

E-BOOKS, DIGITAL READING, AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE BOOK PUBLISHING ECONOMY OF NEPAL

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Abstract

Digital reading is increasing due to the advancement of digital technology, expanding the using of e-book and online publishing. The traditional publication model is changing in Nepal, and with the adoption of a hybrid model. However, only limited studies have been conducted about the issue, so it is necessary to study the issue in the context of Nepal. The main objective of this study is to identify the transformation of publishing industries of Nepal through examining its evolution from print to digital publishing, assessing the impact of digital technologies on production, distribution, and reading practices, and identifying the opportunities, challenges, and policy implications associated with digital publishing. The study followed a phenomenological research design of qualitative research. Using the qualitative method, diffusion innovations theory was used as the theoretical guideline. Semi-structured open-ended questions were used to collect data from the field. Four participants were purposively selected including a bookseller, a university professor, a printing press manager, and a PhD-level student participated in the study as participants. Collected data were thematically analyzed for lived experiences and perceptions. Inadequate digital infrastructure, online piracy, weak copyright enforcement, limited digital literacy, and unequal internet access are the main challenges of e-book publishing in Nepal. Both traditional and new online system book publishing is go side by side; however, the economy of book publishing is at the point of transformation. The study will useful for policy maker publishers, educational institutions, and industry practitioners in promoting a sustainable, innovative, and competitive publishing economy in Nepal.

Keywords: Digital publishing; E-books; reading; economy; Nepal

Introduction

Digital version of the book is known as the e-book. E book can be read by using digital device such as computer, tablets, smart phone and iPad. Rao (2003) notes, "E-books are stored in digital formats such as PDF, EPUB, and MOBI, making them portable, searchable, and easy to distribute"(p. 23). An e-book is easier to study because it can be read on digital devices like computers, smartphones, laptops, and iPads at any time. The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) (2014), noted, "Electronic publication" means that the information is available in a digital form, which can be read on different electronic devices" (45). The journey of e-books began in 1971 with the launch of Project

Gutenberg by Michael S. Hart, widely known as the first-ever initiative to digitize literary works and distribute them free of cost online. This project is considered as a launchpad for the e-book movement in recent times (Hart, 1992). In the 1990s, personal computer advances and developments in internet technology paved the way for increased availability of digital books, as a dedicated e-reader device like the Amazon Kindle was introduced in 2007 and gained popularity for providing easy access to massive digital libraries. Presently, e-books are popular in many domains of use including education, research, and publishing purposes thanks to the fast access of information provided by lower expense of distribution, quick, audio-visual

capabilities, and accessibility functions like changing font sizes and text to speech features (Armstrong, 2008). Digital reading brings more opportunities to the reader compared to conventional print reading. It is easier to search text, interpret the text in multimedia. OECD (2011) explained, "Digital reading is defined as one's ability to understand, use, reflect on, and interact with digital texts" (p. 34). Digital books help to gain new knowledge, meet personal goals, and communicate effectively in society. It comprises not only traditional reading skills but also digital literacy. It requires ability to search, evaluate, and combine information from the Internet (Leu et al. 2013).

The rise of the internet, mobile technology, digital publishing, and the way of reading books has changed dramatically around the world. The online reading has its advantages such as access dictionaries, choose fonts in their readings, and take notes. On the other hand, some disadvantages of digital reading have also been described, including distractions and information overload (Singer and Alexander, 2017). The publishing industry is an essential part of the knowledge economy. It plays a role in education, cultural heritage, literacy, and economic progress. Historically, the publishing industry in Nepal was based on printed materials like the following: printed books, newspapers, newspapers, and printed learning materials. The publishing industry began to grow after 1990 when democracy was restored in the country and the number of private institutions of higher education increased. Publishers have played an important role in bringing new authors, editors, translators, publishers, and distributors into the same world.

