

Tourism for Sustainable Livelihood in Nepal

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Abstract

The main objective of the paper is to clarify the different adaptive strategies and livelihood pattern based on sports tourism initiatives in Nepali rural villages. The sustainable livelihood and adaptation of the natural resources especially in the rural areas of the country have been demanded to raise awareness and building capacity by attracting people from different countries through the organization of in-house and cross country tournaments and youth exchange programs. The livelihood is shaped as per the natural resources and other means provided in the area. This study has attempted to survey the climate change effects in the territory in long run. It has been possible by studying the changes and advancements experienced for twenty years back to today. While analyzing the different researches and studies of the past and the study has concluded that there are number of challenges despite of some progress and advancement in the livelihood. The majority of the population of Nepal resides in the rural areas so that the livelihood in general is critical in such areas. While studying for 20 years there have been changes and progresses in the livelihood pattern and adaptation strategies. The sports tourism has been found effective and efficient tool for the advocacy and lobbying in favor of livelihood promotion as well as sustainable development. The study and analysis of the documents have revealed that there has been tremendous efforts carried out in local level and more demand has been raised for national as well as international events. The sports tourism initiatives have been demanded for the accumulation of the climatic change effects as well as the environmental factors for poverty alleviation along with socio cultural prosperity.

Keywords: Sports Tourism, Livelihood Adaptation, Sustainable Development, Empowerment, Youth Exchange Programs

Introduction

Sports tourism initiatives for sustainable livelihood of any household depends on effective security measures i.e. ownership, resources and

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income earning activities, including resources and assets to offset risk, ease shocks and meet contingencies; ownership of land and livestock; rights to grazing, fishing, hunting or gathering; and stable employment with adequate remuneration.

Sports tourism initiatives for livelihood is determined by a number of factors and there is diversity in livelihood strategies that exist at every level within geographic areas, across sectors, within households and over time which are mainly determined by environmental, socio-economic and cultural factors. The major socio-economic and cultural factors include tradition, caste and other identity also it is determined by the people's evaluation of the possibilities offered by these physical as well as socio-economic environments (Knowledge and Wareing, 1996). Livelihood is also shaped by political system within which they operate (Hoeck, 2001). Sports tourism initiatives for many livelihood patterns are largely predetermined by accident of birth and their parents occupation and some are less predetermined and improvise through education and migration (Chambers & Conway, 1991).

In general, Sports tourism initiatives for the adaptations refer to responses or actions of individuals that have survival value for the individual and the group that constitute the plan of actions carried over a specific time by specific group of people to allow them to adjust or to cope with their local environment. During the latter parts of the 1990's, Nepalese began to migrate to the Gulf countries for work, particularly to Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (USE), Kuwait and Qatar within a short period.

Sports tourism initiatives and the livelihood pattern implications of this situation are far-reaching for Nepal as a whole, for the structure and dynamics of regional and local economy and society. Livelihood strategy varies from place to place. Particularly two characteristics of physical environments of the existing resources together with the socio-economic/culture factors control human activities (Young, 1973).

Sports tourism initiatives for the livelihoods comprise the capabilities and material and social assets necessary for a means of living (Chambers & Conway, 1992). A sustainable livelihood includes the idea of coping with and recovery from external stresses so as to maintain or enhance existing capabilities and assets - a notion central to the definitions of resilience being

discussed in relation to climate change.

Institutions influence the livelihoods and adaptation of rural households in three important ways.

1. They structure the distribution of climate risk impacts. How particular social groups and populations will be affected by climate hazards is in part a function of the physical and structural characteristics of the hazard. It is also in part a function of the way macro- and micro-level institutions in a variety of domains affect distribution of risks related to climate hazards.

2. They constitute and organize the incentive structures for household and community level adaptation responses which shape the nature of these responses. Institutional incentives are key factors in determining whether adaptation responses will be organized individually or collectively because institutions affect the emergence of leadership in different contexts, costs of collective action, and the extent of transactions costs.

