

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF HOMESTAY: A case study of
Tharu Homestay Patalganga, Birendranagar 3, Surkhet**
Assist.prof. BipanaDevkota
dbipana07@gmail.com

Abstracts

Homestay tourism has been emerging as a form of sustainable tourism in many rural areas as a community development program in Nepal. The entire activities from the particular location have been integrated as a major component of rural tourism in homestay programs. To examine the socio-economic status of homestay owner. This study having the objective to explore the cultural practices of Tharu community, examine the socio-economic status of homestay owner describe the demographic pattern of the study area.

Tharu community from Patalganga has been operating homestay programs where guests are offered only basic facilities i.e. normal bed just as the host sleep in their own bed, local food as host normally eat, and unique traditional hospitality with different cultural and natural beauties of particular area. Local cultural activities, traditional lifestyle of host, local tests can be experienced by guests taking part in a homestay program. Tharu people are rich in culture, have their own language, custom, and culture. This Patalganga community homestay perform the following cultural dance to entertainment the tourists like circle dance, stick dance and sakhiyadance. There are some challenges for doing home stay business in Patalganga village. The qualitative characteristics of social capitals such as road, transportation, energy, communication, security, are not supportive to the homestay. Homestay in Patalganga has created an alternative source of income for the concern family of the homestay operators. However, the families face the internal and external problems in the entire homestay. Homestay is a very effective tourism tool for economic sustainability, and natural sustainability of rural community by preserving the local tradition and culture.

Key words: Community, homestay, tourism, economic, sustainability.

Introduction

Surkhet District is known as the capital of Karnali Province in Nepal. Surkhet is one of Karnali's ten districts, located around 600 kilometers west of the country's capital, Kathmandu. The district covers 2,488.64 square kilometers. Surkhet Valley is one the Inner Terai Valleys of Nepal. Bordering districts are Jajarkot, Dailekh, and Achham to the north, Bardiya and Kailali to the south, Salyan district to the east, and Doti to the west. Unlike the cold weather of the Karnali mountain region and hot weather of

Writer is Assist.prof. of Mid-West University, Surkhet

the Outer Terai region, Surkhet has a more moderate climate. Winter temperatures drop to about 5 °C and in summer it goes up to 38 °C. Monsoon brings sufficient rainfall during the rainy season. Beautiful Surkhet is a major tourist spot in Nepal's Karnali Province (Edgell et al., 2008).

The concept of community-based tourism was first coined in the year 1970s in the world (Mitchell & Muckosy, 2008). Community-based tourism is the outcome of Rio-De-Jenerio, Brazil, Summit in 1992 for its sustainable development. Nepal Government first introduced the homestay concept in 2007 AD though it was the old concept in the world that has a significant role in the development of rural sector life-style in Nepal (Devkota, 2010). Two modalities have been planned as 'community homestay' and 'private homestay'. It is also believed that such homestay programs in rural areas provide additional income for the locals. In urban areas, privately owned homestays are also encouraged to allocate two rooms with two beds each. Under the homestay idea, anybody who has a home with at least four rooms can use the empty rooms for tourist's homestay. Nepal government has set the provisions or rules for the homestay operators. Firstly, they have to register their houses who would like to provide homestay accommodation at the local Homestay Management Committee. Secondly, the house owner must be able to provide hygienic food with local taste and good room facilities. The accommodation package and other charges are determined by the Local Homestay Management Committee.

Homestay tourism is a very new and trendy tourism concept, which is still in its evolutionary stage in the world of tourism. Nepal has potential to set its homestay ecosystem as part of core tourism for its multi-faceted offerings. It offers unique experiences to wide range of tourist preferences like man-made heritages, Natural resource, ethnicity, cultural richness, pleasant hospitality, social bonding as community living, and many more untapped treasures that throws surprises to today's travelling fraternity (Bhan & Singh, 2014). The importance of community-based tourism has also been highlighted by the Third World Countries in their development agenda. It is considered very important for the local people as it empowers them and supports them by increasing the rate of development (Corina, 2018).

In year 2011, the travel & tourism sector contributed to 9.1% of global GDP. This sector alone sustained 2 hundred 55 million jobs in 2011 with the total impact of 8.7% of world employment. Cultural tourism is defined now as "the movement of persons to cultural attractions away from their normal place of residence, with the intention to gather new information and experiences to satisfy their cultural needs". The cultural tourism is an amalgamation of one's cultural identification by spotting other's exotic one. As a result of that many researchers report that Nepal is rich with ancient history, many years old culture and the supreme heritage.

