ENHANCING EMPLOYABILITY THROUGH SKILL TRAINING ON DIGITAL MARKETING IN THE KATHMANDU VALLEY

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A Dissertation

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in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
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AN ABSTRACT

of the dissertation of *Anu Pandit* for the degree of *Master in Technical and Vocational Education and Training,* presented in *6 November 2025,* entitled *Enhancing employability through skill training for Digital Marketing in the Kathmandu Valley.*

APPROVED BY

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Richan Shrestha

Dissertation Supervisor

The digital marketing training initiatives aim to produce a digitally skilled workforce that can support the country's economic development and reduce youth unemployment. The dissertation attempts to investigate the influence of digital marketing skill training on the employability of youth in the Kathmandu Valley. It emphasizes the importance of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in improving employment opportunities in the fast-changing digital economy.

The study surveyed 180 individuals who undertook digital marketing training and analyzed data using descriptive and inferential statistics from a structured questionnaire.

The findings show that digital marketing training improves technical skills, creates more access to online jobs, and enhances the overall quality of employment. The trainees were very satisfied with the training, reinforcing their assessments of its relevance and usefulness. Younger trainees tended to enroll in larger numbers, but older participants also felt they accrued more employment benefits for themselves. Gender differences appeared to be prohibitive to a certain extent, but access to training was not impaired on account of ethnic origin.

Such research highlights the need for policymakers to refocus vocational programs to better meet labor market demands. It emphasizes that TVET institutions should improve the quality and accessibility of training, thereby building a skilled workforce that meets the challenges of the digital economy in Nepal.

This study adds to the discourse on digital skill training and employability and lays the ground for further research in this area.

……. 6 November 2025

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शोध सार

विकास शिक्षामा स्नातकोत्तर उपाधिका लागि अनु पण्डित को शोध प्रबन्धको शीर्षक "काठमाडौं उपत्यकामा डिजिटल मार्केटिङ सीप तालिम मार्फत रोजगारी योग्यता अभिवृद्धि" २० कार्तिक २०८२ मा प्रस्तुत गरिएको थियो ।

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ऋचन श्रेष्ठ

शोध निर्देशक

डिजिटल मार्केटिङ तालिमको पहलहरूले देशको आर्थिक विकासमा सहयोग गर्न र युवा बेरोजगारी घटाउन सक्षम डिजिटल सीपयुक्त जनशक्ति उत्पादन गर्ने लक्ष्य राखेका छन्। यो शोधप्रबन्धले काठमाडौँ उपत्यकाका युवाहरूको रोजगारी योग्यतामा डिजिटल मार्केटिङ सीप तालिमको प्रभावको अध्ययन गरेको छ। यसले तीव्र रूपमा परिवर्तन हुँदै गएको डिजिटल अर्थतन्त्रमा रोजगारी अवसर सुधार गर्न प्राविधिक तथा व्यावसायिक शिक्षा तथा तालिम (TVET) को महत्त्वमा जोड दिन्छ।

अध्ययनका लागि डिजिटल मार्केटिङ तालिम लिएका १८० व्यक्तिहरूबाट संरचित प्रश्नावलीद्वारा सङ्कलित डाटालाई विवरणात्मक र अनुमानात्मक तथ्याङ्कीय विधिहरू प्रयोग गरी विश्लेषण गरिएको छ। नतिजाहरूले देखाउँछन् कि डिजिटल मार्केटिङ तालिमले प्राविधिक सीप सुधार गर्छ, अनलाइन रोजगारी अवसरहरूमा पहुँच बढाउँछ, र समग्र रोजगारीको गुणस्तर अभिवृद्धि गर्छ। तालिम प्राप्त सहभागीहरू तालिम प्रति अत्यन्त सन्तुष्ट देखिएका छन्, जसले तालिमको सान्दर्भिकता र उपयोगिताको मूल्याङ्कनलाई सुदृढ पार्छ। युवा सहभागीहरूको संख्या बढी देखिए पनि वृद्ध सहभागीहरूले पनि आफूहरूले उल्लेखनीय रोजगारी लाभ प्राप्त गरेको महसुस गरेका छन्। लिङ्गगत भिन्नताले केही हदसम्म अवरोध सिर्जना गरे तापनि जातीय मूलका कारण तालिम पहुँचमा विशेष अवरोध देखिएको छैन।

यस प्रकारको अनुसन्धानले नीति–निर्माताहरूलाई श्रम बजारको मागअनुसार व्यावसायिक कार्यक्रमहरू पुनः केन्द्रित गर्न आवश्यकतामा ध्यानाकर्षण गराउँछ। यसले TVET संस्थाहरूले तालिमको गुणस्तर र पहुँच सुधार गर्नुपर्नेमा जोड दिन्छ, जसले नेपालको डिजिटल अर्थतन्त्रका चुनौतीहरू सामना गर्न सक्षम सीपयुक्त जनशक्ति निर्माण गर्न सहयोग पुऱ्याउँछ। यो अध्ययनले डिजिटल सीप तालिम र रोजगारी योग्यताको विषयमा चलिरहेको बहसमा योगदान पुऱ्याएको छ र आगामी अनुसन्धानका लागि मार्ग प्रशस्त गरेको छ।

..... २० कार्तिक २०८२

अनु पण्डित

डिग्री उम्मेदवार

This dissertation, entitled *Enhancing Employability through Skill Training for Digital Marketing in the Kathmandu Valley* presented by *Anu Pandit* on *6 November 2025*.

APPROVED BY

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I understand that my dissertation will become a part of the permanent collection of Kathmandu University Library. My signature below authorizes the release of my dissertation to any reader upon request for scholarly purposes.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my original work, and it has not been submitted for candidature for any other degree at any other university.

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DEDICATION

To

My Parents and well-wishers

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CTEVT	Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training
Ed.	Edition
KMC	Kathmandu Metropolitan City
M	Mean
NTS	Nepal Telecommunication Authority
SD	Standard Deviation
SEO	Search Engine Optimization
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

I have been working in the field of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for over three years and seen how it changes people's lives and help communities grow. While working on a key project by Kathmandu Metropolitan City called Employment and Economic Enhancement Prosperity of Kathmandu, I learned even more about how vocational training helps improve the economy. I also took part in Seep Mela 2081, a big event focused on skill-based training, where I saw how different training programs give people the skills they need to succeed. These experiences have inspired me to study how vocational training in cities like Kathmandu can help people find jobs and support economic growth. This thesis will look at how these trainings in cities like Kathmandu can help people find jobs and support economic growth and also look at how these training programs are making a real difference in people's lives and careers.

Vocational training is a form of education focused on providing practical skills and hands-on experiences so individuals become prepared for specific jobs or workforce entry. Unlike traditional school education, which often emphasizes theoretical knowledge, vocational training centers on real-world applications (Dandaya, 2022; Vocational Education, Skill Formation and Social Development, 2025). For example, in digital marketing, learners might work on real-time SEO and social-media campaigns; in automotive repair, they learn hands-on car diagnostics and maintenance; in culinary arts, students practice food preparation; and in electrical work, trainees perform wiring, installation, and learn safety regulations (Du Plooy & Du Preez, 2022). Thus, vocational training plays a vital role in equipping individuals with employable skills, bridging the gap between education and industry needs, and promoting economic productivity through a skilled workforce.

Digital marketing has grown very fast around the world in recent years because of new technology and the use of online platforms for business. Training in digital marketing can help young people gain important skills like SEO, social media marketing, content making and email marketing. These skills are now very important for finding a good job. According to the highly regarded Council for Technical

Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT), skill-based programs have shown some encouraging results, but they still need a lot of work to get to the specific field of digital skills training and provide access to it. Although it does not concern the very area under consideration, according to the Asian Development Bank (2015), skilling reduces unemployment but shows the persistent disparity in training programs, especially in upcoming fields of education like digital marketing.

Digital marketing is filling all the gaps in skills. Digital marketing training has been equipping young individuals with important skills like SEO, social media marketing, content creation, data analysis and email marketing. These aspects make human resource competence (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). However, there is still high demand of training related to digital skills.

CTEVT is the main body in Nepal responsible for overseeing technical education and vocational training, established in 1989 (CTEVT, n. d.). CTEVT promoted outcomes of skill-based courses in different disciplines in 2020 (CTEVT, 2020). It aims to improve the level of education and ensure training is job-market relevant. CTEVT has realized the importance of digital skills in the market and, as a result, it provides training and certifications in information technology and digital literacy, which include digital marketing, web development, and computer applications. The main aim of CTEVT is to bridge the skills gap between the student and the market, for which it's the best example to provide the digital skills to fit the students in the digital world to get the future job that they desire.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) (2015) says that skill development decreases unemployment but also goes on to say that not all members of the population can attend training events, especially in new areas like digital marketing. Digital marketing is the deliberate use of digital platforms and technologies to advertise products, brands, or services to a select audience. It includes such elements as social media advertising, email advertising, paid advertising, SEO, and content creation to get more individuals to look at your business and interact with it. With the growing digital economy, digital marketing vocational education has become essential. It empowers the individual with the skills that they need in order to excel in such a fast-evolving career.

Vocational training modules expose students to real-world experience in campaign analysis, management, and content creation, which prepares them for social

media management, digital marketing, and e-commerce (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). As businesses are going on online, the need for digital marketers is increasing day by day. This shows that proper training in digital marketing is very important. In today's world, digital marketing is a skill that people need to learn through good training programs. The capital city of Nepal, Kathmandu, is the hub for business and education, which even gives more importance to learn digital marketing training to get ready for the jobs.

