



The Role of Collective Action Frame in Women's Recruitment in Meterbyaj Aandolan of Nepal

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Abstract

Background: The Meterbyaj Aandolan (MBA) is a grassroots movement against predatory lending in Nepal that witnessed unprecedented participation of marginalized women. However, past social movement studies in Nepal have rarely examined how framing processes specifically enable women's recruitment in financial grassroots movement.

Methods: This study employed a qualitative descriptive design grounded in interpretivism. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with twelve movement members (four main leaders, four women local leaders, and four cadres) between August-October 2025. Fifteen days of field observation (January 2025) and analysis of movement documents, government reports, and news articles supplemented the interviews. Data were analyzed using inductive thematic analysis ([Braun & Clarke, 2006](#)).

Results: The MBA used diagnostic framing and its resonance frame to recruit women. Through sub-frame problem identification and attribution, identify meterbyaj as structural injustice rather than individual failure, attributing blame to moneylenders, complicit officials, and weak financial laws. This frame was intensified through gendered reframing of victimhood, converting women's isolated experiences (double household burden, harassment, and stigma) into public gender injustice. Frame resonance was achieved through cultural resonance and local narratives cultural expressions (Maithili/Bhojpuri language, regional dress, local movement institutions). Additionally, collective identity and empowerment messaging frame deploying the commanding trainings, leadership responsibilities, and identity formation work proved crucial for recruiting and sustaining long-term participation.

Conclusion: Women's mass participation in the MBA was not spontaneous but deliberately through culturally rooted, gender-sensitive, and emotionally resonant framing practices that converted humiliation into agency and suffering into collective action.



Novelty: This study is the first to apply collective action framing theory to a financial grassroots movement in Nepal, demonstrating that strategic framing particularly diagnostic and its resonance frames are fundamental to recruiting and sustaining women's participation.

Keywords: Collective action frame; framing theory; Meterbyaj Aandolan Nepal; Social movement; women's recruitment

1. Introduction

The Meterbyaj Aandolan (MBA) grounds as a grassroots movement that actively frames the realities of predatory lending and its consequences through ongoing controversy in Nepal. The considerable women's grassroots participation is the foremost issue of this study. The past studies of social movement in Nepal had limited research experiences on framing theory as a framework along with women recruitment procedures in a financial grassroots movement as MBA. By applying the collective action frame perspective and its resonate frame (Benford & Snow, 2000), which energized the women's recruitment in the MBA.

The framing theory of collective actions which are action oriented sets of belief in meaning creation of activities and campaign for inspiring and legitimizing social movement organization (Benford & Snow 2000, P. 614). This theory talked upon the core frames; Diagnostic (problem identification and attribution), prognostic (strategies for goal attainment) and motivational (socially constructed vocabularies in collective action for sustaining participation) frames (Benford & Snow, 2000. p. 615-617). Further it stated frame resonance interact with action and acting link to master frame for contextual cultural and mobilization of potential participants (p. 619-621). However, this study employs the diagnostic frame (DF) and its resonating frames (RF) to examine the variables associated to women's recruitment in MBA of Nepal. Recruitment represents the foundational procedure in the movement. If an initiative fails to identify and address its cause-and-effect mechanisms, it cannot effectively attract participants; in similar, without employing RF, enhancing further recruitment becomes challenging. Therefore this study specifically applied DF and RF strategically for women recruitment. Thus, the diagnostic frame included the problem identification and attribution for the initial phase of generating issues, further MBA reframe issues as gender frame of victimhood. Moreover, MBA used frame resonance link to cultural resonance and local narratives; and collective identity and empowerment messaging.

Meterbyaj is that processes where:

Meterbyajis lend the money at extremely high interest rate without obtaining legal permission to conduct financial transactions, those lenders create forged documents, then extort and ... borrowers who are unable to repay the loans, frequently using threats or violence (Meterbyaj Aparadh Niyantaran Sipharis Karyadal, 2079, Bhadra 27) (MANSK).