Statement of the problem

Surkhet is renowned for having stunning natural scenery, including undulating hills, lush valleys, and lovely rivers. One of the longest rivers in Nepal, the Karnali River, flows through the district and offers stunning landscape for travelers to enjoy.

The Bulbule, lovely park located in the center of the district, is one of Surkhet's most notable attractions. The park includes a lovely lake that offers a peaceful setting for guests to enjoy. The park is a great location for picnics and other outdoor activities because it is home to many lovely trees, flowers, and animals. Surkhet is a fertile land for tourism and the contribution of community homestay in tourism is significant so community homestay is main thrust of the study.

Research questions

The following are the research question of the study:

- a. What is the socio-economic practices of community homestay?
- b. What are the major issues and problems regarding the practices in community homestay?
- c. What is the socio-economic status of homestay owner in the society?
- d. Why they involve in operating the homestay?
- e. Is there any economic development appear after lunching the homestay?

Objectives of the study

The general objective of this study is to find out the socio-economic and cultural practices and changes among community homestay owner of the Patalganga Community Homestay of Birendranagar Municipality Ward No.9, Surkhet District, Nepal. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To examine the socio-economic status of homestay owner.
2. To explore the cultural practices of Tharu community homestay.

Significance of the study

This Study helps to contribute to explore the problems of socio-economic and cultural practices of community homestay, other communities, as well as nation. This study also helps useful for the comparative studies with other ethnic groups of the same area and Tharu community of other area as well. It is also an effective means to change and develop the economic, social and cultural practices of the country. However, socio-economic condition plays the significant role on different sectors in the family, society and nation facilitate socio-economic strategies. In addition, this study is helpful to guide in planning and policy making of their stakeholders like social workers and academicians, INGOs and NGOs.

Literature review

This part is primarily concerned with a review of literature concerning the development of homestay tourism, community homestay and private homestay practices in Nepal. Every study is heavily reliant on prior knowledge. Previous research cannot be overlooked because it serves as the foundation for the current study. The literature review covers the conceptual review and empirical review along with other sectors.

Conceptual review

The word 'Homestay' as a combined word 'home and stay' is replicates that staying or loading in some body's home as a guest by paying some monitory value or book a room on rent basis for some specific tenure. Guests are offered accommodation with some other necessary services by specific host family and community. Thus, the Home-Stay

tourism or business has managed by an individual host or community. The 'Homestay' gives tourist to experience far away from busy, hectic, and crowded infrastructural urban areas to the peaceful calm locality with full of splendid natural surroundings, by offering them to stay in natural, clean, comfortable and pocket-friendly accommodation and authentic local food. Thus, homestay provides to the tourist an inimitable authentic local experience and the charming interaction to the local host community. It opens the possibilities to understand a new and untapped place which the government enable to promote widely as a new tourist place and arrange for an alternative source of income to the rural host population (Gangotia, 2013).

Nepal is one of the famous destinations for homestay tourism for its culture, heritage and geographical land. The environments along with culture are inseparable in tourism business. Market value of this homestay business has been grown up with the demand of visitors. This business offers financial reward and monetary help to the local native community for restoring, protecting and conserving the environment and their indigenous culture (Laurie et al., 2012). To minimize the rural poverty and reverse migration homestay tourism can play a significant role. It assimilates many types of activities like trekking, cultural tourism, agro-tourism, health tourism, and ecotourism (Magar et al., 2013).

The homestays are not just a regular holiday which to spend a few days to exploring the local area, they are a holiday destination in themselves (Lama & Management, 2018). Homestay tourism can occur in any part of worldwide; residents of homestay countries can encourage the host community in order to develop their tourism industry. Although homestay is a relatively new notion, it is an age-old concept in which travelers used to remain as guests with a family and there was no concept of a commercial hospitality system. The term homestay is made from of the words home and stay, and it refers to staying or living in someone's home as a guest in exchange for some monetary value on a rent basis for a set period of time (Azwar, 2020).