Kathmandu has been changed towards the digital economy in recent years. Organizations and businesses have recognized the value of digital media, such as social media, search engines, and email marketing, in reaching and interacting with customers (Nepal et al., 2020). As the digital platform is constantly evolving, there is an immense need for highly trained professionals who realize how digital marketing works. Vocational training in digital marketing allows one to acquire the skills necessary to meet this need and enhance job prospects in the competitive job market (Sharma & Basnet, 2021). Digitalization has put Kathmandu's market in an extremely competitive global landscape, and enormous demand exists for digital marketing expertise. According to Nepal Telecommunications Authority (NTA), more than 20 million people used the internet, and among them, most of them live in Kathmandu. The use of the internet in Kathmandu city is increasing, which shows that the need for online and social media marketing is more important in every job and business.

As more people going online business especially the small and medium are using online marketing to connect with the customers and build their brand (Sharma & Bhandari, 2022). Platforms like Facebook and Instagram are important tools for marketers to reach the right people. A study by Koirala and Shrestha (2021) found that over 70% of businesses in Kathmandu use social media to promote their products and services which shows the importance of digital marketing. However, companies in Kathmandu are having a hard time finding proper people who have received the training in areas like SEO, content creation and data analysis (Yadav & Shrestha, 2020). Because of this, it is important to provide skill-based training programs to help people to learn these in-demand skills and fill the gap in the digital marketing job market. Both the government and the business sector are starting to realize the importance of vocational training in securing a job as a digital marketing expert. The Nepalese government has made attempts to ensure that young people, especially those

from underprivileged communities, gain hands-on digital expertise. One of these efforts is the Nepal Digital Literacy Campaign (MoEST, 2020). Therefore, expanding and supporting skill-based digital marketing training programs is essential for enhancing employability, bridging the digital skills gap, and fostering inclusive participation in Nepal's growing digital economy.

These types of courses were able to provide digital literacy fundamentals, but not really transmit them with advanced specialist skills in digital marketing. Pandey (2022) adds that the need for digital marketing specialists with skills like SEO and data-driven decision-making grew at a faster rate than can be provided by broad digital literacy courses. Learn Digital Nepal and Bigger Brains, private institutions, have thus begun providing more targeted practical courses with specializations in specific areas of digital marketing. The colleges train students to implement activities like pay-per-click campaigns, social media campaigns, email campaigns, and Google Analytics. The course is structured to equip students with the reality of the job market (Bhattarai & Thapa, 2021). These vocational schools generally entail practice training, in which students are engaged in actual marketing platforms and tools to create and implement marketing campaigns. This best equips them for the employment market (Shrestha & Koirala, 2022). While early attempts toward educating individuals on digital literacy have made a good starting point, there is a need to establish specialized vocational training schools to prepare youth with the sophistication that they need so that they can successfully compete in the hypercompetitive digital marketing industry.

Statement of the Problem

The digital marketing training programs at targeted to provide young people who are unemployed, the skills to be part of an active workplace and therefore help drive the Nepal economy. Despite these training programs, the Nepal unemployment rate is still high, reported at 10.7% (World Bank, 2025). One of the key issues that leads to high unemployment is the lack of required/demanded digital skills (Refrigeri et al., 2013: Tunji- Olayeni et al., 2021).

There are also more pronounce quality, access and relevance issues in the area of digital marketing in Nepal. Bhattarai and Thapa (2021), note that while there is increasing demand for digital skills industries' vocational training programs and disconnected from the empirical needs of learners, so when they seek employment,

they do not meet employers' needs. Under-employment is now a significant issue for workers who do not meet the industry's requirements. Ghimire and Sharma (2020) also point out that people had limited experiences on working in the workplace context and lacked proper guidance which makes people to not continue the work regularly. Knowing the emergent learner experience about their skills and access informs not only what works for improvement but justifies whether we should be attempting to improve programs. The demand for improvement leads to a push for a policy and an educator agenda to align training more closely with work needs and access for greater participation to be more seamless.

Government programs such as the Nepal Digital Literacy Campaign (Ministry of Education, Science & Technology [MoEST], 2020) have focused on computer basis but lack the advanced skills which is most required in today's job market. Because of this the program is not most effective in helping the people to get right skills match for the job. There is a notable shortage of workers with skills that are well-trained in digital marketing, especially among small and medium businesses. Yadav and Shrestha (2020) state that most firms in Kathmandu face a huge challenge in recruiting proficient digital marketers, due to which their growth and competitiveness in the digital economy are significantly affected. Researchers found that out of 75 participants, 68% of surveyed SMEs in Kathmandu struggle to find candidates with basic digital skills, despite 74% expressing a need for digitally skilled workers.

Even though vocational training programs on digital marketing have seen significant growth in Kathmandu, several challenges exist regarding the effectiveness and accessibility of such training programs. Among the major challenges is the inconsistency in quality across the different institutions providing the training. According to the World Bank (2021), even though there are some courses that provide full information, but fail to give hands-on experiences that are needed to be done in digital marketing. To work in the real business world, the students need to work as interns or project in the classroom. This is the only way to prepare them for what is expected of them when they start working in the field. According to Ghimire and Sharma (2020), most vocational training programs don't offer internships or real-world applications. This means that students can't get the hands-on experience they need to master digital marketing tools and strategies. Additionally, training programs

for students from low-income families are not always affordable. While government-sponsored programs may be subsidized, private institutions do charge higher fees, making access to quality vocational training somewhat difficult for several aspiring professionals. According to Sharma & Subedi (2021), the rapid growth of the sector of digital marketing sector, such as changes in algorithms or the introduction of new tools, also keeps the training current and an adaptive challenge for any training provider, states Pandey (2022). Therefore, regular updating is very much essential for their long-term success to meet industrial demands.

Purpose of the Study

The study's main purpose is to explore how digital marketing training contributes to individuals' development of relevant employment skills, access to employment opportunities, and enhancement of employment quality.

Research Questions

- What are digital marketing trainees' perceived levels of skills, access, opportunity, and quality?
- To what extent do skill, access, opportunity, and quality differ based on gender and ethnicity?

Hypothesis

There is a significant difference between the skill, access, opportunity, and quality based on gender and ethnicity.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it tackles the digitalization of Kathmandu Valley by digital marketing professionals, which has become increasingly digitalized. The research enables valuable insights into how skill training in digital marketing can improve employability for job seekers, employers, and educators. The data will serve as a reminder to employees, highlighting the key skills required to evolve and grow in this industry. Apart from that, it can also aid training institutions and create opportunities for policymakers to better understand how to design their programs and address industry needs, thereby promoting the economic progress of the region.

In the article "Supporting Youth Employment through Vocational Training Programs in Nepal" by Bhatta (2020), explains about the impact of vocational training programs in Nepal have helped young people especially those who left school early. These programs have helped an important role in supporting sustainable development.

However, there have been fewer studies on trained as digital marketing and their employment, including skills, access, opportunities, and quality of employment. This study helps to fill that gap by looking at the current employment situation of trained digital marketing professionals. This study assessed the key ideas about employment skills, employment access, employment opportunity, and employment quality of trained digital marketing in the Nepali context, which is insightful for TVET policymakers. It would also be helpful to make further strategies to make digital marketing training more effective for TVET stakeholders. The stakeholders of the TVET sector could gain new insights for their further planning. About the above lines, given that it highlights the benefits of receiving training in digital marketing, this study is anticipated to provide a substantial knowledge contribution to the TVET industry.

Delimitation of the Study

The study included only digital marketing trainees from Kathmandu Metropolitan City and focused on four employability dimensions: skills, access, opportunity and quality.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations. First, the research was confined to trainees within Kathmandu Metropolitan City, so the findings may not represent the entire population of Nepal. Secondly the data were collected through self-reported questionnaires, which may include some bias in response. The study used a cross-sectional design, measuring perceptions at one point in time, without tracking long term employment outcomes. Lastly limited time and resources prevented inclusion of additional variables such as income level, age and employment status.

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review is a summary of early research on a particular topic. It helps us to understand what is already known, what has been discovered so far and what areas still need more study. The study of digital marketing training would look at things like the importance of digital skills, past training programs and problems that students are having. It also causes some disagreements among experts and shows that more research is needed. This help people to explore on a new idea instead of copying work that has already been published. In the end, a literature review gives important background information for further research.

Digital Marketing and Its Demand

An emerging demand for digital marketers and their relevance in modern business practice for visibility, data-driven strategies and targeted engagement to navigate digital channels, connect effectively with consumers and drive sustainable growth. Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2020) show how important Digital Marketing has become in today's economy. They explain that it's an important skill that helps businesses stay competitive and succeed in the digital world. They add that through digital marketing, companies can interact with their customers by offering personalized content, thus creating enormous opportunities for professionals who specialize in the field. Similarly, Ryan (2020) talks about learning how the behavior of consumers changes in the digital period which provides the suggestion to marketers to work efficiently on digital platforms that are already in high demand.

Hemann and Burbary (2018) further underline the importance of technical knowledge in digital marketing by focusing on how data analytics shape modern marketing plan. Their work shows that there is an increasing reliance on consumer data in making informative marketing decisions, thus raising demands for professionals who can interpret and apply digital marketing analytics. The view is supported by Stephen (2016), who analyzes the effect of social media marketing on the consumer and how effective the use of digital platforms has a major impact on the purchasing decisions of consumers. Additionally, the explanation by Matthews (2022) also provides insight into the digital marketing professionals' job market, concerning a

strong demand for the required skills in search engine optimization, content marketing, and social media management. The businesses are looking for skilled digital marketers who can boost their business online and connect with more people. Digital marketing is growing fast around the world, especially in areas like marketing and automation and artificial intelligence (AI). A recent study from Kumar (2024) shows that AI is playing a big role in the rapid growth of digital marketing, helping companies work smarter and reach their audiences more effectively. Automation not only helps with creating marketing campaigns, but is also makes it easier to target large groups of people. Automation not only helps with creating marketing campaigns, but it also makes it easier to target large groups of people. According to the research conducted by Bormane and Blaus (2024) found that using AI digital marketing makes it easier to divide customers into groups and send them personalized messages right away. This works because AI uses data to understand each customer better, almost like it's send the message which was written just for them.

