

## Role of Homestay for Promotion of Rural Tourism

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### Abstract

*Among various tourists are attractions in Nepal. The area boasts natural landscapes, diverse ecosystems, a serene atmosphere, and a variety of ethnic cultures, all of which draw visitors. A study was carried out to investigate the role of Homestays in advancing rural tourism and to identify tourism-related challenges. The participants included locals, hotel owners, domestic and international tourists, government employees, among others, totaling 40 individuals. The researcher actively engaged in gathering primary data through structured and semi-structured questionnaires and key informant interviews. Findings indicate significant tourism potential due to numerous attractions such as lakes, peaks, cultural events, and agricultural sites. However, local residents noted a low number of foreign tourists and expressed enthusiasm for tourism promotion despite challenges like inadequate coordination between authorities and local promoters, as well as limited funding.*

**Keywords:** Tourism, Homestay, Rural, Promotion, Potentiality

Introduction: Tourism has rapidly emerged as a major global industry, particularly following World War II, becoming a primary source of income for many nations. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) projects continuous growth, forecasting one billion tourists worldwide by 2010. Rural tourism, focusing on village stays and contributing to rural economies, holds significant importance. Originating from the "village stay" concept, rural tourism gained traction with initiatives like Club Mediterranean's 'Vacation Village' in Majorca in 1950. Examples of successful rural tourism development include villages in Nepal like Bandipur, Dhampus, and Sirubari. Nepal's transition to an open tourist destination in the 1950s marked the beginning of modern tourism.

Nepal has embraced eco-tourism through rural tourism, offering visitors opportunities to experience local cultures and traditions firsthand. The country's rich cultural heritage and natural beauty make it an ideal destination for tourists interested in both. Despite its diverse attractions, the area's tourism potential remains largely untapped. However, initiatives like the Home Stay program, launched under Nepal's Tourism Policy 2065, aim to promote rural tourism. The Home Stay Operation Procedure 2067, introduced by the government, regulates and promotes home stays, with 43 registered home stays as of 2069.

### Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are:

- To assess the role of Homestay for the promotion of rural.
- To explore the Socio-economic impact of home stay

## Methods

Research design is the most important components of the field research. Research design has the logical and systematic planning which directs the research. The research study has been carried out the basis of descriptive as well as exploratory. The main objective of the present study is to explore the potentialities of rural tourism particularly. This research was covered all aspects rural tourism and its role for rural development in the areas. Information was obtained by interviewing with three categories of respondent tourists, hoteliers and locals. Random sampling was done for tourists, locals and hoteliers.

Mainly the research has been focused to development based on tourism percept. Tourism is smokeless industry which helps to alleviate the poverty through the income from the tourist. Primary data have been taken through the field survey, observation and informal interview. Secondary data have been taken from the magazines, journals, articles, books, e-mail, internet and various dissertations was used to make the study which is more authentic. As a cultural heritage is home to a diverse range many castes like Mainly Magar Gurung, Chhetri, Dalit, so on. The icon of the culture heritages is Dashain, Tihar, Dewali, Teej, Lhosar etc. The respondents were selected by purposive sampling method in case of hotel survey and simple random sampling procedure was used for survey of visiting tourists and households. The sample size is selected 10 hotel owner, and 18 different types of tourist (internal and external), 12 in Local people in total sampled data was 40. Qualitative as well as quantitative techniques had been used for systematic analysis. Besides these maps, tables, figures and diagrams will also use for presentation of findings. Qualitative data were analyzed descriptively.

## Results

The promotional economic back bone of any tourism area is the length of stay of the visitors. The survey has found some visitors stay few hours and some tourists stay in long time of duration.

The tourist flow is the great prospect of tourism. The researcher has found the tourist flow in and Tourism Area as presented in the table below.

**Table 1: Flow of Tourists in the Respondents View**

No of Respondents	Peak Season	Off Season
6	50-100	10-15
5	60-90	11-13
1	100-150	5-10

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 1 shows 6 local people said 50-100 tourists visit in a peak season and 10-15 visit in off season, likewise 5 local people said 60-90 tourist visit in a peak season and 11-13 tourists visit in off season and 1 local people said 100-150 tourists visit in a peak season than 5-10 tourists visit in a off season per day. Such flow of the tourist in a new rural destination can be taken as the symptom of a successful potential tourism destination in near future.