National Tourist Board and a Local Management Committee should be formed to efficiently execute the program in the community. The homestay industry has multiple players, including homestay providers, hosts, and guests. A homestay provider is the coordinator of the homestay program whose role it is to organize quality housing (Corina, 2018). Similarly, homestay host refers to the families who offer their homes to the guests for the whole duration of their stay. And the homestay guests refer to the people who occupy the hosts' houses for a fee. It is the door to find possibilities, to understand a new and untapped place resulting in the government enable to promote widely as a new tourist destination and arrange for an alternative source of income to the rural host population (Gangotia, 2013).

Empirical review

Visitors to homestay tourism have the opportunity to spend quality time with a local family while learning about their rituals, values, and culture, which is a fantastic way to get a flavor of rural life and heritage. In the tourism industry, the environment and culture are inextricably linked (Dhakal, 2022). With the increase in visitor demand, the

market value of this homestay industry has increased. This company provides financial incentives and assistance to the local indigenous people in exchange for restoring, safeguarding, and conserving the environment and their traditional culture. Market value is created by tourist demand, where both the environment and culture are commoditized (Laurie & Radcliffe, 2005).

Homestay tourism is an effective tool to minimize rural poverty and reverse migration. It assimilates many types of activities like trekking, cultural tourism, agro-tourism, health tourism, and eco-tourism. Homestay helps to increase tax revenue in a particular country. It may also encourage new markets for the local community to promote and trade their items, such as agricultural products, crafts, and so on. By this program, the community's literacy rate has gradually increased. Homestays have also been discussed in a variety of other contexts, leading to them being referred to as cultural homestays, heritage homestays, educational homestays, leisure stays, culture stays, volunteer stays, and urban stays (Pasa, 2020).

A village tourism program was included in the national tourism policy in 1995 in Nepal. Nepal Village Resorts a Kathmandu-based travel agency started to work as a marketing agency of the village tourism products, launched village tourism for the first time in Nepal in Sirubari Village in 1997 AD. The local people were actively engaged in the planning stages of Sirubari Village Tourism (Thakur, 2013). Each village in Nepal has its own Tourism Development Management Committee comprised of community representatives for the effective development and expansion of rural tourism (Shrestha, 2015).

Homestays are examples of collaborative consumption and the sharing economy. Evolution and development of the homestay program is also related to the Nepalese culture. It is belief that the Nepalese society always respect the guest as 'Guest is God,' people used to welcome their guests or travelers for night stay from the beginning of the society. In Nepalese rural areas, the host used to treat them as if they were gods, providing loving hospitality at no cost. Tourists are individuals who come to Nepal to see the Himalayas. In 1997, the government introduced village tourism to address these challenges and alleviate poverty in rural areas. Sirubari in Syangja District of west Nepal and Ghalegaon in Lamjung District of north-central Nepal were the first two villages to implement the concept of community homestay which was the first effort to develop village tourism by the government of Nepal (Thapa, 2010).

The government started to formulate the new tourism policy. It implements the new Tourism Policy in 2008 and has also formulated the 'Tourism vision 2020' Policy to develop sustainable tourism. Toward achieving the goal finally, the government has conceptualized the working procedure of homestay programs in 2010 which addresses the area of sustainable tourism development in Nepal as well as eco-tourism. The government's program 'Nepal Tourism Year 2011' is another major reason to boost up homestay tourism in Nepal. The government's target was to bring one Million tourists during the 'Nepal Tourism Year 2011' and according to the official figures, there were

669 hotels including all types of hotels with a total capacity of 26,063 beds in Nepal at that time (Royal Mountain Travel Nepal, 2011).

Regarding the patterns of homestay Merriam Webster Dictionary 2013 defines 'Homestay' as "a stay at a residence by a traveler and especially by a visiting foreign student who is hosted by a local family"(Rasid& Razzaq 2011).

In Nepal, mostly community homestays are operating in attractive small villages where life is spent still traditionally and simply, the place which is still untouched from the everyday hassle of city life. The panoramic landscape, unexplored forests, upland gorges, different indigenous cultures, their unique lifestyle, and foods in the villages of Nepal are the greatest interest on the subject and these are the strong foundation of Community Homestay tourism in Nepal. Nepal has the great potentiality of Homestay Tourism in most of the villages which are still unexplored. (HTN, 2017).

The homestay which is run by a minimum of 5 people is known as a community homestay. Community homestays have existed for many years, staying at them is becoming increasingly popular as a sustainable way to travel, and a better way for guests to get a true insight into the places and people they are visiting. Guests stay in the homes of local families and can gain a much better experience of their host culture and day-to-day life. They can get involved in activities like joining their host families in the fields, learning to cook local dishes, or volunteering to teach in a school.

