparty fighting, sowing the seeds of future conflict and encouraging the emergence of new ideologies as a societal process. The CPN (Maoist) took the lead in advocating for this position. To make everyone "essentially equal" in terms of resource availability while simultaneously making everyone "sovereign" in actuality, significant structural modifications were necessary. In 1996, the CPN (Maoist) proposed a 40-point agenda to the Nepali Congress government led by Sher Bahadur Deuba. They stated that in such a situation, "bourgeoisie democracy" would be incapable of meeting people's needs and would have to be rebuilt. Reforming the feudal and complex culture was not an effortless task. Maoist viewed the palace as the primary political foe of the feudal regime. As a result, they considered "republicanism" as a paradigm for Nepalese social reform. And vowed to reject the CPN's desire to reshape Nepalese society militarily and politically. They began the People's War (PW) with a single 303 rifle on February 13, 1996, by attacking officers. PW quickly developed into a formidable force capable of fighting and seizing weaponry from the Royal Nepalese Army (RNA). Gathered powerful weapons to defend themselves against RNA's attack. During the PW, 17,000 Nepalese were killed or disappeared. "The People's War developed in an orderly fashion, garnering global attention. They began broadcasting using mobile radio stations. By strengthening their troops and establishing bases in villages, they gained control of over 80 percent of the country. The Residents of various locations expressed a sense of "government oblivion" (Nickson, 1992). The Maoist-controlled villages increased their strength while limiting the activities and appearance of other parties. In 1998, the UML split because of factionalism within it over the Mahakali Treaty with India. Those who were against the Mahakali Treaty formed the CPN (MALE) under the leadership of Bamdev Gautam. Because of the split of the CPN-UML, it won 71 seats in the 1999 general election, while the CPN-ML did not win even a single seat. "The UML-ML split was so self-destructive to both the parties' interests, the cause of the UML-ML split as being cultural rather than ideological" (Thapa & Rokka, 1999). "The main reason for the split of the CPN

(UML) was not the ideological and working differences, but the annulment of the post of Deputy General Secretary by the Central Committee on June 27, 1996, saying that there was no provision in the Legislature" (K.C., 2065).

After 10 years armed conflict and 19 days people's movement, Nepal has entered to the phase of making a new constitution. It is evident that new constitution will not only be a democratic, also will be federal and inclusive too. Though the idea of federalism was mooted in Nepal around the 1990s when Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal 1990 was framed, but at that time it got no importance. Establishment of the multi-party democracy, and parliamentary system were the major political issue of that time. Nepal has been exercising a unitary and centralized system for more than 240 years. During this period rulers always preferred to the concentration of power and opposed to every effort of the devolution of power. During Panchayat and Parliamentary period decentralization was adopted as the constitutional provision but no sincere efforts were made to implement such provisions. Even the legal instruments like Local Self-Government Act were not properly used to implement the provision made in the constitution (Belbase, 2016).

Acharya et al (2014) found that In Nepal, local governments were instituted during the Panchayatera in 1960, in 1990, the democracy was reinstated and a more liberal approach was implemented in the political system. In 2002, the tenure of the local bodies was run out and these were handed over to central government bureaucrats until 2017 to run the overall administrative and development activities at the grassroots level, Federal, Provincial and Local Governances are the three tiers of Government established as per Federal act 2016 (Acharya et al., 2014; Chhetri et al., 2021).

After implementation of Fedelalization Nepal administrative body divided into three tiers of government. Federal, Provincial and Local Government. A total of seven province classified within a total of 79 district in Nepal. Consequently, a sum of 753 Palikas comes under the Nepal. After Decentralizations, the Communist Government through Various allies ruled the government in majority ad various ups and down witnessed during the period. Hence this study is considered to analysis the effects of communist lead social progress within the core communist district in Nepal, and it is found that a LG level of study is the requirement to analyses the long-term effect and social progress can be measured.

A review by Sharma and Chhetri (2023) added that social institutions play a positive role in structuring people's behavioral patterns; however, some demerits associated with these institutions are the limited perspective that can lead the marginalization of certain groups or individuals who do not conform to the norms and values of the dominant culture. Communist transformation review is one of the challenging and innovative steps towards the progressive society that will show a trend towards positive development. (Sharma & Chhetri, 2023).

