

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF ECO-TOURISM AROUND RARA NATIONAL PARK

A Thesis

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Rural Development

By

Chintan Kumar Shahi

TU Registration No: 9-2-672-25-2009

Exam Roll No.: 281159

Central Department of Rural Development

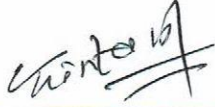
Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur

Kathmandu, Nepal

December 2019

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis entitled **“Economic Impact of Eco-Tourism around Rara National Park”** submitted to the Central Department of Rural Development, Tribhuvan University, is entirely my original work prepared under the guidance and supervision of my supervisor. I have made due acknowledgements to all ideas and information borrowed from different sources in course of preparing this thesis. The results of this thesis have not been submitted anywhere else for the award of any degree or for any other purposes. I assure that no part of the content of this thesis has been published in any form before.



Chintan Kumar Shahi

Degree Candidate

Date: 25/11/2019

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LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

The thesis entitled “**Economic Impact of Eco-Tourism around Rara National Park**” has been prepared by Chintan Kumar Shahi under my guidance and super vision. I hereby forward this thesis to the evaluation committee for final evaluation and approval.



Dr. Rajan Binayek Pasa

Thesis Supervisor

Central Department of Rural Development

Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal

Date: 26/11/2019

2076/08/10



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iv

CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
ग्रामीण विकास केन्द्रीय विभाग

विभागीय प्रमुखको कार्यालय
कीर्तिपुर, काठमाडौं, नेपाल।
Office of the Head of Department
Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Ref. No. :

APPROVAL LETTER

Date मिति.....

The thesis entitled "Economic Impact of Eco-Tourism around Rara National Park" submitted by Chintan Kumar Shahi in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master in Arts (MA) in Rural Development has been approved by the evaluation committee.

Evaluation Committee

Assc. Prof. Bishnu Bahadur K. C.

for Head of the Department

Suman Kharel

External Examiner

Dr. Rajan Binayek Pasa

Thesis Supervisor

Date: 03/12/2019

2076/08/17

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Chintan Kumar Shahi
Degree Candidate

December 2019

ABSTRACT

The study entitled "Economic impact of eco-tourism around Rara National Park" is a quantitative research conducted to ascertain the livelihood enhancement opportunities brought in the wake of ecotourism development. Altogether 132 respondents took part in the survey. The field findings are explained through the theory of eco-tourism and sustainable livelihood. The study area has high potentiality of tourism development in the region. Besides natural beauties, the study area has several social and cultural features to attract more number of tourists in the region. The study area comprises economically active working population in large number. Likewise, the participation of the female in tourism business is quite impressing. Despite these, the small land holding size has become hindrance for promoting organic farming, local breeds of crops, livestock rearing, horticulture, which also could be the alternative source of income for the settlement dwellers.

In regards of the ecotourism development and promotion in the region, very few people have got the opportunity of skill training programs to enhance their skill know how. The learning of vocational skills in the hospitality sector is quite essential to attract the national as well as international tourists. To our dismay, the supply of locally grown products to the incoming guests and national as well as international guests is quite less. This could be due to the import of necessary touristic goods (including fast foods) from the nearby markets. The encouraging data shows that the income from touristic services is five times more than the income from non-tourism sector and 6 out of 10 HHs are direct tourism service provider. Interestingly, the investment is comparatively higher in curing different diseases, than in food, education and other utilities. Likewise, regarding the environmental impacts of the tourism, large number of respondents believes that the changing environmental activities have impacted the flow to tourists in the region. Ecotourism is a good tourism, ethical and eco-citizenship, which aims to limit the human pressure on the environment while contributing to its development. Despite the fact, the environmental degradation is the gradually being observed in the region, which is hampering in the flow of the tourists in the region. The people center development should not undermine the role of local people in protecting the natural surroundings.