As MANSK (2079), in recent years, Nepal has witnessed the emergence of powerful grassroots movements against *meterbyaj* (loan sharking) practices that have entrapped thousands of rural and urban poor, particularly women, in cycles of debt, humiliation, and social exclusion acknowledging publicly as a Meterbyaj Aandolan. Studies across many developing societies'



shows informal lending practices continue to exploit financially vulnerable populations, trapping them in cycles of debt, poverty, and dispossession, in Nepal, particularly in the Terai region. Media coverage throughout [Ratopati \(2080\)](#); [Baral \(2023\)](#); [Republica, \(2023\)](#), [Gurung \(2023\)](#); and [field observation \(Jan 15-29, 2025\)](#) highlighted various aspects of women's participation such as the rise of women's grassroots resistance to such exploitation marked sorrowful adorned faces within colorful veils, awaiting rays of hope with never-tiring, swollen, and bloody feet, depicted in images vibrantly scattered across the wall of national newspapers as name of *Meter Byaj Aandolan* (MBA).

The MBA arose between 2022–2025 as unprecedented mass protests by victims of exploitative meterbyaj lending through the rural poor of the Terai (Madhesh) region scattered primarily on newspaper such as [\(Chand, 2079\)](#); and [\(Oli, 2079\)](#). The general movement observation (2022 to 2025) and [Shrestha \(2079\)](#) shows that whether in eleven days adventurous journey from Mahottari Bardibas to Kathmandu, or in the Naya March (Justice March) of twenty three [days \(Meterbyaj Birudda Kisan-Mazdoor Aandolan Nepal, 2024\)](#), commenced simultaneously from two geographical extremes Jhapa in the east and Kanchanpur in the west, and or in sit insns, rallies, protest, marches, demonstration, petition, and activism most of the women's participation were witnessed.

Despite the women's participation momentum visibility in social movement, there were limited study on movement framing of women's recruitment and participation in Nepal. In this context this study is crucial to find social reality can be framed to get certain objectives those favor to victims.

1.2 Study Context

The mostly women participated protest demanded justice, for died (suicide) their love one, their gender based victimized conditions, landlessness, homelessness, prisoned without fraudulent work caused by exorbitant interest rate. Which is directly going through *sahumahajan* (money lender) as well as government officials, police, courts and local government. The MBA used the Naya marched strategically changed the phenomena that as personal pain into public protest to put direct pressure on state and demand justice for most marginalized.

The general personal observation (2022-2025) for about three years indicates that the movement achieved some goals; negotiation with the government, formation of a task force committee and its work, and three high level commissions and its initiation to solve the issues raised by the movement, are the signs of the movement's success. Therefore, this study seeks to analyze how does movement frame the issues to recruit women for the long time (until 2025...)?

Likewise, most of the movement studies of Nepal used different perspectives such as identity based framework, change oriented, political opportunity, and so on; however the framing theory is left behind these all. Thus, I want to use this framework to study the MBA in Nepal. Visibly, the scarcity of framing theory to analyze women's movement studies in Nepal is the foremost empirical gap of the study.



Thus, after finding the contextual and empirical gap this study analyze the women recruitment process from the diagnostic frame and it's resonate framing to explore the framing processes used by movement to increase recruitment for targeted cadres.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Previous Social and Grassroots movement study of Nepal rarely acknowledged the women's role and participation. The mainstream past studies analyze identity-based, expressive, and cultural dimensions through interpretive framework, rather than treating them as central to movement dynamics. However, this study using the framing theory including financial exploitative movement along with women's long period of participated recruitment is foremost issues for the study.

Addressing this problem will not only contribute to scholarly knowledge on contentious gendered mobilization in South Asia and Nepal but also inform how the resistance play critical role to reform unjust policies and contribute the knowledge of women's recruitment strategic framing procedures to specifically in the financial movement field of Nepal

1.4 Research Questions

This study, therefore, aims to explore how the Meterbyaj Aandolan in Nepal uses diagnostic Frame and it's resonate framing to recruit women cadres in the collective action. This is the focusing objective of this study, therefore it leads specific research questions in the following way:

1. In what way does the MBA of Nepal use the diagnostic frame for women recruitment?
2. How does MBA use frames resonance to increase the women recruitment?

2. Literature Review

This study closely engages to social movement framing theory, another way of introducing is collective action frame and its involvement with women's recruitment in the context of meterbyaj aandolan of Nepal.

2.1 Historical Overview of Framing Theory and Its Resonating Frame

In 1988, Snow and Benford (1988) developed a collective action framework as a name of framing theory to criticize the grievances are not automatic, material and natural but it is interpretive in social movement. According to Snow & Benford, (1992) the framing theory of collective actions rooted theoretically in the work of Goffman (1974), which are action oriented sets centered to targeted participants, belief in meaning creation of activities and campaign for inspiring and legitimizing social movement organization (van Dijk, 2023; & Mendelson et al., 2024), and moving people balcony to barricades (Snow & Benford, 1992; Benford & Snow 2000, P. 614). This theory talks upon the core frames; Diagnostic (problem identification and attribution), prognostic (strategies for goal attainment) and motivational (socially constructed vocabularies in collective action for sustaining participation) frames (Benford & Snow, 2000, pp. 615-617).