2. Materials and methods

This is a cross sectional study and purposively Makwanpur district is chosen as one of the historical districts for the communist movement. The district has a total of 10 Municipality and some 2 Palika, one is Hetauda sub-Metropolitan city and another is Bagamati Rural Municipality (*See Figure-1*) one of the remote eastern sectors of Makwanpur district. To execute this research, a sum of total seven key stakeholders has chosen that can representatively pave their opinion about the communist transformation or policy level information in regards to the communist moments. There are Politician, Civil societies, Government Employee-Civil servants, Farmers, teachers, and NGO/ Development staffs and reporters who fit best to state about the social progress or social elements.

Hence 3 responses from each above were designed to collect from the each selected Palikas. Hence a total of 42 interview questions (*Sample annex-1*) were collected and considered as collection of primary data through self-structured questionnaires. The data further validated through KII and FGD tools that was collected from the LG staffs, representative members of the Palika and from the farmers through interactions. Some 3 KII from each Palika and 3 FGD from each LG was collected and findings of the KII and FGD were compiled and planned to add in the Results section. The data was collected during Jan-March 2023. The data further processed through SPSS and graphs and tables were prepared and illustrated in the Results Sections.

P Value, Regression analysis and Correlation analysis was designed to see the reliability and comparison of the data collected from the two distinct Palikas of Makwanpur district.

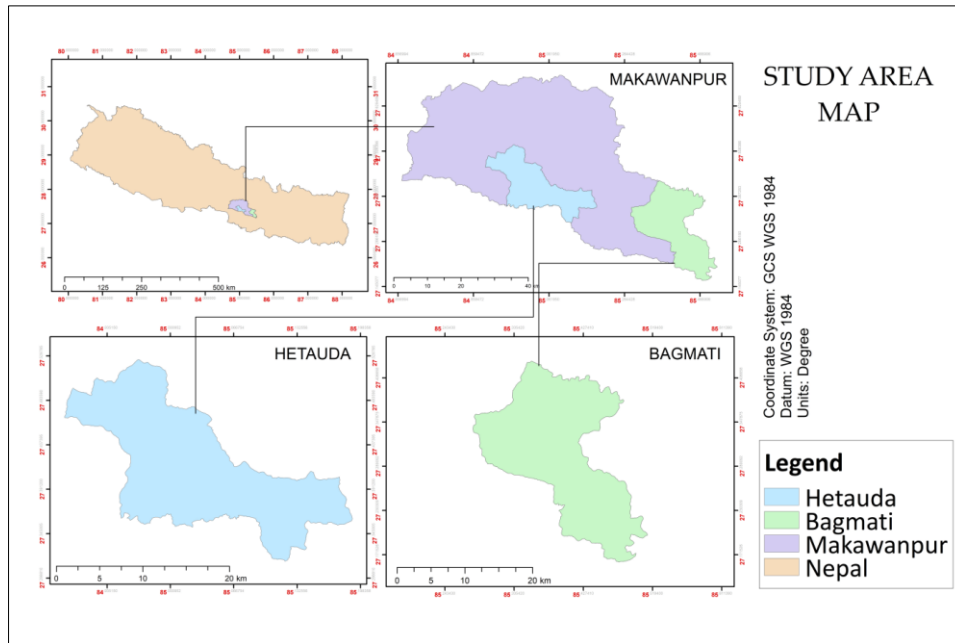
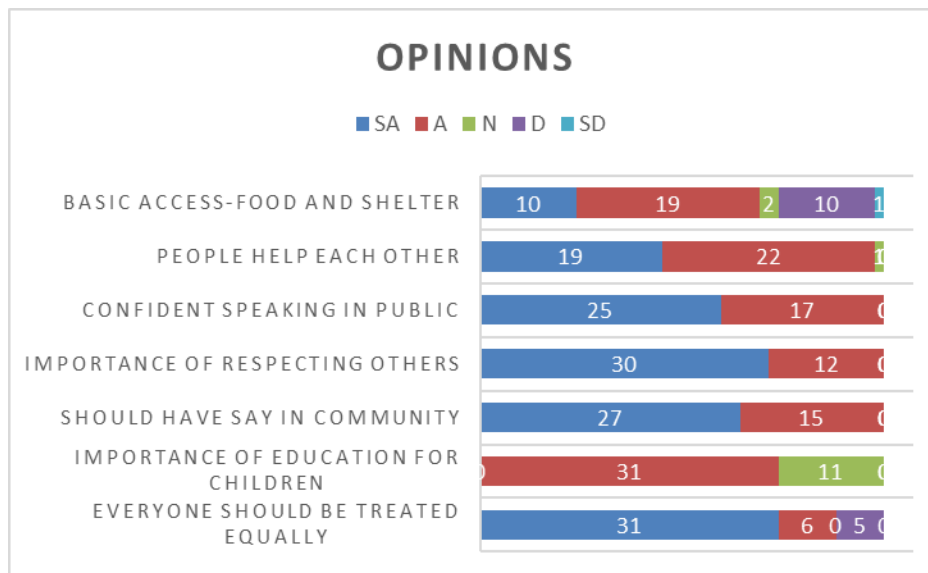