Current research is also looking at how digital marketing creates opportunities for entrepreneurs. Ratten (2022) showed that utilizing digital platforms and making market-led information decisions significantly stimulates new business practices associated with innovation and opens pathways to entrepreneurship. In relation, Parganas and Ntoumanis (2019) also indicate how businesses that eventually adopt digital marketing strategies tend to perform better; thus, digital marketing plays a crucial role in the expansion and sustainability of businesses. In other words, the literature has constantly reiterated that digital marketing is a determinant in ensuring business success. Since companies are embracing advanced digital instruments and platforms for performance competitiveness, skilled digital marketers will be in high demand. This trend shows not only an increase in demand for the services of a digital marketing professional but also an expanding role that digital marketing will play in shaping the prospects of companies.

Training and Employment in Digital Marketing

Due to digital-related technology that is constantly changing the labor market, the relationship between employability and digital marketing training has drawn more attention from academic and professional researchers. Curchod (2020) investigates significant impacts of digital marketing and e-commerce training programs affecting the job market and postulates that those who develop digital competencies tend to be

more advantageously positioned to secure employment in a competitive, technology-driven economy. Similarly, Digital marketing training is crucial for bridging skill gaps in the digital economy, as employers increasingly seek candidates who possess specialized digital competencies (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019; Royle & Laing, 2014). Therefore, investing in comprehensive digital marketing education is essential to enhance employability, meet labor market demands, and strengthen the overall digital economy.

Most researchers agree that digital marketing education plays an important role in creating job opportunities. Langley (2020) looks at how these training programs help people to find a job or start their own business. Similarly, small business and freelancers are using their skills to build and grow digital businesses. Similarly, Studies indicate that digital marketing education programs in developing countries contribute to reducing unemployment and enhancing workforce participation, particularly among vulnerable populations (Adhikari, 2024; Tunji-Olayeni et al., 2021). The conclusion is that digital skills enhance job opportunities but, at the same time, promote entrepreneurship in regions where traditional labor markets might be constrained.

Thompson (2021) underscores the clear link between digital marketing training and employability. Analysis of various training programs by her shows that individuals with certification in digital marketing have a higher chance of employment due to the growing demand for such skills across industries. Gupta (2019) agrees with emphasizing the effects in low-developing nations where demand is very high for digital marketing expertise. Digital marketing education has played an important role in assisting people from poor families to move to well-paying and stable jobs, according to Gupta's research. Professional bodies' reports also support the same. For instance, PwC's Digital Marketing Skills Training and Employment Impact Report (2022) cites that firms are increasingly discovering candidates with digital marketing expertise and thus, career prospects for those who have received proper training are great. A report by LinkedIn Learning (2021), also supports that digital marketing training not only increases job prospects but also accelerates career advancement since businesses are equally interested in professionals who can drive digital growth and increase online presence. Existing literature also appears to agree that competency in digital marketing and training in the associated skills is

indispensable for the enhancement of employability, job creation, and entrepreneurship. Since the digital economy is likely to grow further in the future, substantial demand for the services of such competencies across sectors is expected; hence, the training would be one of the essential resources for job seekers and employers alike.

Training for Skill

To increase the competency of an individual and thus his/her economic output as a whole, Becker (1964) develops the value of human capital investment in terms of schooling and training activities. This is corroborated by a study by Gupta (2019), which looks into ways in which digital marketing training can be used to improve employability in developing nations. Private institutions in Nepal have been providing students with comprehensive digital marketing training that combines theoretical knowledge with hands-on practical experience, helping them acquire skills relevant to the modern workforce (Adhikari, 2024; Mishra et al., 2024). This is also confirmed by Ghimire and Sharma (2020), who are on the digital skills gap and how vocational training can bridge the gap to improve the ability of individuals to cope with the needs of industries. As Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2020) affirm, it is necessary that digital marketing training is based on practice. This finding supports evidence that indicates practice experience to be considered above theoretical knowledge.

Similarly, Curchod (2020) discusses how digital marketing education influences labor markets such that graduates have a slight advantage over their counterparts. In their study on research design technique, Jahoda, Deutch, and Cook (2016) also demonstrate the significance of systematic skill training programs towards employability.

Training for Access

One of the factors predicting workers' progress is being exposed to professional networks and career opportunities. More emphasis is placed on the strategic significance of digital marketing learning for acquiring access to increased employability by Parganas and Ntoumanis (2019). This reflects the increased trend towards the online conduct of business, where having a well-established store of digital marketing strategies will significantly enhance the prospect of the job candidate. Similarly, K.C. (2021) also talks about employability and digital literacy in Nepal, offering training interventions that maximize the opportunities of employment

access. This would have specific applicability in regions where job search behavior commonly may be inadequate, highlighting the wide range of interventionist training to enhance effects.

To support the findings, digital marketing training has been shown to enhance access to industry opportunities by bridging skill gaps. Studies indicate that such training equips individuals with essential competencies, including SEO, social media marketing, content creation, data analysis, and email marketing, which strengthen workforce readiness and professional networks (Adhikari, 2024; Mishra et al., 2024; PwC, 2022). Evidence from Nepal also suggests that job access is closely linked to education and skills development programs, emphasizing the importance of formal training in improving employability (Parajuli, 2024). Furthermore, digital marketing strategies play a fundamental role in positioning candidates in the labor market, enabling them to compete effectively for potential employers (Adhikari, 2024). Overall, these findings highlight the critical role of targeted training programs in addressing the digital skills gap and facilitating industry access in the Kathmandu Valley.

Training for Opportunities

Digital marketing education has created the opportunity for employment and is supported by Key, Porter, and Taylor's (2019) report of growing international demand for digital marketers. Kathmandu SMEs applying digital marketing have opened up new business opportunities, mainly for entrepreneurs, according to Koirala and Shrestha (2021). Digital marketing education, as Langley (2020) requires, becomes a vital component of entrepreneurship since it gives the individual the ability to create his/her own business. Matthews (2022) demonstrates how increasing demands for competent individuals are calling for changes in work practices among digital marketing professionals. Nepal Government (2020) recognizes policies and initiatives in other nations towards digital literacy and employability, and this amplifies the contribution of training towards increased employment. The government also knows that training is important for passing on the skills needed in today's workplaces when they are these.

Training for Quality

Different researchers have examined the effect of digital marketing training on job quality. Stephen (2016) provides the effect of digital marketing on consumer

behavior and thus on career building and job security. Thomason (2021) explains that with a digital marketing certification, you'll be able to earn more and stay employed, based on job security research after training. Pandey (2022) also speaks of general trends and skill deficiencies of Nepal's vocational training. He also speaks of how much one needs to learn new skills so that employment quality can be maintained. According to Shrestha and Koirala (2022), the growth of vocational education and digital marketing in Nepal explained how formal education helps people to hold on to their jobs and earn more income. World Bank (2019) affirms that training is crucial in order to improve quality jobs by giving individuals a motivation to work harder and make more.

Literature reveals that computer education in marketing leads to much better skills, better career prospects, increased job accessibility, and better quality of jobs. Ultimately, in the future, training programs will be forced to deal with issues of making sure everyone has equal access and making sure the cost is worth it.

Research Gaps

While studies have been undertaken on changing trends, applicability, and career prospects in digital marketing training in Nepal, less literature exists on various subjects, such as the availability of skill development, opportunities and quality of training. Bhattarai and Thapa (2021) looked at the role of private institutions in influencing digital marketing education in Nepal. Similarly, they mentioned the growing need for digital literacy to address industry needs. However, most research so far has mainly focused on what's trending on the market rather than looking at whether people can actually afford to study or what problems they face while learning the skills.

In addition, Sharma and Bhandari (2022) have noted higher demand for digital marketing personnel in Nepal due to technological advancement and market expansion but have overlooked those factors that determine the usefulness and quality of the training courses. Similarly, Ghimire and Sharma (2022) determined the necessity for vocational training to make a person employment-ready but did not discuss whether the courses are actually effective enough in teaching relevant skills to students and providing access to training material fairly. One of such literature gaps is how online marketing training influences other career opportunities aside from employment demand. Pandey (2022) emphasizes how specialized skills such as SEO

and data analysis are needed by industries, but misses the quality of such training content and its value in being employed in the long term.

Besides, Yadav and Shrestha (2020) were talking about digital marketing in SMEs and never stressed on carry out a study on how the skill development program could further professionally and economically.

Based on these limitations, thorough research that investigates the fields of skill acquisition, access, opportunity creation, and training quality in the topic of digital marketing education in Nepal is highly relevant. On the basis of such areas, much more vigilant observations can be made on the way vocational training can operate in successfully filling the employability gap in the domain of digital marketing.

Theoretical Framework

I will be using Gary Becker's Human Capital Theory to try to guide my study. In an effort to increase economic productivity and efficiency, human capital theory places a strong emphasis on funding education and training. The theory may support the claim that digital marketing capabilities will enhance job marketability by improving the caliber of an individual's human capital. However, it does not specifically address digital marketing. A person becomes more productive, diverse, and competitive when they acquire skills that align with the current labor market's needs.