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ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

ACAP	:	Annapurna Conservation Area Project
AD	:	Ante Meridian
APA	:	American Psychological Association
BC	:	Before Christ
CBS	:	Central Bureau of Statistics
CCD	:	Center for Curricula Department
CDRD	:	Central Department of Rural Development
EPT	:	India Endogenous Tourism
FITs	:	Free Independent Tourists
GDP	:	Gross Domestic Product
HHs	:	Households
INGOs	:	International Non-government Organizations
LDCs	:	Least Developing Countries
MOT	:	Ministry of Tourism
NGOs	:	Non-government Organizations
NPC	:	National Planning Commission
NTB	:	Nepal Tourism Board
NTOs	:	National Tourism Organizations
OECD	:	Organization for Economic Development and Cooperation
SAARC	:	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SPSS	:	Statistical Package for Social Science
UN	:	United Nations
UNESCO	:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNWTO	:	United Nations World Tourism Organization
WTB	:	World Tourism Bureau
WTO	:	World Tourism Organization
WTTC	:	World Tour and Travels Company

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Mugu district is a part of Karnali province and one of the 77 districts of Nepal, a country in south Asia, bordered by Tibet (China) and India. The tiny town of Gamgadhi is the district headquarters of Mugu. The district covers an area of 3535 km² and has around 45000 inhabitants. In the western part of the country, Jumla & Rara lie in the remote Karnali province northwest of Kathmandu. The Rara region is made-up of long ridges covered with temperate forests and alpine pastures enclosing high valleys. Summer rainfall is low; winter snow can be heavy and persistent. Since the region is fairly high and free from monsoon thunderstorms, the summer seasons is ideal for trekking. Winter is cold, but the autumn seasons trekking rewarded with a profusion of alpine flowers. The trail is very much “off the beaten path” and affords glimpses of culture and scenery very different from those in the rest of the country.

Eco-tourism has become an important economic activity and it provides opportunities for visitors to experience powerful manifestations of nature, culture, and to learn about the importance of biodiversity conservation. Eco-tourism could benefit the community and rural livelihood. Rara national park which is blended with natural and cultural resources is considered as an attractive ecotourism destination place Mugu. Ecotourism is an alternative form of tourism that is consistently gaining ground on a global scale during the past few years. It is one of the newest opportunities for income generation from natural resources without destroying the environment. Its fundamental principles refer to minimizing negative impact on the environment, representing the local cultures and actively contributing to the economic well-being of host communities as well as the stakeholders involved. Ecotourism has the potential to become a driver of sustainable tourism development and also provide opportunities for the development of the disadvantaged marginalized and rural areas leading to poverty alleviation. It stimulates economic development and social well-being of the people and at the same time preserving the natural environment and culture heritage through

awareness creation. Strong arguments have been advanced in support of ecotourism playing a central role in conservation and increase economic status.

In the Mugu district due to the positive economic impacts on the people in the region making it an increasingly important of eco-tourism in around the Rara Lake and Ecotourism activities using natural resource attractions in remote rural areas can be important sources of economic diversification and livelihood opportunity. This sacred lake has very vital status in Hinduism. It had created opportunities for all communities to earn income and created tourism related jobs through the conservation of local ecosystems and culture. The all community has unique symbolic wall decorations (fostering village tours) which attract visitors from home.

Eco-tourism has become an important economic activity and it provides opportunities for visitors to experience powerful manifestations of nature, culture, and to learn about the importance of biodiversity conservation. Ecological-based tourism could benefit the community and rural livelihood. Rara national park which is blended with natural and cultural resources is considered as an attractive ecotourism destination place of Mugu district. So ecotourism as a component of the green economy is one of the fastest growing segments of the tourism industry, and focuses on environmental conservation, socioeconomic development. With the core objectives to identify and quantity impact of ecotourism on environmental conservation social and cultural heritage preservation economic development and enhancement of livelihood.