Further, they analyzed that the frame resonance interact with action and acting link to master frame for contextual cultural and mobilization of potential participants (pp. 619-621). As Snow and Benford (1992) mentioned that frame resonances are tools for collecting a targeted population by articulating centrally held ideas residing in the boarder culture. Gerber et al., (2021) analyzed sixty five cases of anti- debt from 1765 to 2020 illustrated that indebtedness becomes politicized and construct collective resistance as their political framing agenda of debt fare state. Scott (1977) argued that economic relationships are embedded in norms of fairness, moral expectations between lenders and borrowers, and reciprocity which resonate through narrative of injustice. According to McCammon (2013) the properties of the frames themselves and the characteristics of the boarder cultural environment takes place in frame resonance which works as conjunction of the content of framing and ideational elements. Gamson (1992) described about various frame resonance in his writing, talking politics such as injustices frame related to feeling of moral outrage about an issues, identity frame is related to we feelings that build strong sense of powerfulness. And, cultural resonance is connecting with widely shared cultural meaning; language, festivals, customs, religion, everyday behaviors etc.

Most of the framing theory said framing as an action-oriented sets centered to targeted participants, belief in meaning creation of activities and campaign for inspiring and legitimizing social movement organization, and the frame resonance interact with action and acting link to master frame for contextual cultural and mobilization of potential participants by using such as cultural environment, injustice, identity frame resonance. Thus, this study employs the diagnostic frame and its resonating frames to find the kind of variables related to recruitment of women participants in MBA of Nepal.

2.2 Women's Recruitment and Diagnostic frame in Social Movement

Hewitt and McCammon, (2013) highlighted that the recruitment is the fundamental in social movement, however limited studies concern about framing activities and the effect on recruitment. Moreover, the existing study focused on frame resonances, while neglect others. Scholars of social movements highly demonstrated that participation on movement caused by material resources, political opportunities and power holding, however collective action frame is a concept provides the essential theoretical foundation for analyzing recruitment procedure in social movements. Snow et al. (1986); Gamson, (1989); Snow & Benford (1988); Tarrow (1998); and Benford and Snow (2000); deeply influenced by collective action frame further introduced framing as an active interpretive procedure through the main activists construct the contextual meaning to mobilized potential adherents. They identified three kinds of core framing tasks. Among them diagnostic frame; creates the meaning, define the problems, and search the resonating factors to influenced potential participants' lived experiences. Furthermore, they explained credibility, salience, movement goal and cultural compatibilities are direct impact on participant's recruitment. According to Cress & Snow (2000) diagnostic framing is important not only for shaping the problem and blame attribution but also identify capable personality (recruitment of targeted population). Gamson (1992) argued about moral narratives that identify responsible participants and depicted grievances as injustice frames. Similarly, Tarrow (2011) emphasized that the movement main activists strategically used



institutional and discursive frame contextually to operate political opportunity structures. According to Polletta and Jasper (2001) collective identity is central for frame resonating, they also arguing that while individuals easily reflected their everyday interaction in movement narratives, recruitment frequently increases.

Recruitment influencing by grievances as well as interpretative process that connect structural strain to collective identity (McAdam, 1983). McCammon et al., (2004) addressed that social movements pursuing resonance with in hegemonic discourses often coordinate with culturally legitimized claims, which does not pursue to reflect the relatively socially disadvantaged women's experience because discursive opportunity structures are embedded in wide range power relations in US women's suffrage movement (p. 338-340). Thus, this perspective reflects that the recruitment of women are not randomly selecting but selected based on necessity as movement legitimization. Irons (1998) founded in Mississippi civil rights movement, women recruitment into collective action is deeply shaped by the interaction between subjective experience and structural constraint by race, and class or the intersecting hierarchies. Furthermore, she extended the study of recruitment of collective action must be compare between male and female too. Cable (1992) showed that women presence in social networks is the positive situation for women recruitment in grassroots environment protest. De Silva et al., (2025) highlighted that care work of women such as cooking, childcare, and mutual protection often associated with women's inequality variables however, resistance in the anti-microfinance, satyagraha and land right struggle in Sri Lanka those work became a powerful foundation of women participation for sustaining and goal attaining in the collective action. These all of the literature on collective action and its framing model highlighted that engaging women in social movement is not only a random choice but also for specific goal attainment of movement along with a women related framing processes. Hence, this study, investigate how the MBA used recruitment strategies to recruit women in long run, while, the evidence and empirical studies showed women either naturally or personally are not directly, engaged in conflict or movement.