Policy on Employability

The UK government began evolving employability policy in 2002 by initially establishing the Employability Coordination Team (ESECT) to aid student employability progression and healthy learning cultures (Belt et al., 2010). The Welsh Higher Education Strategy (2009) also emphasizes employability as being amongst the higher education priorities. In Scotland, a government agency has specifically targeted helping higher education institutions and colleges in promoting employability skills among students for more than two decades. Northern Ireland also introduced the Graduate Acceleration Programme (GAP) to promote the employability skills of youth in particular who are facing challenges in employment. These initiatives attest to a multi-component, long-term national policy to tackle employability.

In developed economies like Germany, the dual system of vocational education and training (VET) with both work-based training and institution-based

learning perfectly meets the employers' requirements (Hall & Soskice, 2001). The well-rooted in German society and employer and union-controlled system provides students with practical, marketable skills. Hence, the dual system of Germany connects theory and practice extremely effectively. Correspondingly, South Africa has incorporated some skills into its National Qualifications Framework (NQF) to enhance graduate development and economic achievement (Harvey & Bowers-Brown, 2004). Conversely, New Zealand has also redefined its National Qualifications Framework, after stakeholder consultation, to facilitate the employability skills of graduates (Spronken-Smith et al., 2015).

Gill (2018) supports the creation of an Australian network that bridges students and businesses to determine skill gaps when students enter the labor market. The partnership is intended to ease the worry of students and make it clearer what employers require. Australian business organizations have been lobbying for VET policy reform focusing on skills to secure work (Sheldon & Thornthwaite, 2005). UK research by Kornelakis and Petrakaki (2020) shows that small group training can be effective in filling the industry's requirement for employability skills. UK businesses are generally pleased with graduates' key skills, whereas working in small groups can help one function better on difficult tasks.

Employment policies across the world indicate that well-implemented programs help TVET graduates gain employment, with a positive impact on their careers. But Nepal doesn't have a separate TVET policy, incorporating it into the National Education Policy (2019). The government responsibilities are mentioned in the policy, giving priority to the quality of TVET, but the provincial and local governments also need to give priority to the quality of TVET programs so that the trainees become labor market employable. Poudel (2020) points out that the previous TVET policies (2007, 2012) did not emphasize employability, because of which migrant workers could not find skilled work.

Even though sixteen ministries have put budgets into skills development (Lamsal & Bajracharya, 2022), employers cannot obtain graduates with the competencies required by the labor market. The majority of the graduates cannot demonstrate their competencies due to a lack of industry-demanded employability skills. There is no considerable research on Nepalese TVET graduates' employability skills. The Nepal Employment Policy (2015) predicts that university graduates'

competencies will drive the economy, but if they are not equipped with employability skills, employers will not be willing to hire them, affecting productivity.

Sharma (2021) calls for greater collaboration between institutions and employers in identifying and including industry-required employability skills in curricula. A standalone TVET policy would also enable closer examination of stakeholder issues and ensure the inclusion of required skills to enable students to be employable policy should also involve employers in designing the curriculum so the students can learn the skills needed in the job market. This helps to make the training more practical and attracts the student to join the TVET programs.

Human Capital Theory

Human Capital Theory provides the overall conceptual framework of interconnectedness among employability, skill acquisition, and education. The theory (Becker, 1964) is based on the belief that the investment in training and education as human capital is economically driven to enhance people's productivity and economic worth and thereby increase earning ability and employability. Thus, these theoretical perspectives might prove well applied in digital marketing skill training programs in the Kathmandu Valley from the perspective of my thesis. These skill-building programs provide participants with quality, job-ready skills that would better equip them to find jobs in a fast-evolving labor market.

Human Capital Theory provides a useful framework through which the training and impacts of digital marketing on employability in the Kathmandu Valley can be analyzed. Digital marketing training may be thought of as one method of investing in human capital, whereby the increase in investment boosts earning potential, career opportunities, or productivity. This is also dependent on the extent to which one can consider wider market conditions and the extent to which a labor market can absorb such a massive influx of newly acquired personnel.

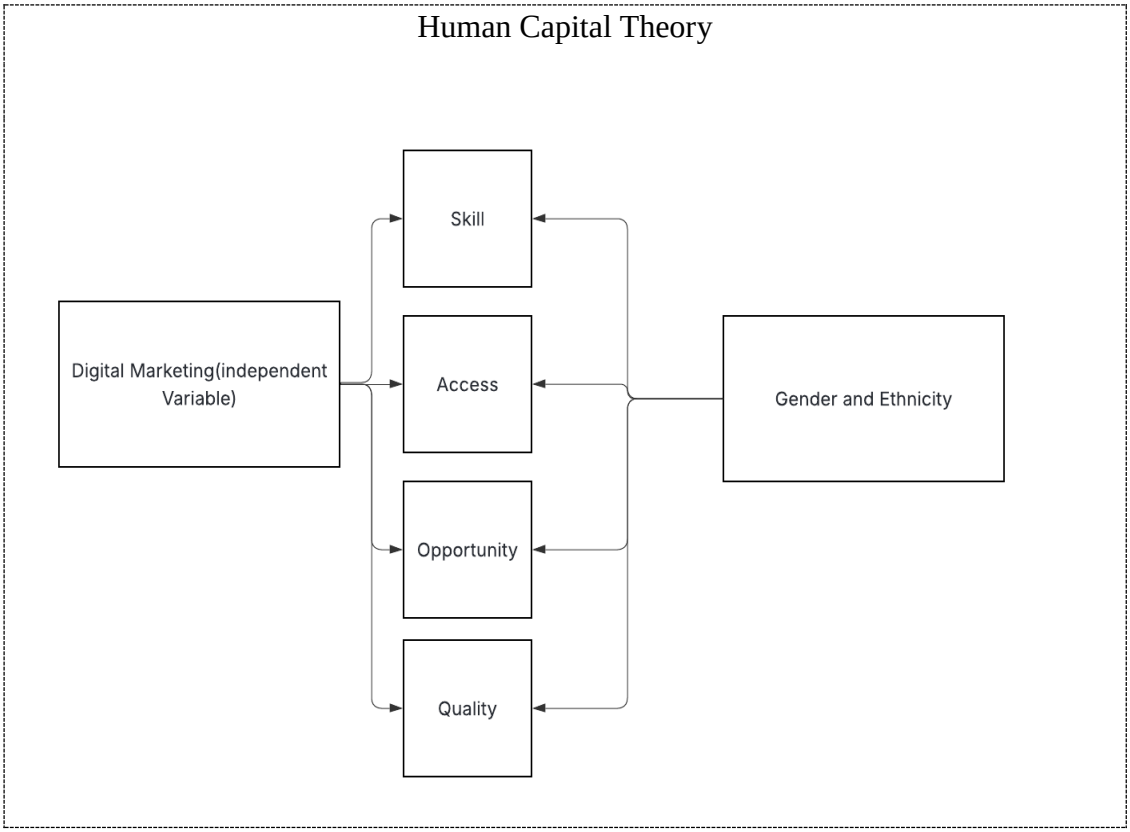
Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is based on Human Capital Theory, which maintains that investment in skills, in this case digital marketing, improves productivity and employability. In the Kathmandu Valley, the people have higher levels of human capital-skills and knowledge developed through participation in digital marketing training, and hence, improve their job opportunities, wages, and entrepreneurial activity. Hence, mechanisms that mediate the relationship is

employment access and employment opportunity -indicate that by acquiring skills, the feeling of confidence and the ability to adapt to labor market demands become more enhanced, leading to better employability.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework



CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is a systematic way of finding a solution to the problem. Research methodology gives us a clear idea of what research we are doing. In this chapter, we discussed the procedures adopted to conduct the research. This study analyzes the effect of skill training on employability in Kathmandu Metropolitan City's digital marketing sector. This method ensures an organized approach to data gathering, analysis, and validation, aligning with accepted academic norms and enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings.

Research Design

The knowledge objective of this research is to generate an understanding of the relationship between digital marketing skill training and employability among youth in the Kathmandu Valley. It seeks to identify patterns and correlations between the types of digital skills acquired and the resulting employability outcomes. The objective is stated in an impersonal and aggregate form, focusing on collective trends rather than individual experiences, and it is measurable through statistical analysis of survey data, including descriptive and inferential methods to assess the level of improvement in employability indicators.

According to Jahoda et al. (2016), research design is arranging conditions under which data are collected and analyzed in a manner that attempts to weigh relevance to the research purpose against economy and procedure (cited by Akhtar, 2016). Research design is a broad plan that helps in carrying out the research through answering the research questions by collecting, interpreting, analyzing, and discussing the data. It is a framework for the research that helps us determine the tools and techniques used in our research. Our research is descriptive and quantitative in research design. Quantitative research design is much needed because it is based on statistical analysis and objective measurement: it allows us to measure systemically relationships and phenomena.

Quantitative approach thus enhances validity and minimizes bias, consequently presenting more accurate and generalized findings to wider groups of people. Through its systematicity, quantitative research makes it possible to test and

compare-based measurement leading to the corpus of knowledge in a field of study. The measurability of the data also allows for simple visualization as graphs and charts, simple communication of findings, testing hypotheses, and confirmation of hypotheses. The main objective of this study is to establish the effect of digital marketing training on individuals in order to acquire respective employment competencies, acquire employment opportunities, and enhance employment quality for employment. Studies such as Wahyuni and Sahid (2020) indicate that digital marketing skills enhance the employability of Indonesian vocational graduates. Similarly, Morrar et al. (2020) highlight that digital skills are now the order of the day for employability in the knowledge-based economy, with digital training serving as the nexus between education and labor.

Area of Study

The main focus of this study is Kathmandu Metropolitan City, which is Nepal's growing capital and main city. It was chosen because it has a diverse population, easy access to institutions and a strong job market. Nepal's Kathmandu is a hub for both old and new industries. It is quickly becoming digital, which makes it a great place to test how well digital marketing skills training works. It's even more important that there are technologically advanced people who want to improve their careers. Researching this urban area helps us understand how digital marketing training might affect people's ability to get jobs and start their own businesses in a job market that is always changing (K.C., 2021).