It also helps in increasing employment entrepreneurship at a hinterland of Rara national park. Income and expenditure of local people had increased because of ecotourism participation in ecotourism the education level and increase in productive human capital and an increase income had enhanced people's livelihoods. So awareness and education programs related to tourism, and strategies to increase the length of stay of visitors would be recommended.

Rara national park (RNP) declared in 1976 is situated in north-western high mountain of Nepal. The park area is 106 km² which extends in Mugu and Jumla district. It is the smallest national park in the country but holds biggest Lake Rara at an elevation of 2,990 m in Mugu district. The highest point of the park is Chuchemara Lake. The unique landscapes and the Rara Lake are major attractions of the park for foreign and

domestic tourist. Rara Lake is the main attraction of the park. The lake was enlisted in Ramsar site (wetlands of international importance) in 1970. There are various tourism related activities that can be held at Rara National Park and its proposed buffer zone. Therefore this study tried to analyze economic impact of ecotourism around Rara National Park.

1.2 Rationale of the Study

Ecotourism has become as an important strategy for sustainable livelihood. Ecotourism has not only a positive impact on the economy but it has also influenced the culture and life style of the people who live in those regions where tourism has been developed and improved their economic conditions. Ever since the area of nature related tourism has emerged, many studies have been conducted to understand the different dimensions of ecotourism. The present review of literature is an attempt to highlight a cross section of the studies which deal with the field of ecotourism. With the review of literature at local level also, it has been observed that Buffer Zone Program (BZP) in RNP carries 4 activities under its annual programs (Ann Rep RNP, 2013). These are:

- Conservation
- Community development
- Income generation and skill development
- Conservation education these activities of the buffer zone program are almost similar to the basic concepts of ecotourism.

At the top is the Buffer Zone Management Committee (BZMC) and at the grass root are users and User Groups (UG) while at the middle is User Committee (UC). BZMC is apex body of committee system. It distributes budget to UCs while UCs are the actual implementers of the program.

In this background, ecotourism activities around Rara National Park also have been creating self/employment opportunities to the local people and also generating rural economy. However, ecotourism activities around Rara are still under shadowed due to poor networking of physical infrastructure, meaningful allocation of collected revenue in community development process. It has different cultures, festivals, history and so on which if developed and planned rationally will contribute in public revenue. The proper collaboration of government and private sector can yield in profit making. This study is

based on ecotourism as a pilot study in Rara national park. In this context this study tried to explain economic impact of ecotourism around Rara National Park.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Generally statement of the problems means the questions related to the research that has to be addressed through the research itself. What are the tourism characteristics of Rara Lake especially (national park) for touristic attraction? What is the role of ecotourism in changing the livelihood of the people? What are the future possibilities for the development of ecotourism in Rara Lake? What is the degree of coordination between stakeholders, entrepreneurs and local people for the possible development of tourism in Rara national park? How has ethnic tourism induced change? What are the provisions of home stays/lodges/groceries in support of tourism? What is the alternative subsistence? What is the provision of infrastructure in favor of tourism around national park? Due to over-grazing and defecation, the national park conservation officers are facing a challenge to preserve the lake. Local people are found cutting timber wood and fuel wood, which is a problem for conservation of Rara. Also during festivals visitors and local people produce a lot of wastage causing water pollution.

1.4 Objective of the Study

The general aim of the study is to ascertain the livelihood enhancement opportunities brought in the wake of ecotourism development around Rara National Park. Whilst the specific objectives were to:

- To examine social and demographic characteristics of the respondents living around Rara National Park.
- To assess ecotourism tourism development and promotion activities around Rara National Park.
- To analyze economic and livelihood impacts of ecotourism on daily life of the respondents in the study area.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Ecotourism” is used to describe ecotourism ventures that are characterized by high Environmental consideration, increased control and involvement of the local residents, as well as significant benefits for the host community around Rara national park. This concept is clearly distinguished from other Ecotourism ventures that are

largely or even totally planned and managed by outside operators and generate negligible benefits for local people.