3. They mediate external interventions into local contexts, and articulate between local and extra-local social and political processes through which adaptation efforts unfold. External interventions in the shape of finances, knowledge and information, skills training, new institutional inputs, and technological support can assume many different forms. Local institutions shape the acquisition and distribution of these interventions in fundamental ways, thereby affecting the degree of success of such interventions.

Problems Faced by Livelihoods

The concept of static equilibrium envisaged in eco-system analysis of man-environment relation has attracted the scholars in recent days. Humans are capable of modifying the rate of such changes or even to reverse it. In fact, man modifies the natural environment for the production of both plants and animals for subsistence and exchange. Sports tourism initiatives and the sustainability of livelihood depends on different factors. Among them, the climate condition plays a significant role. In recent years, the global climate has changed due to various human Induced causes. In this research, climate and socio-economic change varies from local to regional, country and global level and in cases the spatial unit of enquiry is the administrative region. This is formal, which is not necessarily characterized by natural process and associated system in which ecological and physical factors, infra-structural provision, population, ethnicity and social cultural tradition differ markedly

within a short spatial distance. This factor shapes sports tourism initiatives and livelihood directly and indirectly as these factors provide opportunities as well as constraints for people's livelihood. Thus there is need of study at rural level.

Emergence of the Concept of Sports tourism initiatives for Livelihood

The concept of livelihood dates back to the work of Robert Chambers in the mid-1980s and was further developed by chambers and Conway and others in the early 1990s (DFID, 1999). The Brundtland Commission in 1987 introduced sustainable livelihoods in terms of resource ownership and access, basic needs and livelihood security especially in rural areas. Likewise, the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development legitimized and adapted the concept referring "sustainable livelihoods for all" in its Agenda 21. The Copenhagen Social Summit linked sustainable livelihoods explicitly to full employment and the Beijing Platform reemphasized the importance of women's livelihoods to successful development (DFID) adopted sustainable livelihoods approaches from its 1997 White Paper on International Development to its development activities particularly in poverty elimination (DFID, 1999). Besides, international Organization like the European Commission, the World Bank, Food and Agricultural Organization of United Nation (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) are further developing this approach (Wyss, 2004). Sports tourism initiatives and the livelihood approach is a way of thinking about the objectives, scope and priorities for development. DFID has introduced the sustainable livelihood framework with six guiding principles as a tool to improve understanding of livelihoods particularly of poor.

Theoretical discourse and conceptual framework

It has been mentioned that there are several ways of analyzing the issue of poverty which can be categorized broadly into two schools of thought: one school of thought considers poverty from the point of view of employment, whereas another considers livelihood as crucial, especially in the context of rural poor people. The employment school of thought views income at the center of analyzing poverty and ponders over the concepts of urban areas, industries, and other formal sector of economy where an individual can hold a job and get regular payment as daily, weekly or monthly pay and perks. It is perhaps true in an urban setting.

The second school of thought considers livelihood as a complex phenomenon, primarily in a rural setting. The rural poor reside very far from the formal sector of economy with timetable, employment, salary, and market economy. Thus, they can think of the ways to seek livelihood by exploiting a whole range of activities in different seasons. Poverty is one of the components interlocking the entire dimension of deprivation which has five clusters of disadvantages: physical weakness, isolation, poverty, vulnerability and powerlessness (Chambers, Saxena & Shah, 1991, pp. 8-11). Poverty has no single component; understanding it requires complex and exhaustive efforts.