The homestay which is run by an individual is known as a private homestay. A homestay is a popular form of hospitality and lodging where visitors share a residence with a local of the city to which they are traveling. Homestays are examples of collaborative consumption and the sharing economy.

Research design

In this research, descriptive research design had been used with the help of various research tools and techniques. Primary and secondary data had collected, analyzed and interpreted for the final presentation.

Nature and sources of data

To achieve the objectives, both qualitative and quantitative data was used for this research. This study mainly based on primary data collected from the Birendranagar Municipality Ward No.9 of Surkhet district and background information was obtained from secondary sources. Field survey had used as basic source of primary data. So, data had been collected from field works with the help of questionnaire, interviews and participant observation.

Universe and sampling

For this research Birendranagar Municipality Ward No 9 had purposively selected. Patalganga Tharu homestay had been chosen as universe of the study. The chosen homestay represents the Tharu culture, religion and ethnicity. In this ward total household are 2124 and the total population is 8667 among them only 16 households of Tharu people are inhabited in Patalganga village and 6 houses have started homestay tourism business.

Method of data collection

Both of primary and secondary data had collected for the study. The primary data had collected with the help of the following methods like, observation, household survey, interview etc. The key information had collected from leader of the community, old and experience person of the Tharu community.

Techniques for data analysis and presentation

After the collection of data from the respondent's observation and secondary sources had been edited and coded in tabular form. Data had been collected from questionnaire, interview and secondary sources had been analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. Quantitative data which had been collected from the interview, questionnaire, and secondary sources were present in table and figure as far as possible and necessary. Simple statistical tools like average and percentage had been used.

Limitation of the study

The study area is consisting of 6 households of Tharu community homestay of Patalganga village of Birendranagar which may not represent the characteristics of community homestay of whole Nepal. The study intended to focus only on the socio-economic condition of the homestay owner of community homestay of Birendranagar Municipality, Ward No.9. The limitations of this study are as follows:

- This study is based on a small sampling area; it may not show the macro view of socio-economic status of all community homestay owner.
- This study has focused in selected area Birendranagar Municipality Ward No.3 of Surkhet, District.
- This study just covers the Tharu community homestay.

Result and Discussion

Geography of the study area

There are numerous tourist attractions include religious and historical sites such as Kankrebihar, Deutibajai, Bulbule Park, Ghantaghar, Bheririver, Mangalgadhi, Rannimatta, RatananglaGothikanda, Ramrikanda, Phinikanda and so on. Kankrebihar is one of the most attractive historical and archeologically important religious harmony place. BheriRiver is a well-known spot for rafting and for paragliding, Gothi Kanda has been offering the visitors in Surkhet with the regard of Karnali Gate way. Surkhet is a fertile land for all season for the tourism development. Regular road and air transportation facility makes tourist easier to visit the tourism destination sites of Surkhet district.

Regarding the Patalganga Community Homestay, it is easy access to reach on the surface transport using foot trail also having the local culture in the surrounding area of the settlement. Surkhet District is better known as the capital of Karnali province in Nepal. Surkhet is one of Karnali's ten districts, located around 600 kilometres west of the country's capital, Kathmandu. The district covers 2,488.64 square kilometres. Surkhet Valley is one the Inner Terai Valleys of Nepal. Bordering districts are Jajarkot, Dailekh, and Achham to the north, Bardiya and Kailali to the south, Salyan district to

the east, and Doti to the west. Unlike the cold weather of the Karnali mountain region and hot weather of the Outer Terai region, Surkhet has a more moderate climate. Winter temperatures drop to about 5 °C and in summer it goes up to 38 °C. Monsoon brings sufficient rainfall during the rainy season.

In recent times, few of the experiences which motivates the traveler most are heritage, natural environment, art and crafts, history of the land, culture-rituals, language, customs and cultures of people in other lands. The opportunities to observe and experience with others how they live, think and participate with ambience exerts an interesting and vital attraction. Tourist do seek to experience the flavor of a locale people's arts, architecture, cuisine, costume, music, painting, sculpture, celebrations and festivals and their rituals or the authentic cultural attraction may be cuisine, food habit, drink, entertainment or some other form of hospitality. Major destination sites within the Surkhet valley nearby Patalganga Homestay are: Kankrebihar, Mangalgadhi, Bulbule Park, Nikas, Deutibajai Temple, Shiva Mandir, Plain farming land, Green thick forest, Gothikanda, Ramrikandaand Ghantaghar.