2.3 Framing as an Unrecognized Framework in Nepal's Movement studies

Past studies on framing theory in Nepal basically diverse in nature of settings such as Colombini et al., (2016) about gender based violence frame focused in private issues to a public health and policy concern, Bhawana and Race (2020) studied on women's intersect identities in protest frame, it focused on conflict social reconstruction rather than on financial movement, BK et al. (2024) media framing on geo-political context. The use of framing theory in Nepal has been more widespread in other field rather than in movements.

The study of movement in Nepal silently used frame but not mentioned in references, such as Hutt (2013) used primarily a gender perspective, emphasized the role of women in social movement and their agency in boarder socio-political context in historical way used the frame identity and power in national narrative, however the author did not acknowledge the framing theory. Similarly, Fujikura (2001) analyzed the youth activities' contribution to emergence movement through the settings around the numerous frame resonance. Further, Tamang (2009) frame the women activism and its response in national transformation such as women's rights



and social justice settings. Furthermore, Kharel and Suji (2019) emphasized the gender power dynamics and composition, objectives, strategies and identities. Moreover, it criticized structural inequalities and patriarchal norms which existed against gender narratives in Nepali societies along with various intersectional feminist lenses.

These all Nepal's movement related to gender dimension used frame but not acknowledges the framing theory, Hence, to maintain this theoretical framework gap this study used the framing theory for framework to analyze gender dimension of recruitment in the context of long time women engaged movement of meterbyaj by using diagnostic frame and its resonating frame (Benford & Snow, 2000).

2.4 Research Gap

There was insufficient academic focus on how movement maintain recruitment and participation over time but currently, minimal count of research emphasized initial mobilization or singular protest events. Most of the studies on framing theory of Nepal analyzed the articulation of other area rather than women's movement field as well as neglecting the women's lived experience of gender dimension of recruitment typically in movement field. Consequently, there remain to enhance women's recruitment procedure through framing theory of social movement in Nepal. For addressing this gap this study examines the more significant women participated movement of meterbyaj by exploring the framing process of problem identification and blame attribution for women's initial recruitment and identify the frames resonant for increasing women recruitment.

3. Methods of the Study

This study deeply analyzes underlying meaning, social processes, or cultural context and it remains close to participants' language and experience to ensure contextual accuracy and practical relevance to understand, how movement interpret and frame the issues within women's recruitment processes forwarded through qualitative descriptive research design depend on interpretive philosophical stand-point along with inductive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Within this framework knowledge is constructed between researcher and participants, serving as a primary source of data. Because the framing process is closely tied to movement organization, this study purposely, focuses on three key informant groups:

Core leadership: four central committee members (movement central chairman, vice-chairman- secretary and spokesperson).

Recognized women leaders: four initially recognized women local leaders, one from each command (Bhojpura, Mithila, Purbi, Paschima).

Women cadres: four from women cadres basically choose from terai region, selected based on their specific to their respective Kamand area. Altogether twelve informants were purposively sampled and engaged through semi-structured interviews. This targeted approach was chosen because capturing rich movement-specific data is more critical to this study's goal rather than informant's diversity or huge sample size. Additionally, secondary data are contextual



information through news articles, government, and movement documents and field observation was utilized for cross validation and contextual depth.

Furthermore, as an observer 15 days field observation is to understand mobilization strategies, protest rituals, emotional expression, and power relations within the movement. In this study multiple types of data used such as interviews, observation, and numerous contextual documents for cross validation of findings to increase credibility of the interpretation. In this study, data is triangulating between interviews data, field observation of protest events, movement pamphlets, slogans, speeches and documents such as news articles, government documents, and movement's documents. During, saturation is reached when the twelve semi structured interviews existed consistently exhibited shared framing processes. After saturation was reached, additional sampling would not significantly enhance description or interpretation. The saturation process enhanced the credibility and comprehensiveness of the findings of this study.