The evolution of information and communication technologies (ICTs), the internet, mobile phones, and web-based platforms has changed the landscape of publishing. The emergence of digital publishing has brought e-books, online journals, digital libraries, and open access publishing and print on demand, allowing publishers to cut production expenses and increase their readership (Thompson, 2021). In Nepal, as more people get internet access and use mobile devices, more readers are being encouraged to

utilize digital books, online dailies, and electronic learning materials. Higher education institutions, libraries, and research organizations are now increasingly using digital repositories and electronic databases in order to make access to scientific information easier (Tribhuvan University, 2024). Nevertheless, the publishing industry of Nepal is still in a transitional period. Publishers still heavily rely on printed books, as there is little digital infrastructure, low investment, poor enforcement of copyright rights, and low awareness of digital publishing. There are challenges in the forms of piracy over the Internet, lack of digital payments, disparity between urban and rural areas when it comes to the Internet, and low level of technical skills. Thus, very few descriptive studies related to the economic transformation of the publishing industry in Nepal have been conducted.

In Nepal, traditional publishing is changing gradually from print-based to digital one. New technologies have offered possibilities to create, disseminate, and acquire publications, but many publishing professionals in Nepal experience problems with digital progress. Limited technology, lack of digital infrastructure, copyright law violations, lack of governmental assistance, and the transformation of reading habit create problem in publication house. As a result, it is still unclear whether traditional publishing companies can be sustainable or not. Furthermore, there is a lack of empirical studies on the effects of digital changes on production costs in the publishing industry of Nepal, market opportunities, job provision, income, and reading behaviour.

The aim of this study is to analyse how the publishing economy of Nepal is changing due to digital transformation. There are four main objectives of the this study: to analyse the evolution of Nepal's publishing industry from print publishing to digital publishing, to study the effect of digital technologies on the creation, distribution and use of published books, to examine the economic implications of the transformation for the publishers, authors, booksellers, education institutions and readers and to identify the opportunities and challenges created by digital

transformation and to give policy recommendation for publishing industry. Very few studies focused economic aspects of digital publishing in Nepal. Thus, there is lack of enough evidence to help authorities, publishers, and scholars to find the right balance between innovation and sustainability of traditional publishing. In this context the study fill this gap and provide insight into the changes occurring in the publishing economy of Nepal as well as define the role of digital technologies in the development of publishing practices and market structures.

Theoretical Review

The diffusion of innovations (DOI) theory is used as the theoretical guideline of this study. Everett M. Rogers propounded the theory in 1962. This theory elucidates how new ideas, technologies, and innovations are disseminated through social systems over time with the aid of communication channels. Rogers (2003) defines diffusion as, “the process whereby an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system” (5). Innovation refers to the whole idea, practice, or technology that individuals or organizations perceive as new regardless of its existence. Rogers (2003) states that the diffusion process is characterized by four main elements: innovation, communication channels, time, and the social system. Innovation is a new technology or a new practice, e.g. e-books, digital publishing platforms, online book stores, or digital reading devices. Communication channels are the different means through which information about an innovation is communicated. Time signifies the different stages a potential adopter goes through before accepting or rejecting an innovation, while the social system consists of the different institutions, organizations, communities, and individuals it interacts with.

The theory explains adaptation of five stages: knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation and confirmation. At both the individual and organizational levels (recast the remaining part for a better flow. Rogers (2003) further classified people into five adopter groups depending on the timing of the adoption: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. The main contribution of

diffusion of innovations theory is related to explanation of the factors to the speed of adoption.

The diffusion of innovations theory describes the process of modernization of the publishing economy in Nepal because it should be mentioned that the rise of e-books and digital reading has brought new technologies that have transformed the publishing scenario in Nepal. It should be noted that the publishing process in Nepal has always been of the traditional character of publishing books through printing houses and selling the book in stores. The theory is applicable to explain the recent success of digital publishing in some territories and its slow development in Nepal. The use of e-books depends neither on the availability of the technology nor on the technology by itself.

Literature Review

Writers and researchers discussed about system of books publication and its economy impacts. Rogers (2003) discussed about issue of digital publishing and publishing economy in term of innovation of new technology. He focused on the changing scenario of the book publication and its marketing; however, Armstrong (2008) explained the ongoing shifts in the dimensions of the publishing sector and the role of technological advancement. He focused on the role technology on the transformation book publishing. The value of printed books is being reduced by e-books. Thompson (2021) noted that understanding the impact of new technologies is critical, since it has been suggested that media companies increasingly use electronic resources, metadata, online marketing tools, and e-commerce technologies. The reviews noted that technological advancement bring changes in the field of traditional book publication and economy activities related to the book publishing.