Studyarea, a Tharu homestay village of Patalganga is located in Birendranagar Municipality Ward No. 9, nearby the Kankrebihar protected area of Surkhet district, Nepal. The study area isnearabout 4 km away from municipality and the district headquarter of Surkhet. It is accessible in half an hour on foot from Airport Chok, on the way of Ghushra Road. The homestays are run by the Tharu community, a major ethnic community of Nepal. Considering the natural beauty of the village, the typical Tharu culture of the Karnali Province, availability of organic food and good hospitality of the local people, TharuHomestay was inaugurated in 2076BS.A 15 member homestay management committee has been formed. Now, 6 homestays are in functioning. With the objectives to empower the women of the Tharu community, their skill development, economic development, and the preservation of language and culture, the concept of homestay tourism was developed in the village, and now the local people believe that it has been able to convey a positive message about the village and the Tharu culture.

Economic contribution of homestay

The participants involved in the study reported that homestay tourism has created an opportunity to improve their economic status. They explained that homestay tourism has promoted the local products, created job opportunities for the local people, developed women entrepreneurs, improved the living standard of the people, supported to reduce poverty, and developed various infrastructures in the village. Yam Bahadur Chaudhary said that before they started homestays, the local products did not get more value. They used to consume them for our family purpose. We had a survival farming system. Now, they have started to produce various products including vegetables, domestic animals and organic foods focusing on the demand of the guests in homestays. Bhagirath Chaudhary, member of the homestay said that local products have got market. These comments reflected that homestay has provided the opportunity for

marketing other local products. It has created the opportunity for self-employment. Income from homestay tourism was enough to manage the basic expenditures.

Undoubtedly, quality service can add the number of tourists in rural tourism. Despite the cultural preservation, the Tharu Community homestays created more opportunities for their economic empowerment by utilizing domestic products. Similarly, all the participants reported that homestay tourism has created job opportunities for local people. These remarks reflected how homestays have contributed to generating jobs for local people and use their skills in the productive field. The involvement of people in various jobs can improve their economic status and living status.

Social aspects of the homestay

Patalganga homestay is totally owned and managed by the Tharu people. They used to live in the normal hut made up of wood, clay and the roof is made up of hay or tile. In the course of life, they are changing as contemporary society. They change gradually, and made the house using the resources like stone and roofing by circuit.

Structure of houses

In Patalganga homestay, the Tharu people are constricting their house as modern building methods. They were building their houses consulting the engineer, even though they have using the traditional types of houses.

Family structure of the respondents

Family is made up of people who are related by blood and live together in a home. An intimate and relatively permanent domestic group connected by blood, marriage or adoption that live together and share social and economic responsibilities is called a family. It is the smallest and most basic social unit and also the most important primary group found in any society. It is the most immediate group a child is exposed to. In fact, it is the most enduring group, which has a tremendous influence on an individual life from birth until death.

Table1: Types of family of the respondents

Types of family	Number of house hold	Percentage
Joint Family	4	66.67
Nuclear Family	2	33.33
Others	-	-
Total	6	100.00

Source: Field Study 2024

The above table no.1 shows that 66.67 percent of the homestay family were involve in joint family and 33.33 percent family were bound in nuclear family. It reflects that there is equal distribution of homestay family in terms of the types of family.

Age structure of respondents

Age structure of the respondents also play the role in various activities of the family like economic activities, social relation and so on. The following table shows the detail information of the respondents on the basis of their age status:

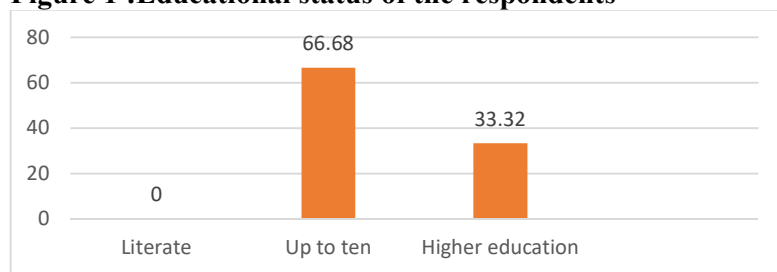
Table 2: Distribution of respondents by age group

Age structure	No of respondents	Percentage
Under 25	1	16.66
26-35	4	66.68
Above 36 years	1	16.66
Total	6	100.00

Source: Field Study, 2024

Above table shows the age status of the respondents. Among the total respondents, 16.66 percent were under 25 years, 66.68 percent of them were 26 to 35 years of age and 16.66 percent of the respondents belonged to the age above 36 years. The data shows that majority of the respondents were above 36 years of age.