Expenditure of tourists plays an important role for the promotion of tourism in any place. More expenditure of the tourists will be more income to the rural people. The expenditure pattern of the tourists visiting Area is given below.

Table 2: Expenditure of Visitors in the Study Area		
Expenditure (Rs)	No. of Respondents	Percentage

Below 200	6	33.3
200-500	5	27.8
500-1000	4	22.2
1000 above	3	16.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2018

The Table 2 above presents that the visitors i.e. 36% spend below Rs. 200/- followed by 33.3% spend Rs.200/- to Rs. 500/-. Only 27.8% visitors spend Rs. 500/- to Rs. 1000/-. 16.7% visitors are found who spend more than Rs. 1000/- in the study area. It shows the low expenditure of the visitors in the study area which can present either the respondents' low economic status or the spot's poor tourist products.

Tourism area is a beautiful place in the point of view of tourism. It is popular in domestic tourism for sightseeing, bio-diversity, and nature beauty & picnic spot. According to the field survey in the study area the influencing factor for tourism Area is given below.

**Table 3: Distribution of Visitors by Influencing Factor of Tourism**

Influencing Factors	No of Respondents by Priority						Total
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	
Good climate	1	6	3	4	5	9	28
Sightseeing	10	8	2	3	5	-	28
Good facilities	2	5	3	6	4	8	28
Bio-diversity	9	8	5	6	-	-	28
Extra culture	4	3	-	3	6	12	28
Natural beauty	8	8	4	4	3	1	28

Source: Field Survey, 2018

The above table shows that maximum numbers of respondents give high priority to sightseeing, natural beauty & bio-diversity. In the field survey, the priority is given to the important factors for the tourism potentialities in the study area. Very few visitors of the spot come to enjoy extra culture, good facilities and good climate.

### Natural and Cultural Attraction

Several natural and cultural attractions are present in this location. It offers excellent views of hills, abundant flora and fauna, and is situated in Nepal, a predominantly Hindu country, boasting temples dedicated to various deities like Devi. Numerous cultural attraction photographs are included in the annexes.

While ancient temples and religious sites may not be abundant, the area showcases the unique culture and traditions of the Magar people. Additionally, there's a small monastery nearby, reflecting Buddhist tradition where reverence is paid to Shiva, Pārbati, and Saraswati. Various other tribes including Chhetri, Gurung, Newar, Brahmin, Tamang, and Kami, each with their distinct cultural practices, coexist harmoniously. The locality celebrates a range of festivals such as Dashain, Tihar, Buddha Jayanti, Shivaratri, Ramnawami, Tamu Loshar, and Sakela Naach.

Religious landmarks such as Bauddha Gumba (Monastery), Saraswati Mandir, and Shivalaya are prevalent in the study area, which is situated near the popular tourist destination of Pokhara, renowned as a significant pilgrimage site in Nepal.

The trekking route to the peak, which takes about three hours from Damuli, offers a rich experience with the fragrance of diverse flora and fauna. The panoramic view from the peak includes snow-clad mountain ranges and captivating landscapes, enhancing the allure of the region.

### Accessibility Facilities

Transportation is the key factor for the development of tourism. Only the transportation facilities make it possible to travel from one place to another. If the transportation or road condition is good, there is more accessible for the visitors to visit frequently. This study area is rounded by main three trekking routes.

Communication is essential for the development of tourism industry in any destination area. But this time is era of communication. All the telephone e-services are available here. NCELL tower and NTC tower are built respectively. These two to us raise giving mobile services. All kinds of mobile telephone can give service in this area.

One health post with an auxiliary health worker at lapse bazaar in is providing primary health care services, other private medicine clinics are located and one private medicine clinic is located in. They provide additional primary Health services to the people. About Ninety percent people. there are facilitated with electricity services. The main tourism area has No scarcity of electricity. In the study area there is also drinking water supply. In this area drinking water is available by local sources (own piped water).

Tourism area where they are planning for further development which is given in below table.