Sampling Design

Sampling design is a fundamental concept that aids in the selection of the survey sample and is among the most significant elements of research design that affects several aspects of the study, particularly the validity and precision of the results (Lavrakas, 2008). However, in this study, a stratified sampling method was used. This approach is especially valuable in that it allows for the selection of all the defined strata into the sample, thereby reducing sampling bias through proportionate representation of some subgroups in the sample. From students of Kathmandu Metropolitan City, the sample will be drawn from those who have enrolled in a digital marketing course. A “universe” in research can be described as the larger group of units a study intends to generalize its findings to, or all relevant entities as specified in the research hypothesis (Neuman, 2000).

The population for this research is all students in Kathmandu Metropolitan City who have completed digital marketing training courses. The population is the collect that can be seen from which the sample was drawn. Merriam-Webster defines a sample as a representative part of a population, selected in order to speak for the characteristics of the population. In this case, the sample of students was chosen well so that it becomes a representative of the large population of people who have received digital marketing training in Kathmandu Metropolitan City, and the study's findings can be applied to the population.

The training duration was 25 days, with every session taking 2 hours. 7 groups were trained and 317 participants completed it and were certified. The study population is these 317 trainees, who included 217 males and 100 females who underwent the digital marketing training.

Sample Size Calculation

The trained digital marketing of one district, specifically Kathmandu Metropolitan City was selected in this study. The researcher employed Yamane's (1967) formula for deriving the sample size of the study. The confidence level was calculated at 95%. The formula for the sample size determination is given below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N * e^2}$$

Where,

n= sample size

N = population of the study

e= Margin of error

The sample size was determined in the following ways:

$$n = \frac{317}{1 + 317 * (0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{317}{1 + 317 * 0.0025}$$

$$n = \frac{317}{1 + 0.7925}$$

Where,

n= 177

N= 317

e= 0.05

After applying Yamane's method, the final sample size obtained was 177. Although the sample size was 177, the data was collected from 180 participants to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, despite the potential errors and incomplete data. The respondents were selected by applying the simple random sampling method in the study. This method helps find a compromise between data accuracy and data gathering practicality.

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire for this study was modified from K C (2022) after permission was granted and tailored to assist in addressing the objective of the current research. The refinement process included improvements to the questionnaire concerning interpretation, relevance, and clarity. The questionnaire was designed specifically to collect quantitative data, and a 5-point Likert scale of 1, meaning "Strongly Disagree", and 5 denoting "Strongly Agree", was utilized as a measurement tool. This method helps to know the people's views and attitudes towards digital marketing skills training in detail. Some parts of the questionnaire focused on learning more about the participants' backgrounds, such as their gender and job status. The study also looked at employment outcomes, including whether participants got jobs after the training or pursued self-employment. Respondents share their views on how useful the training was for improving their job-seeking skills and advancing their careers.

By using the Likert scale, the research was able to identify patterns and relationships between skill training. It allowed the researchers to clearly see how participants felt about the training and how it supports their careers.

Pilot Testing

Pilot testing was done on 20 of the target population respondents before conducting the data collection. It was to pilot test the clarity, reliability, and validity of the study. Cronbach's alpha, an index of internal consistency, was calculated to establish the reliability of the questionnaire. Feedback from the pilot group showed that some questions were confusing or hard to understand, so they were improved to make them clearer. For example, one of the questions under the second theme was whether training improved my marketing in the job market, which was not brief, and changed it to whether training improved my marketing myself in the job market strategy. This back-and-forth process enabled the final questionnaire to meet the

research objectives and be capable of sufficiently measuring employability outcomes variables (Bryman, 2016).

Data Collection

Research data collected is quantitative, for instance, the use of primary sources. The study gathered primary data for a full analysis. Primary data was collected via a structured questionnaire aimed to gather details about demographics, participation in skill training, and employability aspects. The use of the methods also ensured that the data collection was extensive, bias was reduced, and the validity of the data was indeed improved.

Data Analysis

The study analyzed data using SPSS software, with an emphasis on descriptive and inferential statistics analyses. To summarize key dataset characteristics, Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, means, and standard deviations were used. Mean provided an overview of central tendencies, such as average digital marketing skills and employability ratings, while standard deviations assessed data variability for the inferential analysis. Likewise, the chi-square test was used to evaluate the difference in skills, access, opportunities, and quality as an inferential statistic.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability is the accuracy of the measuring process that produces accurate outcomes under similar conditions. A pilot study was carried out with 20 participants to determine if the questions for the survey are unclear and difficult to understand. The 180 participants will be carefully chosen to guarantee the reliability and correctness of the data collected. Cronbach's Alpha has been used to gauge the research's trustworthiness. The 20 research questions have a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.937, which is considered high. This indicates that the questions measured the intended outcome consistently and worked well together. According to Tavakol and Dennick (2011), a score of 0.9 or above denotes exceptional reliability, a score of 0.8 to 0.9 denotes strong reliability, a score of 0.7 to 0.8 denotes fair reliability, and a score of less than 0.7 would suggest that the questions aren't very consistent. In addition to providing solid findings, such a high score indicates that the questions cover a comparable basic topic and are highly applicable to one another. In addition to providing solid results, such a high score demonstrates how closely connected and essentially similar the questions are. The high reliability coefficient's repeated

findings demonstrate how comparable the scale items are and how well they may measure a common underlying element. High internal consistency questionnaire minimizes the researcher's effort and increases the validity of study results and renders the tools for gathering data more reliable (Gliem & Gliem, 2003). Though high Cronbach's Alpha is desirable, extremely high values (more than 0.95) might indicate item repetition and the suggestion that questions need to be reduced without compromising reliability (Streiner, 2003). The 0.937 value of Cronbach's Alpha indicates very good reliability of the measuring instrument for research and practical use.

Table 1

Reliability Analysis of the Theme

Theme	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Skill	.919	5
Access	.842	5
Opportunities	.693	5
Quality	.713	5
Overall	0.937	20

To test the reliability and internal consistency of the measuring scales used for this study, a reliability test was conducted using Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient. Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient is a globally accepted internal consistency measure that reflects the degree to which a series of items are interrelated with one another. A higher Cronbach’s Alpha generally represents better reliability, with an acceptance of a coefficient of 0.70 or greater commonly acceptable for social science studies, but higher for more stable tests.

For the Skill dimension, Cronbach’s Alpha was found to be 0.919 with five items. This indicates a high internal consistency of the items that have been employed to measure skill, hence indicating that the items are highly correlated and properly capture the construct of skill. The high value also indicates that respondents all consistently interpreted the items in the same manner.

With a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.842 on five items, the access theme also showed strong internal consistency. The metric shows that the items evaluate the idea of access coherently and consistently, and they go beyond the generally recognized criterion. The dependability coefficient also shows that participant replies are fairly consistent across access. The opportunities' theme's Cronbach's Alpha was 0.693, which was somewhat below than the generally recognized minimum of 0.70. While this value indicates moderate internal consistency, it may be that some items in the opportunities construct are not as well-placed as is optimal. Further testing, e.g., items-total correlation or factor analysis, would be indicated to validate or refine the scale.

The Quality theme had a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.713 with five items, which is an acceptable internal consistency. This means that the items to assess quality are sufficiently correlated and provide a consistent measure of the construct. By and large, the reliability test confirms that the measurement instruments used on Skill, Access, Opportunities, and Quality are internally consistent and reliable. The slightly lower alpha for opportunities is evidence of a degree of leeway in the measurement scale, yet still shows quite an acceptable measure of consistency in exploratory analysis.

In research, validity refers to a method's ability to accurately measure what it was designed to assess. A valid research instrument generates results that are relevant to real-world events. To ensure validity, a survey was prepared with specific, targeted questions that correspond to study objectives. Content validity, criterion validity, and construct validity, and construct validity are central considerations in determining whether measurement tools employed in research reflect the accuracy and efficiency of assessment (Polit & Beck, 2017).

Content validity was described as how much a tool of measurement portrays the whole variation of the studied concept, such that all aspects being investigated are in good covered. Criterion validity verifies the degree to which a single measure forecasts an outcome based on another, established measure (the criterion) and is further divided into concurrent and predictive validity (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Construct validity verifies whether a test truly measures the theoretical construct it claims to examine, normally via statistical analysis such as factor analysis or hypothesis testing (Cronbach & Meehl,1955).

In my study, I employed several systematic ways to ensure content, criteria, and construct validity. For content validity, I employed the questionnaire in my study. I looked through the literature to determine the concept's key features. A pilot test was also conducted to get feedback on the themes' relevance and fluency. I assess criterion validity by looking at how well my measurement can forecast results in accordance with well-recognized standards.

Together, these types of validity and to research instrument and results' general trustworthiness based on their application. Consultation of teachers will increase validity by collecting important variables.

Ethical Consideration

This study is aimed at addressing ethical issues to make participants' rights and the research process transparent and traceable. Every participant was given informed consent so that they knew the purpose, extent and utilization of data. Transparency will be an utmost priority as well and participants will be kept informed during the research process. Data will be anonymized and kept confidential. Ethical rules are guaranteed throughout the entire process of data collection, where their participation is voluntary and withdrawn at any point. The gathered data will be used for academic purposes only and without revealing or disclosing any data concerning individuals. Adherence to ethical rules preserves the quality of research as well as guarantees trust from participants. Ethical guidelines of the School of Education, Kathmandu University, were also followed in this research.