Saturated and triangulated data are presenting through Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phases approach of inductive thematic analysis. First, familiarization with data through repeated reading, second searching themes by related grouping codes, further, reviewing and refining the themes, furthermore, defining and naming the themes and producing the final report.

4. Analysis and Interpretation

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the empirical data collected during the fieldwork linkage to analytical framework to recruitment and substantiated with committed document in methods of this study. This study analyzed the processes of recruits and sustains of women's participation in the MBA, through the main frame diagnostic (problem identification and attribution, cultural resonance and local narratives, collective identity and empowerment messaging) for recruitment procedures. By using triangulated evidence from empirical interviews data (personal interview, Aug- Oct 2025) with leaders, women local leaders and cadres, Field observation (Field observation, Jan 15-29, 2025), movement documents, government notices, and news articles, the findings demonstrate a coherent framing system that transforms private suffering into collective action.

4.1 Diagnostic Frame and Frame Resonance Linkage to Long-term Women's Recruitment in MBA

By analyzing and interpreting of the empirical data collected during the fieldwork linkage to analytical framework to recruitment in the meterbyaj aandolan of Nepal connect with framing theory (Benford and Snow, 2000), which posits that social movements not only simply arise from grievances but also are actively constructed through a process of framing. This process involves actively shaping a shared understanding of a problem, its causes, and potential solutions to recruit women. The analytical frame is organized into two dimensions: Diagnostic Frame and it's Resonate Framing of women's recruitment is going thoroughly into the following inductive thematic table 4.1:



Inductive Thematic Mapping Table: Diagnostic and Its Resonating Frames Linkage to Long-term women’s Recruitment in MBA

Frames	Key theoretical anchors	Data sources (triangulated)	Analytical	Codes	Themes	Outcomes
Diagnostic Frame	Framing Theory — Problem Identification & attributional framing (Snow & Benford, 1982; Benford & Snow, 2000)	Interviews Movement leaders Women leaders movements cadres); Movement petitions memoranda (Sangharsh Samiti); MoHA task-force report; Online news reportage (Online Khabar; Republica etc.).	;(Naming the problem and locating agency Meterbyaj problem = moneylenders+ complicit officials+financial law, reframes private shame as public injustice this is the core recruitment hook.	Meterbyaji, officials, and Financial law	Complicit Problem identification & attribution	Primary recruitment
	Feminist framing; gendered literature (Ferree, 2003; Taylor & Whittier, 1998)	Interviews: (Movement leaders Women leaders movements cadres); features on women marches (Himal/Republica/Ratopati); movement slogans and testimonies	Gendered narration creates moral legitimacy for women’s public role converts shame into a moral claim (women as defenders of family), which both recruits women (they recognize their	Women’s double role (household chores and guardianship), Physical\Sexual/psychological harassment	Gendered Framing of victimhood	Long-term Recruitment of Women Cadres.

			suffering) and sustains them (moral duty, identity).			
Frame Resonance	cultural resonance and local narratives, framing (Snow & Benford, 1988; Polletta, 1998; Tarrow, 2011)	Interviews: (Movement leaders Women leaders movements cadres): songs/speeches in Bhojpuri/Maithili ; Movement docs with vernacular slogans; Field observation of play-cards & songs; news coverage (Online Khabar, Ratopati).	Women; local idioms make the injustice and intelligible and morally salient → rapid recruitment ; cultural repertoires later function as rituals sustaining bonds.	Maithili/Bhojpuri language, Regional dress (wearing sari with Ghugat), Resonal movement institution (Bhojapura command...)	Cultural resonance & local narratives	Recruitment and Prolongs participation
	Collective identity & empowerment messaging (Melucci, 1996; Taylor & Whittier, 1998)	Interviews: (Movement main leaders and Women local leaders and movements cadres); Training records and descriptions, movement docs, Women leaders' trajectories, field observation of leadership roles.	Transforming recruits into leaders creates ownership and social recognition; identity work converts one time recruits into committed insider's key mechanism linking recruitment to long-term retention.	Commanding training, Leadership responsibility, and Recognition identity	Collective identity & empowerment	Permanent recruitment via promise of role taking

Source: inductive thematic analysis (2025)

Above mentioned each dimension of table 4.1 consists of specific components that explain how women are recruit in the movement and how they remain active over time in the context of MBA of Nepal (which is a compelling example of a long time sustained, and mostly, women engaged movement) through the following interpretive field data.