Main significance of this study is to Develop appears to meet the majority of the targets established in the definition of sustainable tourism, since it constitutes a tool for both social empowerment and long-term economic development of the local communities. This is even more crucial for small, rural and remote communities that often suffer from the lack of governmental attention and assistance. Self-development through ecotourism is particularly important for these communities, since it gives people the Opportunity to utilize their own internal strengths and resources in order to become more self-sufficient. But it has also creating positive socio-cultural and environmental benefits to the poor. Therefore the findings of the study may be useful for the future researchers in the very field. It can also be useful for decision makers. It can be an eye opener to the local communities to more actively participate in tourism development in National park. The research may enhance the collaboration of public and private sector to efficiently design the ethnic tourism advancement in Mugu district.

1.6 Hypothesis Testing

Inferential Hypotheses

- Hypothesis 1: Does category of tourism matters the land holding size of the respondents?
- Hypothesis 2: Does the earning from tourism sector relate with the investment in the education of the child?

Descriptive Hypotheses

- Ecotourism helps to preserving forest resources around Rara National Park.
- The trend of visiting national and international tourists in Rara National Park is increasing annually.
- The livelihood of local people living around Rara national Park is improving through ecotourism activities.
- Homestay tourism is creating earning and self employment opportunities to the local people.
- Central and local governments are working together for promoting ecotourism activities around Rara National Park.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

The main delimitations are expressed as follow:

- The study is conducted in Rara National Park of Chhayanath Rara Municipality.
- That is why the present research study did not cover entire area of the Municipality
- This study deals on socio-economic and occupational status of the households.
- The researching issues related to economic impact of ecotourism has been analyzed and interpreted through the theoretical lenses of eco-tourism and sustainable livelihood.
- Thus, this research study is based upon limited information that is collected through 132 sample number or respondents (see detail in table 1).
- They study is more focused on economic and livelihood impact of ecotourism in the study area.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This study has been classified into six chapters. The first chapter deals with introduction, statement of the problem, objectives, rationale and the limitations. The second chapter explains available literature review. The third chapter discusses the research methodology applied during the conduction of the research.

The description of natural settings, transportation, accommodation, attraction and amenities and the necessary details are considered in fourth chapter. The data analysis and other necessary information have been carried out in fifth chapter. The final chapter leads to findings, conclusions, recommendations and annex (if necessary).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Review

Boo (1990) The term 'eco-tuism' is defined as traveling to relatively undisturbed or un contaminated natural areas with specific objectives such as studying, admiring and enjoying the scenery with its flora and fauna as well as any existing cultural manifestations (both past and present) found in these areas. By this definition, nature oriented tourism implies a scientific, aesthetic or philosophical approach to travel, although the ecologically motivated tourists need not to be a professional scientists, artists or philosophers.

Ross and Wall (1999) Eco-tourism is assessed from various perspectives. According to Scarce (1993), nature travel is an experience that contributes to conservation of the environment while maintaining and enhancing the integrity of the natural and socio-cultural elements. He presents it as a new tourism strategy that balances development and economic gains by stimulating local economies. SNV (2003) Eco-tourism differs from other forms of tourism particularly due to the opportunity for observation and learning it provides to tourists and its contribution to cultural conservation and long term sustainability of communities and natural resources. Therefore, it is a form of sustainable tourism that benefits the community, environment and local economy. This may be achieved through various means such as employment for local people or programs where tourists contribute money or labor to community activities such as tree planting or conservation of local monuments or sites.