Professionals, planners, and policymakers strongly believe that poverty can be reduced by creating off - season employment for the rural poor through sports tourism initiatives. Following such idea, *Jawahar Rozagar Yojana* has initiated in India to provide employment to the poorest in the slack seasons and build infrastructures. But outcomes do not support the set assumptions (Singh, 1995, pp.180-198). Similarly, in Nepal (late 1999s), the government initiated a special program *Garib sanga Bisheshwar* (Bisheshwar Amount the Poor) which was designed to serve 100 families from each of the 205 parliamentary electoral constituencies every year. In order to implement the program and address the problem of the people, it developed criteria of the poor people who could benefit from the program, e.g. landless state, nutrition level, social deprivation, marginalization, gender, and age but no remarkable achievement been noticed due to such program so far (Hakal, 2002, pp. 71-83). In Nawalparasi district, both the programs *Garib Sanga Bisheshwar* and West Tarai Poverty Alleviation have been implemented. Despite the fact that the relevant VDCs have met all the criteria to implement the anti-poverty programs, 42 percent of the households are yet without land (www.cbs.gov.np). Due to their varied and conflicting interests, the central and district level policy makers never implemented the anti-poverty programs in the concerned VDCs.

In order to measure the programs in society, the modern world has developed several indicators, viz. Gross Domestic product (GDP), Gross National product (GNP), Physical Quality of life Index (PQLI), Human Development Index (HDI), Human Empowerment Index (HEP), and Gender Empowerment Index (GDI), etc. Similarly, a number of approaches for rural development have been used, viz. top-down approach, bottom-up

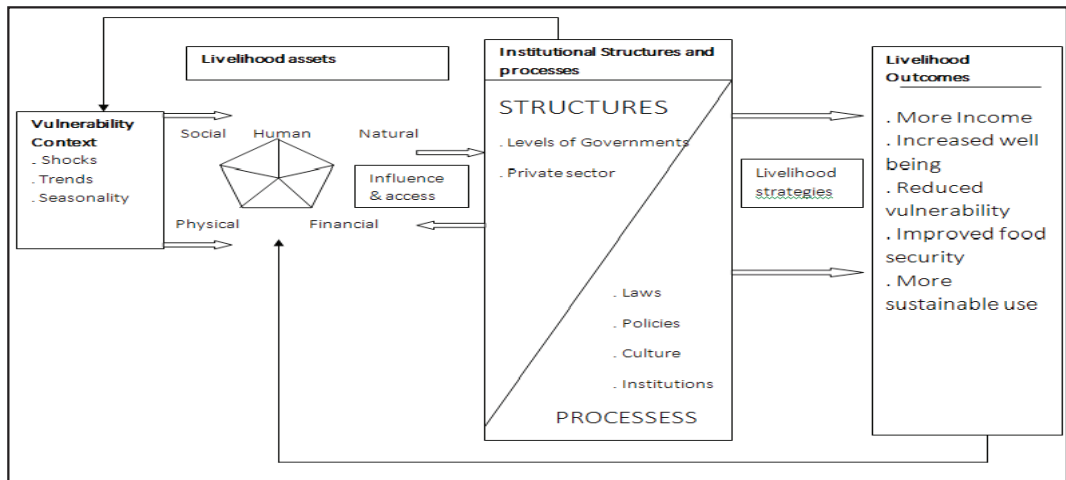
approach, integrated rural development approach, etc (Devkota, 1999, p. 67).

Almost all of development approaches so far have been devised and advocated by the economists and their relevance in terms of ground realities is being increasingly questioned. UN has become one of the vanguards for development. At the end, past development efforts have either left behind, or in the same way even created, large areas of poverty, stagnation, marginality and exclusion (quoted in Esteva, 2000, p. 18). The role of anthropology as a discipline and that of anthropologists as experts have only recently recognized in the form of development anthropology or anthropology (Grillo, 1997, p.1-2). In Nepal, there are some distinguished anthropologists who have contributed in the field of development.

Since the failure of anti-poverty agenda of the US in 1960, the issue of poverty has gradually been taken away from the economists and it now falls under the modernization paradigm and due importance is given to the social aspects. It is noteworthy to mention that there are several theories in sociology and anthropology which explain the status of poverty. For example: Social Theory of Poverty, Culture of Poverty, Situational Theory of Poverty, and Structural. These theories form the foundations for the analysis of the situations.