4.1.1 Linking Diagnostic Frame (DF) to Women's Recruitment in the MBA in Nepal

DF involves themes first, the identification and attribution, and second, the gendered framing of victimhood. This section describes first all of the informants who involve in interview, furthermore the coded themes from the interviews are triangulated to the compatible field observation, movement and government documents, and news articles subsequently construct the final codes and themes.

As all respondents (personal interview, Aug-Oct 2025), stated that meterbyaj is a structural problem and victims faced institutional obstacles. Moreover, they identify meterbyaj is a structural problem by fake *tamsuk*, compound interest rate, land seizure, meterbyaj as a non-recognition financial transaction under law, microfinance instalment, and mentioned police inaction, collusion between money lender and state officials, are the institutional obstacles. These stories fit with Gamson's (1992) idea of the injustice frame, he said that movements turn moral outrage into political claims by naming both what is wrong and who is to blameworthy. Which shows that they have cognitive liberation (McAdam, 1986), or the realization that systemic social injustice rather than individual failings.

Similarly, the selected documents From Ministry of Home Affairs, Public Announcement (2079; Task Force Public Notice (2079) announced that the meterbyaj is the financial problem and the Task Force characterizes them as widespread across Terai districts. These official texts name the problem publicly and instruct reporting an explicit diagnostic recognition at the state level. Moreover, numerous news articles write about meterbyaj problem mentioned that victim's poor access to financial institution, forcing small retail borrowers who need immediate money and lack collateral to turn to the meterbyaj operating outside the law (Bhandari, 2024). Additionally, compound interest rate, complicit officials (Basnet et al., 2023, Nepali, 2024) microfinance instalment, land seizer (Baral, 2023) are the root problems of meterbyaj.

The document of movement Memorandum Letter (2080); Appeal Letter (2080) revealed that exactly the same dynamics of informant's account of injustice; the documents said that the Ministry of Home Affairs asked for cooperation but local administration still fails to resolve victims' problems, and police personnel abused or threatened movement members for their personal gains from the sahumahajan.

Likewise, I saw in the field observation (Jan 15-29, 2025) most of the victims had said about forged document and threat where the courts, district administration offices, and police offices could not act properly on them. Those actions could prove predatory lending is a social crime, government officials felt many obstacles to solve the problems through authentic way without law. This means, the situation, where lack of law is the nation problem or the structural problem not a victim's state of financial scarcity.

These government and movement documents, interviews, and field observation altogether make a strong triangulated account on define the problem and assign blame through exploitative lending system, in this system meterbyaji, government officials, and banking law are the main root causes define by meterbyaj aandolan. These structural causes are the backbone of recruitment as Benford & Snow, (2000); Gamson, (1992); McAdam, (1986) in which diagnostic framing works on three levels: personal, organizational, and institutional.



This convergence form from many sources shows how the MBA turned debt bondage into a real political issue, giving power to victims to see their exploitation as part of structural injustices and encouraging them to join and stay in the movement. Hence, the problem identification and attribution is a main frame of recruitment in MBA.

The diagnostic frame was further intensified by gendering the experience of exploitation. The MBA made a frame related to women issues both through victims and agents of change, which pushed them to take actions in public.

The informants' (personal interview, Aug-Oct 2025) interview concluded that women borrowers were not only financially dispossessed but also physically threatened and sexually harassed by Sahu Mahajans and at the same times abused by police during protests. articulate that the MBA re-frame the movement issues connected to women's personal issues such as the male family members were in labor migration abused, or imprisoned; women's double burden of responsibility (household chores, and financial management); lack of women's access to banking; and level of knowledge in rules, regulation and law of financial systems; patriarchal social systems; neighboring verbal assault, relative's behavioral communication in cultural, and financial give and take; enduring humiliation, sexual assault, and psychological/ physical harassment. The interview informations are similar to the phenomena that I observed in the field observation (Jan 15-29, 2025). Hence, these factors re-frame the meterbyaj aandolan related to women's vulnerability.

Simultaneously, the movement's own documents particularly the [Meterbyaj Birudda Kisan-Mazdoor Aandolan Nepal \(2024\)](#) slogan "Investigate all incidents of violence related to meter byaj" institutionalized this frame by demanding accountability for gendered violence. The slogan translated women's embodied suffering into a diagnostic frame linking gender oppression to state inaction, while its investigative demand represented a motivational frame appealing to justice and moral duty ([Snow & Benford, 1988](#)).