2.2 Theoretical Review

Eco-Tourism: Eco-tourism simply means eco efficiency in tourism activities that principally aimed to foster socio-cultural, economic and environmental development through tourism activities. Ecotourism is a good tourism, ethical and eco-citizenship, which aims to limit the human pressure on the environment while contributing to

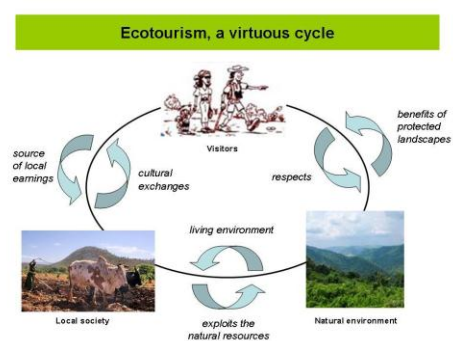


Figure 1. Benefits of Eco-tourism Development

its development (Villepontoux, 2013). Originally, the term of ecotourism is invented in the 80s by biologists who were concerned by environmental degradation caused by the development of tourism practices. Since the 2000s, the World Tourism Organization makes the first campaigns of communication on ecotourism introduced as the new alternative development model for sustainable tourism. From this period, the suffix "eco" plays on the double logic "ecology and economy" to show that it is possible to make "good tourism" and reconcile the imperatives of ecology and economy.

2.3 Policy Review

Tourism development plan began in Nepal with the establishment of national planning system in 1956. When the international tourism was in boom, Nepal was one of the new attractions during 1950s and 1960s. Realizing the immense potentialities of tourism development, tourism has been getting a high attraction from the very beginning of the economic planning in Nepal. Since the first plan, tourism sector has been accorded a high priority in every plan periods.

- **First Plan (1956-1961)**

It had given adequate emphasis to build infrastructures like road, water, electricity and construction of airports that is essential for tourism development. During the plan period, Nepal acquired membership of different tourism related organization. Tourist development board was established in 1957 under the development of industry. RNAC as the national flag carrier was established in 1959. The setting up of hotels of various standards, establishment of travel agencies, development of Tribhuvan International Airport, and tourist guide training and some of the achievements of the first plan.

- **Second Plan (1962-1965)**

The enactment of the tourism Act 1964 (2021s) was notable development for tourism during second plan. During this plan period, tourism statistics was initiated for making further planning and formulation of policy in tourism sector in the country. Specially, tourism activities like the sightseeing services, providing training for tourist guide and marketing in international market were highly prioritized.

- **Third Plan (1965-1970)**

Preparation of master plan for Lumbini development was pronounced during the plan period. This plan aimed to increase the number of foreign tourists to increase foreign exchange earnings. The prime focus during the plan was again on the establishment of hotels in Kathmandu, Pokhara, and Birtnagar by considering international standards. During the plan period, Nepalese attractions of tourism and tourists literature were produced and distributed for international tourists. Nepalese art and architectures provide attraction to tourists, therefore, steps were taken to preserve and maintain temples and historical places.

- **Fourth Plan (1970-1975)**

This plan was actually the turning point in the history of tourism development in Nepal. Nepal tourism master plan 1972 was developed with the joint co-operation of the government of federal republic of Germany in 1971. The main objectives of Nepal Tourism Master Plan 1972 were:

- To develop international tourism, which will provide sustained economic benefit?
- To induce economic activity through tourism that would assist in the development of agriculture industry infrastructure foreign exchange earnings.
- To develop tourism in manner that would preserve and enhance the social cultural and historical values of Nepal. Thus, fourth plan had assumed tourism as the prime source of foreign exchange earnings in the economy.

- **Fifth Plan (1975-1980)**

The ministry of tourism became a full-fledged ministry during this plan period in 1977. The fifth five-year plan had spent out the following objectives for the development of tourism:

- Increasing foreign exchange earnings and these by balancing of payment situation.
- Increasing employment opportunity in tourism sector by developing skill and ability.
- Achieving balanced regional development by establishing tourist centers in different part of the country.

- **Sixth Plan (1980-1985)**

The sixth plan adopted and integrated approach with the following objectives:

- To earn foreign exchange

- To increase the number of tourists and length of their stay
- To replace foreign goods by domestic products.
- Provide employment opportunity through tourism related industry.