Digital literacy plays important role for the changing the traditional pattern of book publishing. Coiro (2003) highlighted digital literacy and reading environment and highlighted different set of cognitive skills, such as navigating, assessing, and integrating online content. In the same line Leu et al. (2013) discussed about new literacy and explained by comparing traditional reading culture and digital skill of collecting

reading material and critical way of using it. In the same line Singer and Alexander (2017) showed how the way reading material is presented affects comprehension. It was discovered that while reading in a digital format is easier, reading from print materials is likely to be better for understanding more complicated and elaborative academic texts. The authors suggested using both print and digital formats according to purposes. Studies conducted in the field of e-book technologies revealed the latest innovations. Balaji et al. (2015) suggested a hybrid e-book that integrates multimedia elements with traditional reading. Their study proved that multimedia elements in e-books help students become more engaged in the process of e-reading and thus gives them more desire to use e-reading technology.

In the context of South Asian nations like Nepal and India readers are increasing in digital platform. OECD (2011) noted that digital reading is crucial for participating in learning and knowledge societies today. UNESCO (2023) stresses that digital literacy together with media and information literacy has become indispensable for creating equal access to knowledge. The organization mentions this topic in its recent activities in Nepal as well where the stress is laid on increasing media and information literacy alongside with learning how to think critically and how to be responsible while operating in digital society. In Nepal, however, the research that addresses publishing economy is not too developed at present. Pradhan (2008) examined the links between copyright, authorship, and book publishing in Nepal and concluded that copyright protection is one of the main factors for sustaining creative production and publishing activities. He argued that it is necessary to implement a strong legal and institutional system to make copyright work. The study conducted in Nepal on the issue of digital transformation covered the sphere of public administration and institutional development. Like Pradhan Sharma and Kautish (2021) discussed on digitization positively affects the operations of organizations, it is still important to have proper technical infrastructure, enough qualified staff, and right policies. The findings can serve as a basis for further studies on publishing

industry being introduced to the world of digital technologies.

Recent public initiatives also demonstrate growing interest in expanding digital access to Nepali literature. Community-led efforts to digitize Nepali literary works have highlighted increasing demand for electronic books while also revealing practical challenges related to copyright, platform compatibility, and sustainable digital publishing models.

Support for digital publishing and reading can be found at the international level in the framework of the activity of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in the field of education, distribution of educational materials, and digital access. The organization informs that digitization should only add to conventional education, not supplant it. Moreover, it boosts media and information literacy as the basis of responsible participation in the digital world. In particular, the Copyright Act (2002) in Nepal gives legislative protection to literary, artistic, and scientific works (including electronic ones). The Act determines economic and moral rights of authors and is considered the main legislation regulating copyright issues in the particular area. Nevertheless, the rapid development of digital publishing poses new threats to publishers dealing with different forms of piracy, deliveries, and protection of digital rights. The Constitution of Nepal (2015) guarantees rights of people concerning education and information, thus supporting their access to knowledge with the help of new technologies. The Digital Nepal Framework (2019) aims to promote the digitization process in various spheres, including education and communication, which gives additional chances for expanding publishing and electronic libraries.

The literature that has been reviewed shows that international research on e-books, digital reading, and digital publishing is abundant. However, most of the existing research examines the issues of adoption of technology, comprehension of reading materials, digital literacy, or publication in developed countries. The research in the South Asia region, especially in Nepal, has focused on copyright protection,

education, and institutional digitization, rather than the overall economic development of the publishing sector. Further, there is little empirical research on how e-books and digital reading are affecting the business models of publishers, their production costs, and the prospection of expanding their market as well as creating new jobs, delivery systems, and the sustainability of Nepalese publishing industry as a whole. Current policy research does not help much to explain the interaction between digital innovation, copyright regulations, and economics of publishing. Thus, this research tries to fill this research gap by looking at how e-books and digital reading transform publishing sector in Nepal and what opportunities, risks, and policy implications lie behind this digital change.