CHAPTER IV
FINDINGS

This chapter deals with the analysis of the data into information. The data of this study was the primary data collected from 180 respondents who had currently completed their training on digital marketing. The data was collected from the online Google form. It further explains the input of data into SPSS and interpretation of the result given in the form of mean, percentage, standard deviation and Chi-square test.

Demographic Statistics

Table 2

Gender

Demographic	Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	134	74.4
	Female	46	25.6
	Total	180	100.0

Table 2 shows how many men and women took part in the research. 134 of them, or around 74.4% of the people who took part, are men. This shows that men make up a large majority. But there are just 46 women who can take part, which is around 25.6% of the total. This means that there is a gender disparity in enrollment for this vocational training, as male participants are larger in percentage than women.

Table 3

Ethnicity

Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
Brahmin/Chhetri	106	58.9
Janajati	57	31.7
Others	17	9.4
Total	180	100

Table 3 presents the ethnic distribution of participants in the study, comprising 180 individuals, with the largest group being Brahmin/Chhetri, consisting of 106

persons, or 58.9% of the respondents. The second largest group, Janajati participants, totals 57 individuals, totals 57 individuals or 31.7%. The others include 17 participants who identified themselves as belonging to other ethnic groups, or made up 9.4% of the total. It reflects that the greater majority of the participants who took up the digital marketing training were mainly from a Brahmin/Chhetri background, while the representations from Janajati and other ethnic groups were minimal.

Level of Perceived Skills, Access, Opportunity, and Quality

Table 4

Level of Perceived Skills

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The digital marketing training has increased my skills in the field.	180	4.34	.636
The training enhanced my technical knowledge more than my theoretical knowledge.	180	4.27	.575
My skills are relevant to the current job market.	180	4.16	.723
The training increased my confidence in handling digital marketing tasks.	180	4.24	.674
The training enhanced my problem-solving abilities in the digital marketing arena.	180	4.16	.718

The employment skill analysis for 180 samples showed that the digital marketing training increased professional skills and provided a better learning experience. The training was notably successful in improving general proficiency in the practice, with a mean 4.34 score (SD=0.636). It further emphasized practical knowledge instead of theory, with a mean score of 4.27(SD=0.575), indicating there was a strong emphasis on practice. Participants strongly agreed that the skills an individual would obtain with this course are relevant where job markets are headed, scoring a mean of 4.16 (SD=0.723). In addition, the training greatly boosted participants' confidence in their digital marketing management capabilities (M = 4.24,

SD = 0.674) and enabled them to tackle challenges in this area (M = 4.16, SD = 0.718). Based on the overall mean scores, which were consistently high across all five statements, it can be inferred that the training improved the technical skills along with job readiness, while a low standard deviation suggests the participants felt strongly about the statement and agreed to the impact of training on the employability skills.

Table 5

Access

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
Digital marketing professionals are in demand in the current job market.	4.25	.708
The training expanded my professional network within the digital marketing industry.	4.02	.881
The training helped me build personal connections in the digital marketing field.	4.06	.710
The training increased my relationships with potential employers.	3.91	.923
The training improved my approach to marketing myself in the job market.	4.00	.805

The training expanded my professional network within the Table 5 on access to employment shows that, overall, the training in digital marketing had a very positive impact on improving the career prospects of participants. People strongly agreed that there's a high demand for digital marketing professionals in today's job market, giving it the highest average rating of 4.25 out of 5. This means most participants felt the same way. The training was also seen as helpful for growing professional networks, with an average score of 4.02. Additionally, it helped participants make personal connections in the industry, scoring 4.06 on average. These results suggest that the training helps participants to meet others who will help them progress in their careers. The average effect of training on the formation of relations with prospective employers was 3.91 (SD=0.923), indicating that it had a largely excellent effect, though less significant than other variables. Lastly, the

participants rated the training at 4.00 (SD=0.805) as to how well it prepared them to sell themselves. The study shows that digital marketing courses can enable students to secure jobs by learning to network and sell themselves.

Table 6

Opportunities

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The digital marketing training created significant job opportunities for me.	180	3.91	.990
The training helped me explore the possibilities of starting my own digital marketing business.	180	3.73	.972
There is growing awareness about the importance of skilled digital marketers.	180	4.16	.641
I have received equal opportunities and fair treatment in employment.	180	3.64	.889
The training enhanced my entrepreneurial skills in the digital marketing field	180	3.73	.961

The table 6 on employment opportunities shows how the participants' career prospects and entrepreneurial minds have been influenced by training in digital marketing. The statement emphasizing the increasing recognition of skilled digital marketers in the job market received a high mean score of 4.16 with a standard deviation of 0.641, which shows a good overall consensus among the participants on increasing recognition in the job market for digital marketing skills. Apart from this, the idea that digital marketing training yielded wonderful job opportunities was likewise well received with a mean score of 3.91 (SD=0.990), even though the larger range does reflect more diverse individual experience in regards to its employment consequences. The impact of the training on increasing entrepreneurial skills scored 3.73 (SD = 0.961). The statement of receiving equal opportunities and fair treatment in employment scored the lowest with a mean of 3.64 (SD =0.889), indicating that

there is still some room for improvement in the pursuit of being as fair as possible in providing equal opportunities to all participants. Overall, the evidence would suggest that whilst digital marketing training significantly raises awareness about industry importance, creates jobs, and provides equal opportunities for seeking employment, there is room for improving perceptions of support for entrepreneurial growth.

Table 7

Quality

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
My basic income has increased after completing digital marketing training.	180	3.51	1.189
I prefer a full-time digital marketing job over freelance work.	180	3.69	1.225
I can fulfill my basic needs through my digital marketing job.	180	3.78	1.115
I can provide quality education for my children through my job earnings.	180	3.04	1.147
I can afford health insurance for my family members.	180	3.06	1.245

Table 7 shows that people experienced some improvement in their finances after taking the digital marketing training. Many participants said their income went up a little, and they preferred having full-time jobs over doing freelance work. The majority of participants believed that their daily expenses could be met with the money they made via digital marketing. They were less certain, however, when it came to more significant financial objectives like covering their children's tuition or obtaining family health insurance. They gave fewer favorable and more ambiguous answers. This implies that while the training contributed to their increased short-term financial stability, its effects on their long-term financial security have not yet been significant.

Chi-square of Skill, Access, Opportunity, and Quality with Gender and Ethnicity

The Chi-Square Test was conducted to determine whether there is a relationship between skill, access, opportunity and quality with gender and ethnicity.

Table 8

Gender and Skill

Variable	X^2	p
Gender and Skill	1.652	0.199

A Chi-Square test was done to see if there's a meaningful link between gender and skill level. The result (Pearson Chi-Square = 1.652, with 1 degree of freedom) showed that there isn't a strong or significant relationship between the two. The p-value derived is 0.199, which is greater than the commonly used alpha of 0.05. This means that the null hypothesis cannot be rejected, and therefore, there is no significant relationship between gender and skill. This means that any differences in skill levels between male and female participants could have happened just by chance. The test didn't find any solid evidence of a real gap between genders when it comes to acquiring digital marketing skills. Furthermore, the minimum expected frequencies requirement for the Chi-Square test assumption has been satisfied, as all the expected cell values were greater than 5. This enhances the validity of the results obtained using the test. Overall, the results show that skill development is not affected by gender in this study.

Table 9

Gender and Access

Variable	X^2	p
Gender and Access	0.773	0.379

In analyzing the relationship between gender and access—whether to opportunities, resources, or training—the Pearson Chi-Square test produced a value of 0.773 with 1 degree of freedom and an associated p-value of 0.379. As this p-value is

significantly higher than the standard threshold of 0.05, it implies that there is no statistically significant association between gender and access. This result indicates that men and women have relatively equal levels of access in the sampled population. The Chi-square test assumption has been met in that none of the anticipated frequencies fell below the cut-off value of 5. Accordingly, the findings are valid and accurate. The findings validate the general suggestion that the availability of relevant resources is not gender-stereotypical, at least in the specific scope and setting of the present research.

Table 10

Gender and Opportunity

Variable	X^2	p
Gender and Opportunity	1.659	0.198

To establish if there existed a relationship between gender and perceived or actual opportunity, a Chi-Square test was conducted. The test resulted in a Pearson Chi-Square of 1.659 with 1 degree of freedom and a p-value of 0.198. This is higher than the 0.05 cut-off, thus revealing that the gender difference observed in opportunity is not statistically significant. This would mean that opportunities, whether for work or training, development, are not observable and are differently distributed between male and female respondents in the sample. Also, the requirement that all expected frequencies are greater than 5 is fulfilled to ensure test validity. The results indicate the detection of the fact that gender is not a determining factor in the allocation of opportunity among the population under investigation.

Table 11

Gender and Quality

Variable	X^2	p
Gender and Quality	0.938	0.333

Chi-Square test employed to check whether there is any possible association between the quality and gender, presumed to be of training acquired or education or outcome came out to be 0.938 and 1 degree of freedom, and the corresponding p-value came out to be 0.333. Since this p-value is greater than the standard cut-off of 0.05, this indicates that there is no statistically significant association between quality and gender. All the expected counts were greater than the minimum of 5, and thus the test assumptions were satisfied. This analysis indicates that the perceived or experienced quality by the respondents does not differ in a statistically significant way between females and males. These findings are consistent with the idea that quality-related experiences are not disproportionately influenced by gender in this study setting.

Table 12

Ethnicity and Skill

Variable	X^2	p
Ethnicity and Skill	11.446	0.003

The analysis of the relationship between ethnicity and skill level revealed a statistically significant relationship, as indicated by a Pearson Chi-Square value of 11.446 with 2 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.003. Because this p-value is much smaller than the 0.05 significance level, it leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis. It supports the conclusion that skill levels vary significantly across various ethnic groups. However, it should be noted that a single cell (16.7%) contained less than 5 expected counts, which slightly violates the chi-squared test assumption. Despite this, the result remains significant and points towards variations in the learning or identification of skills across ethnic groups. This could be an artefact of any combination of socio-economic or educational factors that differ by ethnicity within the sample population.