Figure 1 :Educational status of the respondents



Source: Field Study 2024

Education is the reflection of modern means of development in terms of civilization and awareness. The figure shows that all respondents of the homestay are not only literate some of them have got higher education. Data reflects that all of them can read and write so they can run homestay business properly.

Table 3: Indoor and outdoor activitiesprefer to the guest of the homestay

S.N.	Indoor activities	Outdoor activities
1	Learning to cook	Excursion to village and forest
2	Harvesting	Eye-sighting birds and animals
3	Learning local norms and values	Observing society
4	Learning local language	Kankrebihar visit
5	Studies family pattern	Forest trip

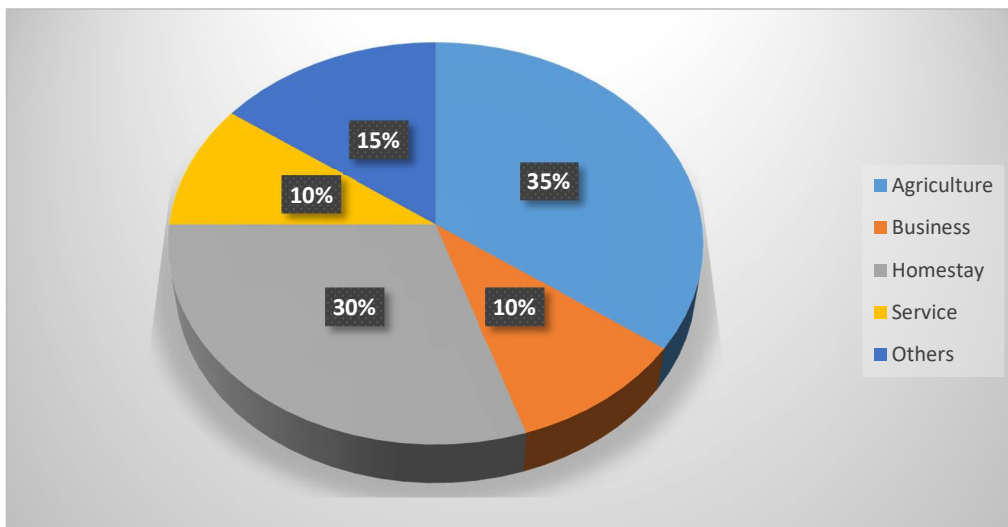
Source: Field Study 2024

Guest who visit and stay in the Patalganga homestay are interested in indoor activities like learning to cook, harvesting, learning local norms and values, learning local language, studies family pattern. Like this the visitors interested in outdoor activities like excursion to village and forest, eye-sighting birds and animals, observing society, Kankrebihar visit, and forest trip. The table shows that visitors who visit and stay in homestay can easily feel because of the homely environment of the homestay.

Main sources of income

Homestay owner and their family member involve in different economic activities even though their main occupation is agriculture. Apart from the agriculture their other sources of income are business and services.

Figure 2 : Main sources of the income



Source: Field Study, 2024

Figure shows that highest source of the income of the respondents was agriculture which covers 35 percent of the total sources. Like this homestay was second largest source which covers 30 percent. Like this business 10 percent, services 10 percent and 15 percent other activities.

Annual income of family

The annual income of a family refers to the total amount of money earned by all members of a household in a year. This can include wages, salaries, bonuses, investments, pensions, and other sources of income. Understanding family income is crucial for assessing economic well-being, financial stability, and socio-economic status. The annually income of the respondents of the study area is shown in following table:

Table 4: Annual income of family

Annual income level	No. of respondents	Percentage
Below 2 lakh	1	16.67
2 lakh to 3 lakh	2	33.33
3 lakh to 4 lakh	2	33.33
Above 4lakh	1	16.67
Total	6	100