The news article from Nepali Times "On Women's Day, Nothing Left to Lose" the journalist [Nepali, \(2024\)](#) shows how the way journalists frame things is like and makes the movement's internal framing processes stronger. By pointing out that most of the marchers were women, the text makes victimhood seem more feminine. It emphasizes that "usurious money lenders physically exploit women from the families of the borrowers." And working migration of male family members makes the women as double role of household chores and outrage work. This description broadens the diagnostic frame from financial injustice to gender-based violence and women's burden, enhancing the movement's moral and emotional impact. On the himal khabar newspaper; [Sapkota, et al, \(2080\)](#) state that due to meterbyaj system women suffer huge quantity of incidents such as murder, suicide, divorce, assaults, multiple types of harassment of exploitation. They also emphasize that due to lack of education, information and technology and financial resources, women in meterbyaj problems. Such social, financial, physical and psychological multi-layered suffering are similar to informant's information, these serve the over increases participation of women engagement in movement.

By synthesizing, all the convergence evidences show that the MBA reframed women's lived experiences of financial exploitation into collective moral claims of multi layered gender



violence issues. The movement interviews, the field observation, movement slogan, and media coverage said about women's double role (household chores and guardianship), physical/sexual/psychological harassment changed into women resonating skill between of community, bargain skill to authority and stakeholder, women led marches reinforced the gender framing of victimhood by legitimizing women as both victims and agents of justice, similar to the feminist framing theorists (Ferree, 2003; Taylor & Whittier, 1998) argument of converting gendered suffering into moral authority allows marginalized women to reclaim agency and mobilize solidarity. In the context of the MBA, this gendered diagnostic framing transformed women's pain into movement power turning the domestic sphere into a frontline of resistance. These are the foremost factors of women's recruitment in the MBA. Consequently, the frame gender victimhood is a foundational for women recruitment in MBA.

4.1.2 Linking Frame Resonance (FR) to Women's Recruitment in the MBA in Nepal

The cultural resonance and local narratives; and collective identity and empowerment messaging used for women's recruitment in MBA which localized the struggle and enabled rural women to connect movement.

The Movement leaders' interviews (Personal interview, Aug-Oct 2025), and field observation both assigned that women used to make speeches singing songs in Bhojpuri and Maithili, and subsequently, these activities were broadcast through media, participation among rural women significantly increased. This narrative aligns with frame resonates of Benford and Snow (2000), this resonating the public cultural perceptions and emotional vocabularies are congruent then the mobilization is goal oriented. The intentionally used of Maithali and Bhojpuri languages, Madhesi women dress, and expressions of motherhood and suffering localized the movement's abstract financial grievances into concrete, emotionally resonant experiences. The songs and slogans sung by women participants at maitighar mandala shows that the women participants not only spoke against financial injustices but also shows moral solidarity by transferring pain into a shared identity of resistance.

The online newspaper Ratopati (2079) and Meterbyaj Birudda Kisan-Mazdoor Aandolan (2023) photos frame of women in sari with ghugat in streets of Kathmandu shows the cultural performance of shared solidarity among women against injustice. Similarly, Nepali (2024), Meterbyaj Birudda Kisan-Mazdoor Aandolan (2024) explain during the Naya Marches, women participation for 42 days with solon barefoot with sari and sorrow face in ghugat (veil) shows the women emotional scenario publicly create women contribution for their family and structural injustices to gain justice. The Kisan Mazdoor Sangharsh Samiti's petition to government offices is a good example of this vernacular strategy. It shows that they can use both bureaucratic negotiation and cultural protest.

These sources together show that cultural resonance was not just a choice of style, but a planned way of framing that turned structural injustice into stories that were easy to understand and morally right. Using familiar languages Mathali/ Bhojpuri, clothing regional dress (wearing sari with ghugat), and idioms, regional movement institution (Bhojapura, Mithila...command), the MBA changed women from isolated victims to culturally rooted agents of justice. This findings resonating with where literacy is low and social hierarchy is high, cultural frame is



fundamental to gain movement objectives (Snow & Benford, 1988; Polletta, 1998; Tarrow, 2011). The MBA intentionally using the local languages (Maithili, Bhojpuri), songs, and Tarai dress for creating cultural resonance that made its message relatable and emotionally grounded. And also connect women with cultural symbols, integrating activism into well-known cultural expressions of suffering, motherhood, and justice. Thus, the MBA used all the grassroots everyday interactions as theme of cultural resonance and local narratives.