Table 13

Ethnicity and Access

Variable	X^2	p
Ethnicity and Access	6.915	0.032

The table shows a relationship between ethnicity and access to digital marketing training. The "X^2" variable (Chi-square test) is 6.915, and the "p" value is 0.032. In simple terms, this means that there is a statistically significant difference in access to digital marketing training among the ethnic groups. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, this suggests that ethnicity does play a role in whether or not people have access to this type of training, rather than differences being due to chance alone.

Table 14

Ethnicity and Opportunity

Variable	X^2	p
Ethnicity and Opportunity	1.752	0.416

The table 14 shows that there is a significant relationship between ethnicity and access to work after digital marketing training. The value of X^2 is 6.915 and p-value is 0.032 indicates that variations in access to work based on ethnicity are not due to chance. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, it shows that ethnicity significantly impacts whether one gains access to work after receiving digital marketing training. This means that members of different races might be exposed to unequal opportunities as far as getting employment in this career is concerned.

Table 15

Ethnicity and Quality

Variable	X^2	p
Ethnicity and Quality	1.909	0.385

The table 15 test to find out the relation between ethnicity and quality had a Pearson Chi-square of 1.909 on 2 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.385. Because the p-value is greater than 0.05, the test results are not significant. While there was one cell with an expected frequency of less than 5 (16.7%), its influence on the overall result is negligible. This means that the quality of training, service, or experience received by the people is not, to any significant degree, dependent on ethnicity. Therefore, in the present study, quality distribution appears to be uniform across ethnic groups.

CHAPTER V
DISCUSSIONS

The outcomes of this research provide insightful information on the effect of digital marketing training on employment skills, access to employment, and the quality of work. The results indicated that training improved individuals' skills, created access to opportunities, connected them with the networks and other people, and ultimately improved their lives. Therefore, it is critical to understand how this training helps individuals learn new skills for jobs, gain access to jobs, have opportunities, and enjoy better working conditions, particularly for those who may need someone to advocate for them. This discussion explores the implications of the research findings, aligning them with the existing literature and suggesting potential avenues for further investigation.

Skill

This study indicates that vocational training in digital marketing is strongly expected to improve technical skills among the trainees. This study found that respondents strongly possess competencies directed towards the job market. This concurs with Becker's (1964) Human Capital Theory, which states that investment in education and training correlates with increased productivity and employment.

Further, the emphasis placed by the training on the development of problem-solving skills would indicate the possibility of a secondary impact, skills would indicate necessity for adaptability of the speedily changing digital landscape. The assertion of Ghimire and Sharma (2020) would support this, stating that vocational training should include critical thinking to counter the shortage of digital skills.

This supports Becker's (1964) human capital theory, which posits that investment in education and training improves productivity in the labor force. Bhattarai and marketing have moved from focusing on theory teaching to a move toward skill development. This is corroborated by Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2020), who comment that practical experience in digital marketing is important to develop skills.

This is unlike the wider teaching method within traditional education, where learning theory would usually come before its application in practice (Neuman, 2000).

The results further show that problem-solving capacity was enhanced. This aligns with what Ghimire and Sharma (2020) put forward about vocational training courses having to include critical thinking to address the digital skills shortage. Also, a Nigerian study by Okolie et al. (2020) confirmed that the use of digital skills in vocational training led to higher levels of competency among youth and higher job readiness in the ICT sector. This is consistent with findings here in Kathmandu Valley. Practical learning in digital marketing was also mentioned by Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2020) as an essential aspect for skills mastery, a fact echoed globally. In the UK, practical digital marketing workshops substantially enhanced learners' operational and strategic capability (Smith, 2019).

Access to Employment

The study emphasizes how the digital marketing training has been improving access to employment opportunities. The respondents gave a high rating on the demand for digital marketing professionals, indicating an awareness of the growing job market. The finding supports Matthews (2022), who states that companies are increasingly looking for digital marketers with skills who can manage their presence online.

The training further assisted in creating networking opportunities for expanding the professional network and building personal connections, respectively. This finding corresponds to Koirala and Shrestha (2021), who emphasized the important role of networking in securing job placement in the digital marketing landscape. On the other hand, the study highlighted that there is a gap in direct interaction with potential employers, suggesting that the training should strengthen this aspect to give better placement results to the participants.

It is evident from the study that training in digital marketing enables individuals to get employment since enables individuals to get employment since there is a high demand for such skills. This aligns with what is occurring globally, as most firms desire digital marketing employees (Matthews, 2022; Pandey, 2022).

The training also enhanced professional networks and personal contacts. This validates Koirala and Shrestha’s (2021) study, which shows how crucial networking is for digital marketing jobs. The training moderately less impact on relationships with prospective employers, showing that there is a shortfall in directly interacting with employers. Thompson (2021) suggests that certification courses do not directly help

individuals in finding jobs post-training. Though digital marketing training enhances the ability in self-promotion, the results show that there is a need to further improve the linkage with employers along with job placement strategy, which has also been emphasized by Shrestha and Koirala (2022).

Opportunities

The result from the survey showed that the digital marketing training is improving employment opportunities while fostering entrepreneurial opportunities. It is observed that training providers provide a degree of empowerment to individuals to consider entrepreneurship as a valid port of call. This concurs with the view of Langley (2020), who argues that digital skills are required to pursue entrepreneurship, particularly in emerging markets.

Against the above advantages, the relatively lower means score on the equal opportunities parameters shows that barriers still exist, which may derive mainly from socio-economic conditions affecting access to resources and networking that are crucial for entrepreneurship. It is paramount to grant intervention measures to resolve the differences so that all trainees, despite their socio-economic backgrounds, can use their skills in the job market.

The study indicates that digital marketing training increases job opportunities and helps people to start their businesses. This is in line with Langley's (2020) finding, which states that people venture into new businesses when they gain digital skills. The increase in recognition of expert digital marketers aligns with Parganas and Ntoumanis'(2019) contentions, which state that recognition in the industry increases expanding jobs opportunities.

Equal employment opportunities received a lower mark, indicating that perhaps there are job access differences even with training programs. Digital marketing training programs are present in Nepal, with opportunities; however, they have barriers to women's participation. In Nepal, similar situations can be seen as programs try to train women entrepreneurs in digital marketing to address these gaps. For example, the UNESCAP and the South Asian Women Development Forum (SAWDF) have trained more than 200 Nepalese women to use digital technologies to grow their enterprises. Sadly, many women encounter both access and economic obstacles that they didn't cause, and these barriers might be a mix of problems that women entrepreneurs all across the world confront (UNESCAP & SAWDF, 2024).

Sharma and Poudel (2025) say that women don't become involved in Enterprises very much, especially in small and medium enterprises (SMEs), since they don't have easy access to money, skill training and societal conventions. Since many of the women are restricted to Limited opportunities, there is little benefit from the digital training.

Quality of Employment

The results, about the quality of jobs, give a mixed picture, where respondents reported a moderate increase in their income; participants express a preference toward full-time jobs as opposed to freelance work, and there are indications that many significant barriers remain. Respondents were less confident regarding their long-term status regarding the provision of quality education for their families and health insurance.

This is in line with the recommendations of the World Bank (2021), which stated that while digital literacy improves short-term employability, it is the continuous professional development and support mechanisms that establish long-term financial stability. From the findings, this calls for training to also include elements of financial literacy and career development aimed at improving long-term job quality.

The studies demonstrate that training has a small positive effect on financial stability with increased basic income and inclination to aspire for full-time jobs. But, it is not definite this will generate long-term financial stability. Participants also believed their education skills and health insurance needs were still not sufficient. World Bank (2021) states, the possession of digital competency helps in finding jobs quickly, but achieving stability requires lifelong learning. Gupta (2019) has shown there is a delay in using skills soon after training versus the much later career opportunities. For instance, in developing countries like Nepal, digital marketing training rarely translates into work opportunities or financial independence. PwC (2022) identified training for career and money management as the next step in the continuum.

Gender and Ethnic Disparities

This research reveals important gender disparities concerning training participation and outcomes. Higher enrollment of male participants was seen throughout the entire training program, but findings suggest that female cohort

members, though in smaller numbers, may achieve comparable outcomes while undergoing training on digital marketing. These situations are in the wake of a more general trend in Nepal, where, under prevailing societal gender biases, women are limited in access to vocational learning.

On the flip side, the detected lack of large ethnic disparity toward access to training and job opportunities, encouraging the thought that digital marketing training programs are inclusive in the Kathmandu valley. However, more needs to be done to ensure this training yields equal benefits for all ethnic groups.

The growing use of digital technology in jobs has unleashed the importance of specialized skills, especially in digital marketing training. The research shows that digital marketing has a major impact on job skills, job prospects, and job quality. The findings are aligned with the notions about human capital and job skills (Becker, 1964; Key, Porter, & Taylor, 2019). This conversation looks and includes information from previous studies.

CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Conclusion

This study concludes that digital marketing plays a transformative role in enhancing employability skills among the youth in Kathmandu Valley. As the job market becomes increasingly skill-oriented and digitally driven, traditional education models are struggling to keep pace with the changing demands of employers. In my opinion, digital marketing can teach young people useful skills in a way that is easy to understand, fun, and not too hard. As a result, skills like analytics, social media management, content creation, and SEO can help you get a digital job. These "skills" also make a person better at thinking, talking, and managing themselves, which are all good traits that can be useful in many jobs and fields.