- **Seventh Plan (1985-1990)**

The plan had the policy to attract investment from both the public and the private sector in tourism. Emphasis had been laid to develop mountaineering and trekking tourism. The main objectives of the plan were as follows:

- To improve balance of payment situation through increased foreign exchange earnings by attracting upper class tourist.
- To create new employment opportunity by utilizing tourism industry to the fullest capacity.
- To increase the length of stay by extending tourism related activities and business where tourism infrastructure is available.

- **Eight plan (1992-1997)**

The prime objectives of the eighth plan were as follows:

- To earn more foreign currency by developing tourists industry.
- To increase the employment opportunities through expansion of tourism industry thereby improving the living standard of the people.
- To improve the quality of tourism services and to promote and preserve environmental, historical and cultural heritage.
- To encourage the use of local materials and services in tourism industry.

The eight plans recognized tourism as a significant sector to uplift the national economy of the country. It had reviewed the progress made during the seventh plan which reviewed the progress made during the fiscal year 1990/1991 and 1991/1992. During these two years, some of the notable change had been observed such as previously restricted areas namely Manang and Mustang were opened for trekking. Government had adopted liberal economy policy and priority has given to private foreign investors to invest in tourism industry. It has mentioned “in order to attract foreign private investor’s necessary atmosphere would be created and suitable policies would be formulated”.

- **Ninth Plan (1997-2002)**

The overall objectives spelled out in the plan were guided by the long term concept of tourism development through village tourism in given way:

- Priority will be given to tourism as one of the most important sector for economic development of the country.
- Effective promotion and publicity will be made to establish Nepal “An Exclusive Tourism Destination” and
- To increase employment and foreign exchange earnings from tourism and to provide this benefits up to the village levels.

The main objective of the plan was poverty alleviation through tourism in village and backward regions by utilizing the ethnic cultural attractions. The plan shall look forward to promote regional tourism especially in SAARC countries. For the promotion of tourism, diplomatic missions, friendship associations, airline offices, and Nepalese organizations abroad would be made to take active participation. Hi-tech media like internet, homepage, e-mail, international television channel were used for marketing. The achievements of this plan were given below:

- Launched ‘Visit Nepal Year 1998’ as a national campaign.
- Additional air agreement with different countries for air services, seats and routes.
- Added airport infrastructures in the hilly and relatively busy local airports.
- Improved the standard of Tribhuvan international airport runway, its equipment, parking area, terminal building, and five extinguishing services.
- External flight permits have been granted to some domestic airlines and some opportunity will be made available to other airlines as well.
- Civil aviation authority of Nepal has been established and is functioning well.
- Established Nepal Tourism Board by dissolving the department of tourism.

- **Tenth Plan (2002-2007)**

Plan has given more emphasized on an integrated approaching to accelerate market linkage in the tourism economy. Providing effective marketing, employment opportunities and increasing in foreign receipt from tourism sector are the major targets. The major objectives of Tenth plan are as given below:

- Sustainable and qualitative development of tourism sector and promotion of its right markets.
- Conservation of historical, cultural, religious, and archaeological heritage and enhancing their practical use for income generating purposes.
- To make air transportation services easily available, secure, reliable and standardized.
- **Three Years Interim Plan (2008-2010)**

The interim plan again envisaged enhancing the contribution of tourism in national economy as an important segment. Through develop and improve physical infrastructures, international and national air services were prioritized. Internal and external tourists were given to more emphasize through development and promotion of urban and village tourism destinations. Private sector was given to extra emphasize who can provide a functional role on construction, development, expansion, and operation of infrastructures and service delivery.