**Table 4: Tourism development Activities**

<b>Tourism Festival</b>	<b>Adventure Activities</b>	<b>Temple Conservation</b>
Tanahushur tourism festival	Trekking, Package Tour, Sky dive, Sun rise and Sun Set, Shooting Spot	To Hill Tanahushur Temple

Source: Field Survey, 2018

From the perspective of tourism development, was committed that in the context of Tourism year 2020 which was organized in 2074 the will activate level Tourism Development Committee.

The local tourism committee has brought awareness program. The local people of has labored free of cost & have started to collect rare animals. Youth club, District also planning to development of tourism. So, they are prepared tourism development and management planning of district.

### Hotel Owner

The Magars boast a number of folk and community dances that have been handed down over the generation. It is in these dances that the visitors can glimpse the typical heritage of Magars in all exotic hues. Most important of these dances are Chudka, Paundure/ Sorathi, Ghantu, Dhohori, Jhaure, Panchebaja (very classical and common band of Nepal), and etc. Interestingly, none of these dances are intended for the stages. One can observe them dancing tirelessly with bare feet throughout all the dances. No guest can avoid dancing with them. The traditional melodies and music, vibrant colorful garments, smiles, and grace in their movements captivate the visitors, enticing them to join in their performances. Visitors can savor a variety of seasonal fruits, from luscious oranges to sweet mangoes. Autumn brings guavas, oranges, bananas, and other citrus fruits, while spring and summer offer dozens of varieties of bananas and mangoes. Local women present handmade bamboo souvenirs such as handbags, hats, and purses, along with kitchen utensils crafted from local materials like hay and wood. Guests are treated to

Kodoko tinepane raksi liquor, green organic salads, gundrunk, local delicacies like soybean pickle, sakune kukhuri (local chicken), neuro, siplikan, koiralo, and more. There's a noticeable increase in female participation in local tourism activities compared to males. Ama sauha-jaqgriti and Bhawati are particularly active, astonishing village tourists with their enthusiasm and contributions to socio-economic progress through village tourism.

### **Analysis of Hotel Owners**

During field surveys, domestic tourists visiting the area were questioned on various topics. Most emphasized the natural beauty of the temple, jungle, open lanes, and diverse bird species. Sightseeing and entertainment were the primary purposes of their visit. All hotel owners are married, some without homes nearby, instead staying with relatives. Certain visitors noted climate issues, lack of accommodation, and limited space at the site. Hotel owners proposed improvements including entertainment facilities, accommodations, extra activities, security, and health facilities.

### **Prospects of Tourism**

Factors influencing tourism in the area include visitor types, flow, hotel status, employee conditions, and length of stay, visitor expenditure, influencing factors, and local stakeholders' efforts. The length of visitors' stay is crucial to the area's economic promotion. The survey revealed varying durations of visitor stays, from a few hours to longer periods. The region is renowned domestically for its sightseeing, biodiversity, and natural beauty, attracting tourists for picnics and exploration. Sightseeing, natural beauty, and biodiversity were identified as the top priorities for visitors.

### **Problems and Weaknesses of Rural Tourism**

Respondents highlighted numerous weaknesses, including a lack of clear vision among policymakers, insufficient awareness about tourism's importance, and failures in attracting foreign visitors. Obstacles like poor marketing, inadequate accommodations, funding shortages, and cultural programming deficiencies hinder development. Key issues include political instability, poor governance, conflicts, insecurity, and inadequate marketing of local products. Stakeholders like tourism boards, ministries, and local committees are perceived as apathetic towards developing tourism assets. Lack of advertising, inadequate infrastructure, overcrowding, and a dearth of trained tourist guides exacerbate challenges.

### **Conclusion**

Despite challenges, the region harbors significant potential for tourism development. Unique attractions like the Goddess temple and small monasteries, coupled with hospitable locals, majestic Himalayan views, sunrise vistas, and cultural assets, provide a strong foundation. To realize this potential, addressing communication, security, transportation, and accommodation issues is imperative. Establishing basic infrastructure and upgrading existing facilities in an integrated manner can transform the area into a model village tourism destination. Thus we can say that western region has wide and bright prospect of tourism which shall be actualized to increase the income level of the locals. And it can be one of the means to alleviate the rural poverty as well.

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