The frame resonance of collective identity and empowerment messaging shows women not only as victims but as agents of change, changed of pain into collective empowerment, and shared suffering serves as a foundation for moral cohesion and self-recognition are the witnessed foundation of practical field work that emerge solidarity by women empowering process of MBA. Moreover, all the informants (Personal interview, Aug-Oct 2025); field observation and movement document analysis cumulatively analyzed that organizing court gheraos program (Meterbyaj Birudda Kisan-Mazdoor Aandolan, 2024), community mediators between victims and sahumahajan, management of movement local office works and organized local movement ((Meterbyaj Birudda Kisan-Mazdoor Aandolan, 2024) are the consequences of training is similar to Gamson, (1992) notion of empowering frame reduce stigma and produce belongings by shared experience of role taking, having regular meeting, naming group etc. can make collective identity that create the environment for new recruitment and keep women recognition and enduring moral pride in the movement.

As well as leadership responsibility, commanding training, recognition identity created both organizational capacity and emotional belonging. This interplay of shared injustice and shared power enabled women to claim moral and political authority as defenders of justice, transforming gendered vulnerability into collective strength to recruitment (Melucci, 1996; Taylor & Whittier, 1992; McAdam, 1986). Thus the identity and empowerment messaging is a frame empowering of women participation in MBA.

The MBA intentionally used this frame for creating bottom-up solidarity and empowering women as an independent coordinator, program organizer in local setting, negotiator etc. This process is related to what Melucci (1996) said cognitive and affective process of collective identity. Where participants begin to see themselves as part of a collective actor, that make sustain participation and enduring solidarity in the movement

5. Findings and Conclusion

This study analyzed the processes of recruits and sustains of women's participation in the MBA, through the main frame diagnostic and its resonating frame for recruitment procedures that find the following findings and conclusion.

5.1 Findings

In diagnostic frame, MBA thoroughly found meterbyaj is a social problem, accordingly, it assigned blame to meterbyaji, complicit officials, and financial law from the frame problem identification and attribution to prove meterbyaj is a structural injustice, for calling the victims to organize and advocate their rights. Further, it re-frame the movement issues resonating with



women's personal issues such as the women's double role (household chores and guardianship), physical\Sexual/psychological harassment for recruiting the women victims. Additionally, MBA resonating the cultural resonance and local narratives; collective identity and empowerment messaging frame with organizational activities to local/cultural bond such as Maithili/Bhojpuri language, regional dress (wearing sari with Ghugat), and regional movement institution (Bhojapura command...) for increased in recruitment and enduring participation. Moreover, it rejoined first, women empowering by Commanding training, Leadership responsibility, second, give identities-based roles for increasing organizational capacity and emotional belonging.

Overall, this study concludes that women's massive participation in the meterbyaj andolan did not emerge spontaneously. It was constructed through deliberate, culturally rooted, gender-sensitive, and emotionally resonated framing practices. First, the MBA constructed the frame diagnostic: problem identification and attribution; and gender framing of victimhood. Further, for frame resonances; cultural resonance and local narratives; collective identity and empowerment messaging; for women recruitment.

5.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, the MBA re-framing and converted lived experience of gender humiliation into agency and suffering into collective resistance that transformed ordinary rural women into legal advocates, negotiators, organizers, and public speakers. Fundamentally it constructed women to challenge patriarchal stereotypes that represent women as apolitical and passive role, instead reconstituting them as moral agents, cultural communicators, and strategic leaders to gain justice for all. MBA uses these all types of strategic gate way to recruit women in movement in long run. This study suggests that future social movement and other organizations, who work for gender issues and financial injustices in Nepal can adopt the gender sensitive, culturally grounded supportive, morally, emotionally, and rationally resonated framing strategies for enhancing sustainable social change.

5.3 Suggestions for Future Research

Future researchers could examine the long-term impact of women's participation in the MBA, particularly how the movement involvement of women shapes their political identities, financial autonomy, and roles within community decision making. Comparative studies across different regions and different form of financial exploitation would help to assess the contextual variation of framing processes in women's recruitment and participation. Further, analyzes on male participants are the crucial to understand the further processing of movement framing that help to sustain women activism. Additionally, digital mobilization practices such as the use of Whatsapp, Facebook groups, and online evidences may reveal emerging gender dynamics in contemporary collective resistance, finally, the study on effectiveness of state responses, legal reform will give valuable insights into how grassroots mobilization influences institutional change in Nepal.

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