Research Methodology

The study utilized qualitative research method based on phenomenological research design and investigates the experiences and perceptions of stakeholders with respect to e-books, digital reading, and changes happening in Nepal's publishing economy. Phenomenology aims to find out how individuals comprehend the given phenomenon through their own experience (Creswell and Poth, 2018). Since this study focused on how different stakeholders view the ongoing digital transformation of the publishing sector, it was appropriate to apply phenomenological approach that allows getting specific, contextualized, and experience-based data. A total four participants who have specific knowledge and experience in publishing in Nepal were chosen through purposive sampling. The respondents include a bookseller, a university professor, a manager of a printing house and a

master's student. The participants were chosen as all of them reflected different experiences in the publishing value chain. Through the contributions made by the university teacher, one gained insights regarding academic and educational perspectives related to the use of digital educational resources, issues related to publication of scientific literature, and changes in reading behavior in higher education involving the vice president of the printing house who shared the knowledge concerning technological changes in printing, its demand, production costs, and economic consequences of digital publishing for the printing sector, and the master's student providing the first-user experience regarding the academic publications including preferences in reading materials, accessibility, affordability, and learning behaviors. Semi-structured interviews were conducted by using open ended questions and collected the experiences and understanding the participants about publishing economy in Nepal. The interviews were recorded with the informed consent of the participants and transcribed verbatim. The collected information was analyzed according to the thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) that consisted of six stages, namely, becoming familiar with the data, generating initial codes, identifying themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and reporting the results. Ethical aspects such as obtaining informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity achieved by the use of pseudonyms, and the right to withdraw from the research at any time were observed. Demographic profile of the participants mentions as follows;

Table 1

Demographic Profile of the Study Participants

Pseudonym	Participant Category	Age (Years)	Sex	Educational Status	Professional Experience	Experience Related to Books
P1	Bookseller	46	Male	Bachelor's Degree	20 years in book business	Selling both printed and e book since some time.
P2	University Professor	60	Male	PhD	25 years of university teaching	More than 20 years teaching experience He is also members' of reader club using digital and e book in teaching learning
P3	Printing Press Manager (Master Printer)	56	Male	Bachelor's Degree in Printing Technology	25 years in printing and publishing	Has extensive experience in book design and printing
P4	PhD Level Student	31	Female	PhD ongoing (Ongoing)	6 years of academic study	Regular user of printed books, e-books, digital libraries, and online academic databases.

Source: Field Survey, 2026

There have given pseudonyms to the participants from P1 to P4 and maintain anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents. Participants were chosen purposefully since they are key actors in Nepal's publishing environment, which consists of book distribution, higher education, printing, and digital reading fields. Because of their varied professional experiences, participants offered valuable experiential evidence.

Data Analysis and Presentation

Over the past twenty years, the publishing industry in Nepal has greatly changed owing to the fast growth of new digital technologies. The old print publishing industry is now moving toward digital book publishing, e-books, distribution of books online, and digital libraries. The transformation opened new opportunities to access more knowledge more easily, make publications less costly, and reach wider audiences while

changing the structure of the publishing industry economically. However, there are a number of issues that need attention the underdeveloped digital infrastructure in Nepal, the problem of copyright violations, unequal access to the Internet, low levels of digital literacy, and the future of the traditional publishing industry. It is necessary to investigate the transformation of the publishing industry in Nepal, its economic consequences, and available opportunities and

problems in order to develop a sustainable and competitive publishing industry.

Situation of Nepal's Publishing Industry and Its Contribution to the Economy

The publishing industry is a vital part of the creative economy and knowledge economy of Nepal, since it facilitates the publication of textbooks, educational materials, and academic journals, novels and other literary works, newspapers and magazines, and digital publications. The industry provides value-added products through various entities including writers, editors, translators, publishers, printers, booksellers, libraries, educational institutions and online publication services. Although the share of publishing in Nepal's economy is very small, publishing sector contributes to a great extent to development of human capital, promotion of literacy, saving of cultures, and development of educational sector.