Figure 1 Study map

3. Results and discussion

In the result section, the data from the two Palikas was further converted into table and Graph and illustrated herewith-



(Source; -Field visit, 2023) (Note: Five Likard scale used SA-Strongly agree, A-Agree, N-Neutral, D-Disagree and Sd-Strongly Disagree)

Figure 2 Opinion summary related to rights and social leadership in the study areas

The respondent’s majority stated that the social and cultural pattern of society has been changed as basic access like food, cloths and shelters are more in advocacy and raising voice. Some Disagree figure speaking a fact that the still some point need to consider the primary need of human need.

The communist manifestation and advocacy are both targeting the suppressing people or such who are below low income or lower poverty levels.19 SA and 22 A is the evidence on this indicating that the Majority of peoples are supporting each other’s. Hetauda is Urban areas Whereas Bagamati is eastern remote rural areas, the common features of social helping mean a lots and this is due to social integrity as per the cultural unity and somehow communism promotions of integrity and the we concept.

The freedom of speech and respecting other are other examples of social progress, the people with various caste and languages have integrity in each other are also evidence of social progress through communism effects.

The communism school of thought has a common understanding and promotion of speak up loudly and raise the voice, in these manifestations, the freedom of voice and speaking mentality is highly accepted by the respondents. The importance of education is another fact that is highly appreciated by the participants who were engaged on the interviews.

In case of treated equally, the participants have argued and accepted more in equity and equality concept, but some disagree pointing that still due to complex society and many other social institutions the political establishment by the communist are somehow challenging and elites and power sharing factors are disturbing this figure and this is the facts that treated equally are suppressed and away from the benefits, this is insignificant figure in the study area.

Chairman of Hetauda and Bagamati LG commonly stated that the people with low income and poor backgrounds people and communities are the top priorities for the Government. The policy and programs are also targeted for the such people who could get a optimum benefits and learned and earned but still there are many political challenges occurred which is difficult to address

FGD participants of Bagamati and Hetauda stated equally that the Communist visions are no doubt are good and made for the people with low background, raising voice for them, many people also benefited under this, such as local elected peoples are from the different family and caste backgrounds, women’s are participating in policy level positions, DAG are in some position to rules the law and many more things are fact but still the power sharing exercise is taking all benefits to some special hands who is more powerful and misused accordingly.

Table 1 Opinion summary of the community about the social status and rights-based questions

Legend	SA	A	N	D	SD
Community activities more included	3	34	5	0	0
Improvement in children treating	19	22	1	0	0
Helping those who are in need	32	8	2	0	0
Right of opinion freely	40	2	0	0	0
Responsible for well being	1	29	7	5	0
Work together for common goal	14	28	0	0	0
Treated everyone equally	13	29	0	0	0
Involved in community decision process	1	36	5	0	0
People support each other in difficulties	8	36	0	0	0

(Source: - Field visit, 2023)

In a summary of various opinions from the surveyed areas, it was found that the majority of respondent agreed on community activity more included. The community activities are gathering, dissemination of information. Making of Users committee formations and so on. The child treating is more consciously in the society as the respondent have strongly agreed and agreed both in a majority. The child consideration is none other than a birth registration, caring of various vaccinations, treating well in diseases and caloric intakes are comes under this.