More and more young people are taking the initiative to learn new skills by using sites like Coursera, YouTube, or sites that connect freelancers with clients. They are learning how to do digital marketing, make money online, and get jobs on their own. Digital marketing can help young people with an education who can't find a job the usual way take charge of their work and career.

Still, there are still problems with digital jobs in the Kathmandu Valley. Most people who live outside of cities have bad devices, slow internet, and not very good digital skills. Women have even more problems because of social norms. Digital work lets women work from home, and in some cases, they can even make a lot of money doing it. But we can also see that historical trends make it harder for women to get higher-level jobs in management or technology. Additionally, many students struggle to differentiate between effective and ineffective training, which impedes their skill development. If schools and the government don't do more to help the already rich people who live in cities, inequality will get worse instead of better.

We need programs that let businesses, the government, and schools all use digital marketing as a job. Schools should not only teach kids how to use computers, but they should also give them chances to practice and learn from real-life situations. The government should make it easy for people to get training, teach kids how to use computers, and give people in rural areas more access to technology and the internet.

Employers should value the skills that people learn from freelance work and online courses. They should also help young people learn by giving them paid work and training. Young people should take the lead, keep learning new things, and use digital tools to move up in their jobs and start their own businesses, not just look for work. Everyone must work together for the Kathmandu Valley to show how developing economies can use digital tools to better prepare young people for good jobs and a sustainable future.

Implications

For policymakers: This research indicates that the government should strengthen the quality and availability of training in digital marketing. Politicians should support vocational education by providing grants, creating training programs that meet the needs of industry partners, and urging vocational training institutions to partner with businesses to offer internships and apprenticeship opportunities.

For training providers: Vocational training centers should promote hands-on learning and practical knowledge in digital marketing, emphasizing complete self-management via online platform access, industry-recognized success statements, and entrepreneurial skills training for students.

For employers: In order to facilitate the transition from learning to working, organizations can and should communicate with training providers. Actual employers can assist vocational training providers to develop training that enhances and sustains employers' ability to hire new employees with training and skills for jobs by providing internships, job-shadowing, and working with vocational training providers to identify needed skillsets.

For job seekers: Individuals seeking employment in digital marketing should obtain training through vocational training programs that focus on specific skills related to digital marketing. In addition to attending vocational training programs, job seekers should keep learning new skills, actively build networks/relationships in the industry, and try freelance work to experience the marketplace.

For Local government: Establishing vocational training in digital marketing may support overall economic growth as Nepal moves further in its transition to a digital economy by creating a trained labor force, small and medium business entrepreneurship, and digital entrepreneurship.

For CTEVT: CTEVT should modify its digital marketing curriculum, create relationships with private sector companies, guarantee industry-certified instructors, and expand access to digital resources and practical projects.

By addressing these issues, stakeholders can ensure that digital marketing training promotes sustainable economic growth in the Kathmandu Valley and beyond and improves employability.

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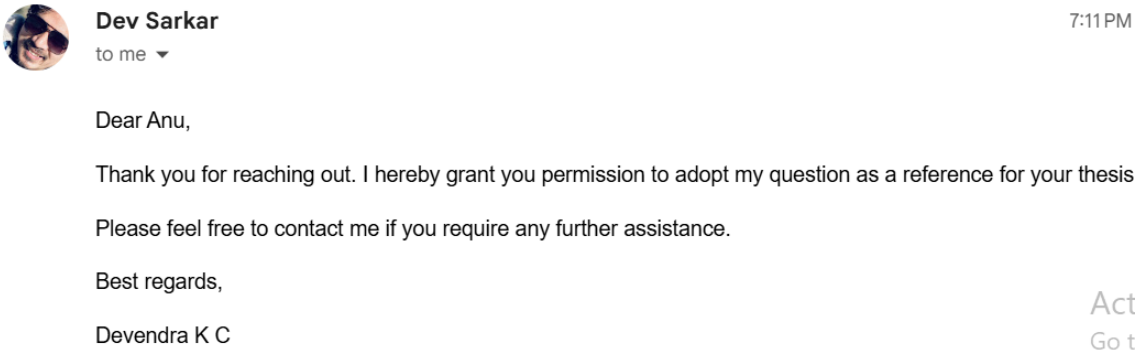
ANNEX

Annex 1: Permission to adopt the questionnaire



Dev Sarkar 7:11 PM
to me

Dear Anu,

Thank you for reaching out. I hereby grant you permission to adopt my question as a reference for your thesis

Please feel free to contact me if you require any further assistance.

Best regards,

Devendra K C

Act
Go t

Annex 2

Questionnaire

Date: ……...

Part A: Demographic Information

1. Name (नाम): .....

2. Gender (लिङ्ग):

☐ Male (पुरुष)

☐ Female (महिला)

☐ Other (अन्य)

4. Ethnicity:

☐ Brahmin/Chhetri (ब्राम्हण/क्षेत्री)

☐ Janajati (जनजाति)

☐ Dalit (दलित)

☐ Other (अन्य)

5. Address (ठेगाना): .....

8. Your Current Status:

□ Searching for a Job (जागिरको खोजीमा)

□ Working on salary/wage (तलबी काम)

□ Working as a contractor (सम्झौतामा काम)

□ Other (अन्य)

9. What is your average monthly income? (in NRs) (हजुरको मासिक तलब कति छ?)

……

10. What is your total expenditure per month? (हजुरको मासिक खर्च कति छ?)

……

11. How many hours do you work per day? (हजुर दिनको कति घण्टा काम गर्नुहुन्छ?)

……

Part B: Digital Marketing Employment

Rating (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Undecided, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

मूल्याङ्कन (1 = पूर्ण असहमति, 2 = असहमति, 3 = निर्णय नगरेको, 4 = सहमति, 5 = पूर्ण सहमति)

i) Digital Marketing Skills

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1) The digital marketing training has increased my skills in the field (डिजिटल मार्केटिङ तालिमले मेरो सीप बृद्धि गरेको छ |)					
2) The training enhanced my technical knowledge more than my theoretical knowledge (तालिमले सैद्धान्तिकभन्दा प्राविधिक ज्ञानलाई बढाएको छ |)					
3) My skills are relevant to the current job market. (मेरो सीप अहिलेको रोजगारी बजारसँग सान्दर्भिक छ|)					

4) The training increased my confidence in handling digital marketing tasks. (तालिमले डिजिटल मार्केटिङ कार्यहरूमा मेरो आत्मविश्वास बढायो ‖)					
5) The training enhanced my problem-solving abilities in the digital marketing arena. (तालिमले कार्यस्थलमा समस्या समाधान गर्ने क्षमता सुधार गर्यो|)					

ii) Employment Access (रोजगारी पहुँच)

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1) Digital marketing professionals are highly in demand in the current job market. (डिजिटल मार्केटिङ पेशेवरहरूको हालको बजारमा उच्च माग छ|)					
2) The training expanded my professional network within the digital marketing industry. (तालिमले डिजिटल मार्केटिङ उद्योगमा मेरो पेशागत सञ्जाल विस्तार गर्यो|)					
3) The training helped me build personal connections in the digital marketing field. (तालिमले व्यक्तिगत रूपमा डिजिटल मार्केटिङ क्षेत्रमा सम्बन्ध बनाउने मद्दत गर्यो ‖)					
4) The training increased my relationships with potential employers. (तालिमले रोजगारदाताहरूसँग सम्बन्ध विस्तार गर्न मद्दत गर्यो ‖)					
5) The training improved my approach to marketing myself in the job market. (तालिमले मलाई रोजगारी बजारमा आफैलाई प्रस्तुत गर्न सुधार गर्यो |)					

iii) Employment Opportunities (रोजगारीका अवसरहरू)

	Statements	1	2	3	4	5

1	The digital marketing training created significant job opportunities for me. (डिजिटल मार्केटिङ तालिमले मलाई ठूलो रोजगारी अवसर सिर्जना गर्यो |)					
2	The training helped me explore the possibilities of starting my own digital marketing business. (तालिमले मलाई आफ्नै डिजिटल मार्केटिङ व्यवसाय सुरु गर्न मद्दत गर्यो |)					
3	There is growing awareness about the importance of skilled digital marketers. (सीपयुक्त डिजिटल मार्केटरहरूको महत्त्वबारे जनचेतना बढ्दै गएको छ|)						
4	I have received equal opportunities and fair treatment in employment. (म रोजगारमा समान अवसर र न्यायपूर्ण व्यवहार पाएको छु |)					
5	The training enhanced my entrepreneurial skills in the digital marketing field. (तालिमले डिजिटल मार्केटिङ क्षेत्रमा मेरो उद्यमशीलता सीपलाई सुधार गर्यो |)					

iv) Employment Quality

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
My basic income has increased after completing digital marketing training. (डिजिटल मार्केटिङ तालिमपछि मेरो आय बढेको छ |)					
I prefer a full-time digital marketing job over freelance work. (म फ्रीलान्स कामभन्दा पुरै समयको डिजिटल मार्केटिङ रोजगारी गर्न चाहन्छु |)					
I can fulfill my basic needs through my digital marketing job. (डिजिटल मार्केटिङ कामबाट मेरो आधारभूत आवश्यकता पूरा गर्न सक्षम छु |)					

I can provide quality education for my children through my job earnings. (म मेरो डिजिटल मार्केटिङ कामबाट मेरो आधारभूत आवश्यकता पूरा गर्न सक्षम छु |)					
I can afford health insurance for my family members. (म मेरो परिवारका सदस्यहरूको स्वास्थ्य बीमा किन्न सक्षम छु|)					

13. Any comments regarding the training and future training needs:

……

14. Any additional comments:

……

……

Thank You!