According to the National Accounts of Nepal 2023/24, the Information and Communication sector has become an essential component of service economy of Nepal. It covered 1.94% GDP with gross output of Rs. 245 billion in the fiscal year 2023/24, is determined to be due to the increase in digital technologies. The Department of Industry points out that the information and publishing industries contribute to creating more jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities. Printing presses create job opportunities to the people, as well as other industries. Digitalization helps create new jobs in electronic publishing, digital printing, e-retailing, content creation, educational technology, etc.

Despite these positive contributions, publishing industry faces several structural challenges in Nepal. Limited investment in digital publishing, inadequate copyright enforcement, a relatively small domestic market, online piracy, high printing costs, and unequal internet access continue to constrain sectoral growth. However, the expansion of higher education, increasing internet penetration, growing smartphone use, and government initiatives under the Digital Nepal Framework provide new opportunities for publishers to diversify into e-books, digital libraries, and online learning platforms.

Strengthening digital infrastructure, protecting intellectual property rights, and supporting innovation is necessary for enhancing the publishing industry's contribution to employment, economic growth, and Nepal's knowledge-based economy.

Changing Dimension of Publishing Industry in Nepal

In Nepal, the book publishing profession is shifting with technological advancement and the development of digital platforms. A digital study platform and an eBook are not only associated with the reading habits of the readers but also related to the publishing economy. In this context P1 share his experiences as: *I have been in the book business for about 20 years. Previously, customers would come to the store to buy books. Now, many students and teachers search online first. Some use e-books, while others prefer printed books. So I have experienced that the nature of the business is gradually changing.* (P1, Personal communication, June 15, 2026). He perceived change that has taken place in the publishing and retailing of books during the course of 20 years. The rise of online popularity and the use of e-books have affected marketplace, resulting in the decline of purchasing from bookshops, however physical books and e-books are used simultaneously. In this regards, P2 notes, *"The use of digital materials in education has increased significantly. The study style of students seems to have changed as research articles, e-journals, and e-books are easily available. However, many students still find printed books useful for in-depth study".* (P2, Personal communication, June 15, 2026). In Nepal the reading habit of digital book and eBook is increasing due to advancement of online platform. P3 expresses his opinion as, *"Printing technology has improved a lot. Digital computer-based layout, and print-on-demand systems have made the production process faster and more efficient. However, some publications have experienced a decrease in the number of copies printed as they have moved to digital media."* (P3, Personal communication, June 15, 2026).

Digital book publishing practice decrease the volume of printed book publication that

directly affected on the market and profit of printing profession, however, digital book can be prepared in less cost than the printed book and easily sells from online platform increase the new opportunities in publishing. In this regards P4 notes, *"I use both mediums. Reading e-books on mobile is easier, especially for searching and making notes. But I have found that reading from a printed book can help me concentrate more when preparing for exams."* (P3, Personal communication, June 15, 2026). Participants reported on their impressions of the process of digital transformation in Nepal's publishing industry. The access to electronic materials has improved; printed books continue to be significant educational and cultural tools.

The Impact of Digital Technology in Publishing Economy

The fast development of digital technologies, the publishing economy has changed completely in the whole world. The appearance of e-books, online publications, digital libraries, and print-on-demand services has changed the approach to the production, distribution, marketing, and consumption of content. These innovations have decreased the costs of production, given access to global markets, and created new possibilities for independent authors and publishers. However, digital technologies also threatened the publishing industry with many challenges, such as copyright violations, tough competition, changing customer preferences, and decreasing sales of traditional printed publications. P1 notes: *With the development of digital technology, many customers first search for books online and only then buy them. Some use e-books, while many buy printed books for exams or reference. Although the market structure has changed, it seems that there is a demand for both mediums.* (P1, Personal communication, June 15, 2026).