After the formation of Lg, the service for the health’s is giving from the doors steps, the central health system is highly centralized at the LG levels and all facilities are providing from the door steps (KII with Health Official). In case of helping for those who are in need context shows that such persons like disables, old age, pregnant and lactating mothers and homeless peoples are more prioritized in the development and supporting accordingly. Opinion of speech in any areas such as in the jurisdiction areas of local administrations, raising complains are the common evidences in the social progress and this level of orientations are the result of communist orientations and leading support through various policies and empowerments.

The responsible for wellbeing is also considered agreed by the respondents, this indicating that the role of every citizen are towards positive development.

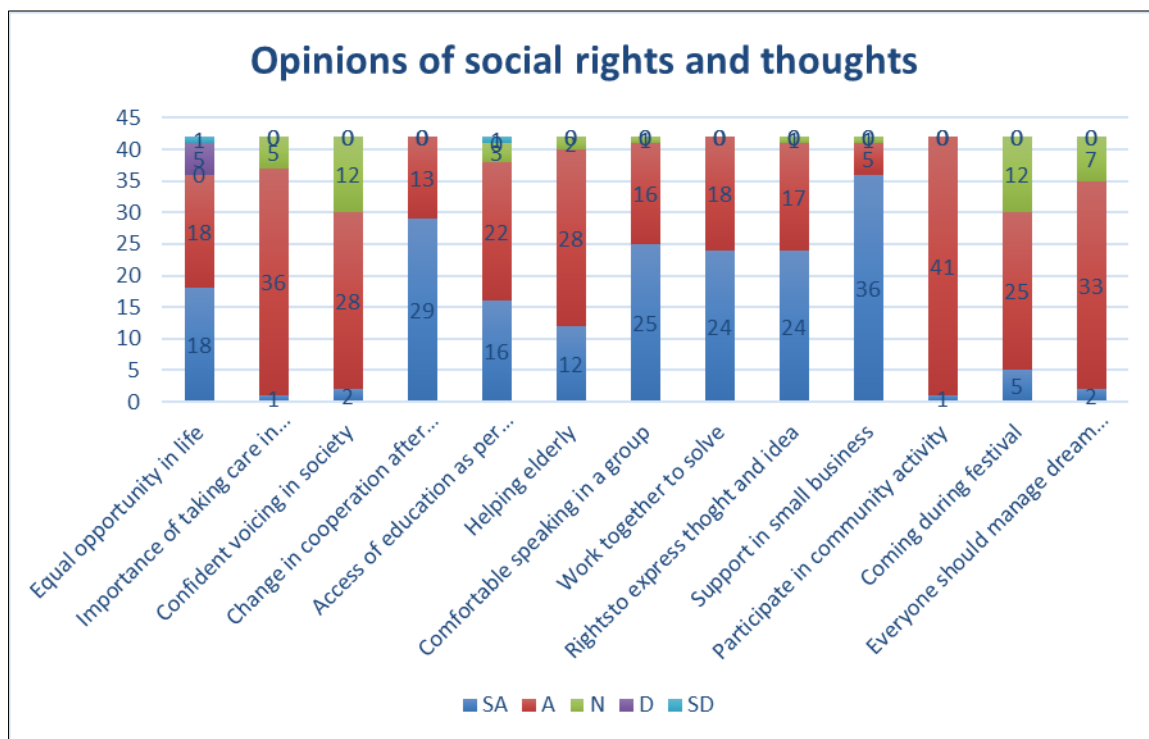
The common goal of government is to developed the nations through various positive approach of participation of all people from every aspect of life, to manage these common goals, the support through paying taxes, managing rural development activities, positive role of economy development and enhancement of local productions are the responsibilities of the people. The surveyed area respondents are found engaged in such activities and local actors such as police, administration, reporters, advocate, development workers, farmers and many more are all actively involving in the positive development.

The participation in development process such as Planning, monitoring, constructional activities and so on are more found in the areas, the women participations and people from the DAG, backward communities are more empowered in the study area.

The people support from each other during crisis or natural disaster of political disputes have a common understanding and resolving problems through debate and positive discussion, the familiar environment and participation from the all groups and people have supported the local development process.

FGD also added that during each discussion of development and planning process multi sectoral people and needful audiences are invited to debate and finalized the overall program and development goals and policies. Earlier in the monarchical system, there was a system of forcefully acceptances of decisions.