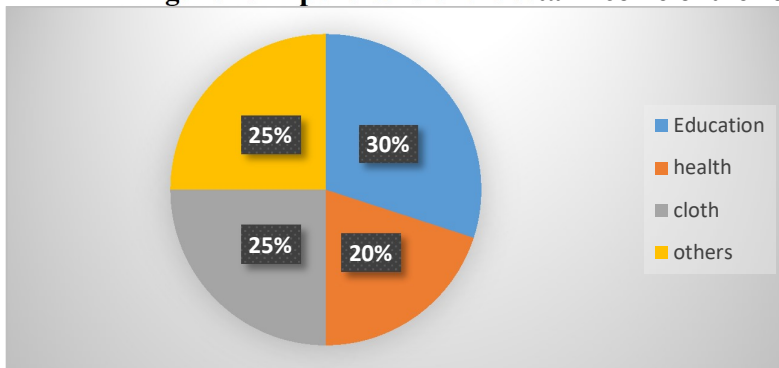
Source: Field Study, 2024

Above table shows that 16.67 percent of respondents were below two lakh annually income of the households, 33.33 percent of respondents were two lakh to three lakh of annually income of the households, 33.33 percent of households were three lakh to four lakh and 16.67 percent of respondents were above four lakh. Majority of the respondents had two lakh to four lakh annually income of the households of the home stay.

Expenditure of the total income of the respondents

The expenditure of the total income of respondents refers to how respondents allocate or spend their income on various categories of expenses. Understanding this helps in analyzing spending patterns, financial behavior, and economic well-being. The status of the expenditure level of the respondents is shown as below.

Figure 3: Expenditure of the total income of the respondents



Source: Field Study, 2024

The above figures show that respondents' expenditure ratio is in health, education, clothing, and others. They spent 30 percent of the income in education of the children, 20 percent in health facility, and 25 percent in clothing. Whereas they spent 25 percent in the other sector.

Cultural aspects of Tharucommunity homestay

Tharu people are indigenous group of people involve in agriculture. Professionally they are farmer and deprived people of Nepal. They are Indo-European, Indo-Aryan group. Tharu people are settled in gate way of Karnali Province, Valley of Surkhet and otherparts of Terai of Nepal.

Religion

Tharus of Patalganga homestay follow Hindu religion because they claim that they are migrated with Rajputs of Rajasthan by blood. This is very interesting fact because they have not any specialty of RajasthniRajputs in their Race and Culture but they claim blood relation with them. Traditional Tharu worship various gods in the form of animals such as dogs, crow, ox and cows. Such gods are seen in Hinduism.

Dress and ornaments

Tharu people use their own traditional dresses which can be classified into the dresses for daily use and the dresses for special use. In traditional Tharu male use *Langauti* and female use shot white *Lungi* and black blouse. Tharu people of Patalganga homestay use special dress on performing their folk culture. *Ghurghut* is used to cover head by the female dancer or the male dancer in women's role while performing folk dance. *Phankaniis* used on the front part of the body between the shoulders while *satakiis* a red piece of cloth wrapped around the front lower part of the waist(Dhakal, 2022).

Folk musical instruments

Tharu ofPatalganga homestay used folk musical instruments that are *Madal*, *Jhyali*, *Majura*, and *Murali*. According to Ram Krishna Chaudhary there are two types of *Madal*, that are made of wood and leather. *Dhol* is a big *Madal* while *Mandra* is a small *Madal*. *Kastarjhal*, *Majura*, and *Chatkoliare* different kinds of *Jhyali*.

Food habits

Tharu people eat rice, pickle, and pulses every day. They include fish, rat meat, and shells in their traditional food. Yam Krishna Chaudhary, an educated person of the Tharu community, informed that the Tharu foods can be classified into ordinary food and special foods, which are consumed in the daily life and the feasts and festivals, respectively. In the ordinary food are fermented radish and vegetables. Pikkale of rat and fish is very favourite food of Tharu people.

Festivals

Tharu people have their own feast and festivals which are very attractive for the tourist and are the main potential product of the tourism development in Karnali Province.

Maghi

Maghi, the greatest festival of the Tharu, is famous for celebrating Tharu culture and holding conflict resolution dialogues among them. During *Maghi*, people visit elders to receive blessings. It is also a time for decisions that impact the community, such as division of multifamily households. Before the *Matwan* declares his approval and divides the property equally, he listens carefully, provides counseling, and briefs them about the disadvantages of the division. Traditional foodrice, *Ghughi*, fish, and alcohol

are used as rituals. Yamu Chaudhary stressed that these symbols of rituals help the conflicting parties to rebuild their relationships

Soharai

Tihar is known as *Sohari* in Tharu community. On the occasion of *Sohari* people worship Goddess Laxmi, according to Hindu mythology Laxmi is the symbol of wealth. Tharu people make bread from rice flour and give a name corresponding to each structure of the bread.