The response from the participant demonstrates that consumer behaviour in publishing is progressing, as digital technology has allowed easy book searches online. E-books resulted in greater convenience for future references. P2 expresses his openings as, *"Digital resources have given students and teachers easy*

access to international journals, e-books and research materials. This has made studying and research faster. However, not all students have the same digital access and skills." (P2, Personal communication, June 15, 2026). Digital reading platform and eBook increase the access of students in international publishers and publication house. The access of online platform reducing volume of printed books. In this regards p3 notes, *"Technology has come along that can print even smaller quantities than before. As some books are distributed only digitally, the demand for printing has changed. Therefore, printing houses also need to adopt new technologies."* (P2, Personal communication, June 15, 2026). The participants comment that new digital printing technology has changed the market of printing because of the low-cost of production and distribution of digital books. It is also easy to study by using digital device. In this regard, p4 expresses her perception as, *"I often read study materials on mobile and laptop. E-books are useful because they are cheap and easily available. But when reading for a long time, I feel more comfortable reading from a printed book."* (P2, Personal communication, June 15, 2026). Participants shared their opinion that new technologies influence the way books are manufactured, delivered, used, and read. They mostly agreed that digital media and traditional paper forms are developing side by side.

Opportunities, Challenges and Policy Suggestions

Digital transformations in the publishing industry entail not only new opportunities but also create the challenges. Achievements in technology have led to the simplification of the information reaching its audience, and the benefits brought by the digital era are beyond doubt. It is important to deal with such problems as copyright infringement, the disparity in technology access, issues with security, and issues regarding lowering printed book sales. In this regards p1 notes, *"Digital publishing has good potential in Nepal, especially among the younger generation. However, piracy and low digital awareness have created challenges for the business. The government should encourage publishers and booksellers."* (P1, Personal communication, June

15, 2026).

The growth potential for digital publishing in Nepal is considerable, especially among the youth using digital media; however, piracy and low levels of digital literacy are obstacles to business development. It is stated that government support is important in terms of copyright enforcement, raising awareness of digital technologies, and encouragement of publishers and booksellers. In this regards P2 notes, *"A hybrid publishing system could be effective in the future, where both printed and digital books are used. Universities should expand their digital libraries and protect the intellectual property rights of authors and publishers."* (P2, Personal communication, June 15, 2026). He focuses a hybrid publishing method, which combines printed books with digital ones to satisfy the various preferences of readers. It also states that there is a need to improve digital library services in universities and ensure that government authorities respect intellectual property, as this may make it possible for authors and publishers to benefit from fair relations helping the publishing industry develop. P3 highlights the issue as, *"Adoption of digital technology requires investment in new equipment and skilled manpower. If the government provides concessional loans, tax exemptions and training for technological modernization, the publishing industry can become more competitive."* (P3, Personal communication, June 15, 2026). The effective implementation of digital technologies requires the provision of modern hardware and competent personnel. The role of the state in this process is considerable; the government can contribute to technological modernization by granting preferential loans, tax breaks, and providing professional training. In this regards P4 notes, *"Quality e-books should be made available to students at affordable prices. Improving internet access in rural areas will make digital learning more effective. Both printed and digital books have their own value and should be developed equally."* (P4, Personal communication, June 15, 2026)

Participants expressed both opportunists and challenges of using digital and eBook in Nepal, such as obsolete infrastructures, piracy, budget constraints, low digital competence, and

legislative gaps. The participants clearly state that governments, private sector, academic institutions, and publishers have to cooperate for better performance in print and online publishing.

Discussion

The results suggest that the publishing sector is experiencing important changes as it moves from traditional publishing to a hybrid model that combines print and digital. Participants in this study highlighted the importance of technology in changing the processes of book publishing, distribution, availability, and reading without pushing printed books entirely out of the picture. In the first theme, "Changes in the Nepalese Publishing Sector", participants observed that technological advancement has changed the way things work in publishing. The bookseller (P1) noted that buyers show new purchasing behavior as they search for books on the Internet before a purchase. The university professor (P2) discussed increased use of e-books, online journals, and electronic learning materials in education whereas the printing manager (P3) spoke of technological changes in layout and print-on-demand technology. This result concurs with Thompson (2021) who claims that the publishing industry has undergone transformation with the introduction of electronic publishing alongside conventional print publications. In the same way, Armstrong (2008) indicated that electronic publishing has opened markets and reduced production and distribution costs.