But in the present system of Federalism, the people immediately raised a voice and knock the authority doors for the suggestions and complains.



(Source: field visit, 2023)

Figure 3 Opinion summary of social wellbeing and thoughts

The study clearly showing a picture of opportunity has been given to the people at the grass root level. The Federalism is also a concept that was majority given by the communism, and this function not only giving autonomous system also giving a participation reservation in the area. The taking care in a families and society has unique features of caring within a family which was banned in the dictatorship mechanism when a rebellion was not allowed in a society to care by his families. The legitimacy also given rights of voting and people vote very confidently without any under pressure.

The cooperation from the all sides is considered strong from the social and cultural point of views. Education system is strengthening now a days as the primary learning of communism are to provide learning environment to all and education is the best way to provide knowledge for all. The level of education and upgradation applied as per the background of the people. In both study area, the Number of schools for early grade to the higher secondary level is available but for the higher education system the facilities available in Hetauda compared to the Bagamati study area.

Ols age people, disables, single headed women's and many more peoples are caring well and government also providing social allowances of NPR. 4000 to each Sr. Citizen people and many more privileges are given so this is a given by the communism systems and the real transformation of managing livelihood for them who have limited working opportunity.

The protest and comfortable speaking are evidences of many cases in the study area where people speak up when they not happy with any facts and this empowerment are the evidence of the social development in the present time. Work together strategies is the most useful activities in a community where all people work together to make a development, such as during road, building and more constructional activities, the local Users committee formations have a mandate to participate from the gender and all must include to make a representative participation. The development approach of we feeling generate when people do voluntarily in various development work. Like, chairman is the supreme position of the schools and most powerful and this is voluntarily contributions.

Expressing view and support in business are common and apply for such who are small- or large-scale producers, this applies for the agriculture, livestock of forestry based local production enhancements.

The local participation also increasing as the political parties have treated citizen to get there right and this education not only aware people to speak and also take serious participation and do advocacy for that, the dream and desire of the people to travelling is not restricted, the communist lead government in Nepal has no specific boundary of not traveling in the particulate areas. There is no boundary of the citizen has been given and the law is trying to make for the shake of people must privileged without any biasness. Specially people from the remotes have specific development packages of education, infrastructure development and so on. FGD and KII also added that voting is the powerful event of the citizen and they have a right to change the people through the rights of voting, People much aware now and cast their vote as per the choice of the people, this choice is the result of communism promotion.

Table 2 Mean summary of the various questions asked

Legend	N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation	Range	Minimum	Maximum
Treated equally in society	42	1.5	1	1	0.994	3	1	4
Access of basic needs, foods/ cloths/ Home	42	2.36	2	2	1.165	4	1	5
Children treated well	42	1.57	2	2	0.547	2	1	3
Engagement more in community decision process	42	2.1	2	2	0.37	2	1	3
Equal opportunity in life	42	1.88	2	1 ^a	1.064	4	1	5
people cooperation increased after political movement	42	1.31	1	1	0.468	1	1	2
Education access increased as per background	42	1.76	2	2	0.79	4	1	5
work together to solve community problems	42	1.43	1	1	0.501	1	1	2
expression of thoughts and ideas	42	1.45	1	1	0.55	2	1	3
community participation and engagement	42	1.98	2	2	0.154	1	1	2

(Source: - Field visit, 2023)

Table 2 Correlation statistics

Legend	Everyone must treat equally	Importance of education	Speaking in community	Importance of respecting others	Confident in speaking in community	helping each other's	Acces of basic needs
Correlation Coefficient	1.000	0.452**	0.053	-0.372*	0.138	0.293	0.503**
Sig. (2-tailed)		0.003	0.738	0.015	0.385	0.060	0.001
N	42	42	42	42	42	42	42
Correlation Coefficient	.452**	1.000	-0.218	-0.377*	0.612**	0.565**	0.547**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.003		0.166	0.014	0.000	0.000	0.000
N	42	42	42	42	42	42	42
Correlation Coefficient	0.053	-0.218	10.000	-0.251	-0.412**	-0.424**	0.164
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.738	0.166		0.108	0.007	0.005	0.300
N	42	42	42	42	42	42	42
Correlation Coefficient	-0.372*	-0.377*	-0.251	10.000	-0.307*	-0.483**	-0.755**
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.015	0.014	0.108		0.048	0.001	0.000
N	42	42	42	42	42	42	42
Correlation Coefficient	0.138	0.612**	-0.412**	-0.307*	10.000	0.659**	0.328*
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.385	0.000	0.007	0.048		0.000	0.034
N	42	42	42	42	42	42	42
Correlation Coefficient	0.293	0.565**	-0.424**	-0.483**	0.659**	10.000	0.376*
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.060	0.000	0.005	0.001	0.000		0.014
N	42	42	42	42	42	42	42
Correlation Coefficient	0.503**	0.547**	0.164	-0.755**	0.328*	0.376*	10.000
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	0.000	0.300	0.000	0.034	0.014	
N	42	42	42	42	42	42	42