Jitiya

Jitiya is celebrated for three days on the month of Bhadra. Tharu women take a fasting and bathe in near by ponds and rivers. Tharu women and girls, dressed in new clothes especially in white and black color, sing in their own songs in their language. They dance making circles.

Dance

Tharu people perform their dance on the occasion of festivals and any happiness of the family of their community. The majordances of the Tharu community are; circle dances, *Sakhiya* dance.

Marriage

There are three types of the marriage system among the Tharu people. Love marriage, arrange marriage and widow marriage. Love marriage is done without the permission of parents where as in the arranged married. Bride and bridegrooms' parents managed the marriage ceremony with the help of middle man. In this marriage relatives and neighbors are informed.

Ritual friend

The ritual friend is regarded as a family member; marriage is not allowed between family members of the ritual friend. The purpose of the ritual friend is to build relationships to transform conflicts or differences. The Tharu people have practiced ritual friend in order to build relationship with Tharu community ritual friend system can also be found in other caste in the Karnali Province.

Contribution of homestay in development

It was found that more females were motivated in the homestay program in comparison to the men in the family. They were involved in activities like cooking, planning, managing, interacting with guests, cleaning, etc. Homestay tourism was helping in regular income generation for women and involved them in mainstream development by encouraging gender equality. Even handmade souvenirs to tourists were other jobs created by the homestay program. Women also actively participate in the decision-making process at the local level. Women have managed homestays very well and generate more resources of income. Women conduct various training like tailoring, knitting, cooking, and so on resulting in women's empowerment in the village.

Homestays have developed women entrepreneurs for community development activities and make women major stakeholders for homestay development.

The rise of living standard

The study homestays were found to contribute to the promotion of local resources. It has provided an alternative way of self-employment for generating income to subsidize the expenditure. The study found a satisfactory level of income from homestay resulting in a rise in living standards.

Development of infrastructure

Tharu community homestays of the study area were found prepared with basic infrastructure facilities like roads, drinking water, sewage and drainage, public toilets, electricity, communication, etc.

Economic sustainability

Homestay program has made an alternative source of income to rural entrepreneurs. The participants explained that tourism has employed other members of the family apart from the headman. Above all, such activities supported the family economically. Homestay tourism may create a risk of shifting the traditional economy to a market-based economy.

Improve education of the children

The participants involved in the study reported that homestay tourism has developed educational awareness among the local people. Besides general education, I observed local people using computers and social media.

Promote local cultures

It is observed that local people have preserved local cultures because the guests wanted to enjoy with local culture in local taste. The participants expressed that local people got an opportunity to have interaction with people from various cultures and ethnicity.

Conclusion

The more the participation of local people and enhanced marketing of tourism may help to grow tourist flow in village and people would be more benefited. While developing infrastructures to attract tourists, the local environment is adversely affected. Therefore, protecting the environment, providing good service, preserving local tradition and culture should be the main goal of the government and the community to make it the best. This study offers some important implications for the success of the homestay program in other parts of Nepal. It contributes firstly, to the theoretical literature on homestay tourism from the perspectives of the local people. Similarly, the current study contributes to the research by exploring various criteria on which economic benefits can be explored.

Moreover, the study also has practical implications for the policymakers and the practitioners as they can utilize the study for destination planning and development. This study presents some limitations which provide the opportunity for future researchers. Future researchers can include more villages and also a comparative analysis can be made. After the analysis of all interviews, the outcome indicated that the locals were very pleased by homestay tourism. At present, the homestays are receiving only internal guests.

The Patalganga homestay has been suffering by the problems such as; Quality of road, regular public transport service, tourism marketing and extension of tourism services, tourism information centers, conducting tourism festivals, and competition to the modern hotels.

As a new sector of the tourism development in the country, homestay has some opportunities in the study area like; related to the guest host interaction, an ideal platform to encourage the harmony between different races and nationalities, migration control, employment and income of local communities, along with these opportunities there has been seen some challenges in this sector such as; maintain the proper infrastructure, maintain the proper level of hospitality, to promotion of tourism marketing, protection of the nature and environment, maintain the social security as well.

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