The influence of digital technology and the publishing economy signifies the twin effects of digital technology, which has created various economic prospects but has posed some challenges in the structure. The participants opined that digital publishing has resulted in better access to learning materials and has facilitated the process of information diffusion. The postgraduate student (P4) highlighted the affordability and ease of access to e-books, while the educator (P2) noted greater access to global academic resources. The observations made here corroborate the views of Coiro (2003) and Leu et al. (2013), who stated that digital reading actually facilitates accessibility of information and also develops new ways of literacy. However, the respondents at the same

time emphasized the advantages of printed books for performing intensive reading and preparation for examination.

Participants observe digital publishing as an opportunity, yet they stress a number of challenges associated with its sustainable development. Among the main barriers to digital publishing are piracy, lack of infrastructure, lack of internet connectivity, lack of technical investment, and insufficient policy support. The results support the UNESCO (2023) report which claims that successful digitalization requires equal access to technology, digital knowledge, and institutional support. Moreover, as Pradhan (2008) points out, copyright protection must be improved in order to help the publishing sector continue functioning in the digital age. Participants also think that it makes sense to establish e-libraries, develop infrastructure, renew printing technologies, and provide governmental support for publishers and the printing industry.

Findings

The findings of the study showed the debate of publishing sectors of Nepal based on digital publishing and publishing eco-system. The coexistence of printed and online books is indicative of the changing needs of consumers, technological progress, and the revision of education. There is a need to invest in the digital infrastructure, protection of the intellectual property rights, and improvement of digital literacy skills for the establishment of a favourable environment for the use of digital reading platform and eBook.

The study discovered that the publishing economy of Nepal is experiencing gradual changes, which is moving from traditional print publishing to a hybrid model that combines printed and digital publishing. Most participants agreed that the rise of e-books, digital libraries, and the internet has made it easier to access information, made information retrieval faster, and improved learning options. IT has increased efficiency in publishing to eBook, make easier to demand system, and online delivery. Nonetheless, it was confirmed that printed books remain a preferred option for those who engage in serious reading and studying because of the ability to concentrate and

better comprehension. The study has also analyzed some major obstacles of the publishing experiencing, including insufficient digital infrastructure, copyrights violation, online piracy, low investments, unequal access to the internet, and limited digital literacy.

Conclusion

The transformation of Nepal's publishing economy reflects the broader process of digitalization occurring across education, communication, and knowledge industries. Rather than replacing printed books, digital publishing has complemented traditional publishing by creating new opportunities for knowledge dissemination, market expansion, and educational accessibility. The total process of transformation is based on the diffusion of innovations theory that demonstrates the adoption of digital publishing depends on technological readiness, institutional support, and users' acceptance of innovation. Sustainable development of publishing sectors of Nepal requires collaboration among government agencies, publishers, educational institutions, technology providers, and readers to strengthen digital infrastructure while preserving the cultural and educational value of printed publications.

Recommendations

The Government of Nepal ought to build up copyright protection and implement effective measures to combat digital piracy. The amount of investment must be increased in digital infrastructure, affordable internet and widespread digital literacy initiatives. Publishers must switch to hybrid model of publishing by producing printed and digital books, investing in modern publishing technology. Universities and libraries have to increase digital repositories and electronic library services to enhance access to academic materials. Incentives and technical training in addition to tax exemptions need to be implemented for the introduction of innovations in the publishing and printing industries in Nepal.

Outcomes of the Study

This research adds to the scarce empirical literature about Nepal's publishing economy by presenting qualitative information provided by key respondents such as booksellers, university professors, printing press managers, and

postgraduate students. It shows how digital technologies are changing the publishing industry and the reading habits of people and transforming the economy of this industry. The findings provide significant evidence for government officials, publishers, educators, and researchers who wish to come up with viable strategies for digital publishing in Nepal.

Suggestions for Further Research

Utilizing mixed-method or quantitative research designs with larger and diverse samples

representing publishers, authors, librarians, policymakers, and readers from all regions of Nepal should be adopted in future research. Like that the economic aspect of e-books on GDP in Nepal, jobs creation as a result of e-book publishing, publishing entrepreneurship, digital copyright management, artificial intelligence in publishing, digital reading of people at various ages, and the sustainability of hybrid forms of publishing should be the subject of future research.

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