(Source: - Field data, 2023)

The mean statistic of various responses is showing a diverse trend in the responses, the mean of various indicators is higher indicating that the majority and trend is higher for the equal treating in society, basic needs rights, engagement of people in local or community decisions, equal opportunities, participation and so on are high in responses that indicating that the people awareness and social rights are accelerating day by day.

The statistical analysis also indicating that such variable which has higher means stands a more reliability of the responses by the participants.

The correlation statistic also indicating the similar trend that the value of each variables which is less than 0.005 is highly significant and associated with the variables that indicating that the relationship in between the variable is strongly associated with each other, However, the correlation statistics have positive, negative and no correlations situation means the negative is giving a down trend and positive is giving an upward trend and no is showing a neutral trend of the data based on the situation and analysis.

4. Conclusion

The study concluded as the role of various actors in the development is equally important to provide the basic service of food, shelter and cloths, the development progress is very difficult to measure and one lens is not possible to measure the transformation in social science. The freedom of speech, participations in each sector, support in community development, debate, discussions and various jurisdiction are the beautiful aspects of the social progress. Communist led Government always empowered the locals mainly the people with low educations, lack of access and below poverty levels to uplift the development access and increase the economy to build a nation. Apart from the political disputes and conflict the communist lead development approach of equal opportunity is playing a good role in society. The surveyed area has a two distinct area Urban and rural but both are ongoing through communist lead leadership since many years and the recent progress after the development has seen that many opportunity related to the legal, participatory and many awareness and progress have measured in the present situation, Thus, the communist empowerment and polices have somehow given opportunities to the locals to build, enhance and access the development progress and freely raise their voices and took participation in every development progress. The study suggested to take a wider study area perhaps in the Provincial level analysis for the capturing of mass people across the nations.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

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Appendix

1:-Interview questionnaires

SN	Questions	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	I believe that everyone should be treated equally.					
2	I know about the importance of education for children.					
3	I believe that every person should have a say in community decisions.					
4	I have learned about the importance of respecting others.					
5	I feel more confident speaking in public than before.					
6	I have noticed changes in how people help each other in the community.					
7	Everyone has access to basic needs like food and shelter.					
8	I feel more included in community activities now compared to before.					
9	I have noticed improvements in how children are treated in my community recently.					
10	I have learned about the importance of helping those in need in my community.					
11	Everyone should have the right to express their opinions freely.					
12	I feel more responsible for the well-being of my community now.					
13	I have noticed changes in how people work together for common goals in my community.					
14	I have learned about the importance of treating everyone with respect in my community.					
15	I feel more involved in community decision-making processes now compared to before.					
16	I have noticed improvements in how people support each other during difficult times in my community recently.					
17	I believe that everyone should have equal opportunities in life.					
18	I have learned about the importance of taking care of the environment in my community.					
19	I feel more confident voicing my opinions in public now compared to before.					
20	I have noticed changes in how people cooperate for community development in my village since the political movements.					
21	I believe that everyone should have access to education regardless of their background.					
22	I have learned about the importance of helping the elderly in my community.					
23	I feel more comfortable speaking in front of a group of people now compared to before.					
24	I have noticed changes in how people work together to solve community problems in my village since the political movements.					
25	I believe that everyone should have the right to express their thoughts and ideas freely.					
26	I have learned about the importance of supporting small businesses in my community.					
27	I feel more encouraged to participate in community activities now compared to before.					
28	I have noticed changes in how people come together for festivals and events in my village since the political movements.					
29	I believe that everyone should have the opportunity to pursue their dreams and aspirations in life.					