Social Theory of Poverty was propounded by Charles Darwin. Vigorous proponents of this view have been found in the US recently as a 'new right' which includes George Gilder, Murry and Richard Hernstein. They hold an extreme belief that the poor are genetically blueprinted to be at the bottom of the social hierarchy; to invest for them is a sheer wastage of resources.

The theory of Culture of Poverty was developed by Oscar Lewis (1959) which was based on his observations and experiences in Mexico. The Situational Theory of Poverty gives importance to the condition of society that contributes toward magnifying poverty. The Structural Theory of Poverty holds is caused by the structure of large scale social-economic order. It is the macro and holistic structure of the society that produces inequality and as a result poverty emerges which becomes widespread. Various theories have been used to describe the issue related with poverty but their perspectives are different. However, the examples of the Third World countries, especially from the neighboring country, are relevant.

Figure: DFID Livelihood Model

Source: DFID. Project Appraisal, 2007

The word 'livelihood' can be used in many ways on the basis of context and culture which comprises the capabilities, assets (material as well as social resources), and activities that are required for a means of living.

Nepal has pursued livelihood security at the household level, which can only be achieved by integrating the needs and opportunities related to individual security components like economic security food security, potable water, health services, educational opportunities and time for community participation (GON, 2014). But it has undermined the decision-making component, which is one of the crucial factors, at all levels in policy framework. Oxfam and UNDP have also used the livelihood approach in their Programs to analyze the poverty issue.

Approaches to Sports tourism initiatives for Livelihood Improvement

The livelihood concept is a recent one. The concept of sports tourism initiatives dates back to the work of Robert Chambers in the mid-1980s and was further developed by Chambers and Conway and others in the early 1990s (DFID, 1999). The sustainable livelihood approach as a development concept is legitimized through several international forums.

With regard to sustainable livelihoods DFID (1999) published a set of guidance sheets with a view to attempting to summarize and share on sports tourism initiatives for the sustainable livelihoods approach. The guidance

sheets are the outcomes of the White paper on International Development issued by Government of the UK in 1997. Following the approach of Chambers and Conway, DFID define livelihoods with some modifications but it is exactly the same as defined by Carney (1998). The guidance sheet presents origin, core concepts and framework of sustainable livelihoods. The framework presents the main factors that affect people's livelihoods and interrelationship between these factors. It begins with simultaneous of people's assets, their objective and the livelihood strategies, which they adapt to achieve their objectives. The framework shows five capital assets- human, social, natural, physical, and financial in a shape of pentagon, which lies at the core the framework and it is connected to the other components which vulnerability context, transforming structure and processes, livelihood strategies and livelihood outcomes. The capital assets are defined as:

1. Human capital represents the skills, knowledge, ability to labor and good health that together enable people to propose different livelihood strategies and achieve their livelihood objectives.
2. Social capital includes networks and connectedness, membership of more formalized groups and relationships of trust, reciprocity and exchanges.
3. Natural capitals are the natural resources stock from which resources flow and service useful for livelihoods are derived. These include land, forest, marine/wild resources, water, air quality, erosion protection, waste assimilation, storm protection, biodiversity degree and rate of change.
4. Physical capital comprises the basic infrastructure and produce goods needed to support livelihoods.
5. Financial capital denotes the financial resources that people use to achieve their livelihood objectives. There are two main sources of financial capital- available stocks (cash, bank deposits, livestock, and jewelry) and regular inflow of the money such as pension or remittances.

Conclusion

While studying the different researches and studies made by NGO's, INGO's and many other organizations, we can conclude that still there are number of challenges despite of some progress and advancement to the sports tourism initiatives for the livelihood improvement. The majority of

the population of Nepal resides in the rural areas so that the livelihood in general is critical in such areas. While studying for 20 years there have been changes and progresses in the livelihood pattern and adaptation strategies. The study and analysis of the documents have revealed that there has been a tremendous efforts carried out for the implementation of the programmes of interventions in future. The sustainable programmes have been demanded for the accumulation of the climatic change effects as well as the environmental factors for poverty alleviation through sports tourism initiatives.

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