- **Interim Plan (2010/11-2012/13)**

The Three Year plan aims Nepal to upgrade the country from its current status of Least Developed Country (LDC) to Developing country (DC).The plan has more emphasized on role of tourism development in national economy. It has been aimed to establish Nepal as a major tourist destination in the world through intensive and coordinated efforts in tourism development by expanding tourism industry to the local level of the country. Likewise, it is expected to earn more foreign currency and generate greater employment opportunities from tourism development by introducing Nepal as a “naturally beautiful country” in the world. In addition, this sector has also been anticipated to largely contributing to the economic development of the country and making it economically self- reliant. It might be reason the plan has intended to achieve given targeted outcome; arrival of foreign tourists in Nepal would have been reached 1.2 million by FY 2012/13, average stay of foreign tourists in Nepal would have been reached 12 days, foreign exchange earnings from tourism would have been reached 400 million US dollars and direct employment from tourism sector would have been reached 150 thousands (NPC, 2010).

The major objectives of the plan are as given below:

- To generate greater employment opportunities, reduce poverty, and maintain regional balance and economic growth through developing and expanding tourism industry up to local levels along with increasing economic activities by implementing intensive and coordinated development programs; and to develop Nepal as a major tourist destination in the world.
- To develop tourism industry as well as national economy by extending international air services along with enhancing greater accessibility by strengthening existing air transport services of the country.

To fulfill given objectives the plan has developed given Strategies:

- Develop tourism industry as a main basis of national economy.
- Establish Nepal as a major tourist destination of the world.
- Expand domestic tourist destinations and diversify tourism businesses.
- Develop and expand physical infrastructures in tourism industry establishing cooperation between public-private sectors and local community and local bodies.
- Attain balanced development through tourism development providing significant contribution in employment generation, poverty reduction and regional balance.
- Create conducive environment for tourism development.
- Develop regional/international airports.
- Raise capacity of Airlines through management reforms of Airlines Corporation.

- **Home Staying Guideline and Action Plan, 2011**

The prime aim of the guideline was helped to provide tourism return to the rural people in the village area through their active participation in which they can provide home staying service collectively or individually to the guests. It was envisioned that local people can change their living standard and life style because of income generation and creation of employment opportunities in their area during tourism activities. The provision was also focus to implement rule and regulation of the government before providing home staying service from local people. To the end at least five house hold must needed for providing collective home staying service and they need to register their service either in district home staying development committee or in any tourism institutions. Formation of village tourism development committee in the local level is

inevitable for providing accommodation facilities as well as cultural and religious functions.

- **Fourteenth Plan (2016-18)**

This plan set the vision tourism for economic prosperity. It has developed and implemented national tourism strategic plan (2016-2026). Focus has given to promote tourism activities in rural areas and create employment to the 25,000 people in 2017 and to the 40000 people in 2018 (NPC, 2016). During this plan period, government also has developed National Tourism Strategic Plan (2016-25) (MoCTCA, 2017).

- **Fifteenth Plan (2019-21)**

This plan identified tourism as a lead sector of national economy as it is creating employment to the local people and improving their livelihoods, generating economy and reducing poverty (NPC, 2019). This plan came up with five major strategies in regards tourism:

- Marketing of Nepali tourism in international tourism market including neighboring countries like China and India.
- Developing integrated tourism development plan by covering education, health and sports sectors.
- Attracting national and foreign investment in tourism sector for constructing modern tourism infrastructure and marketing through public private partnership.
- Establishing cooperation between and among public and private sectors in provincial and local level for identified new tourism destination and diversified tourism services.
- Distributing tourism benefits to the local people in local levels.

CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is the most important aspect of research work. Authenticity and reliability of any research depends upon the tools and methods used for data collection. Hence, the primary purpose of this chapter is to discuss and design the framework for the research.

3.1 Research Design

This study applied quantitative case study method for addressing the researching issues. However, qualitative information on researching issues also have been generated and triangulated with quantitative data. Case as “a bounded system” and inquire into it “as an object rather than a process”. It is a specific or a complex functioning thing like; boundary and working parts and purposive social interactions (Stake, 1995, p. 2 as cited in Yazan, 2015). Therefore, in these study tourism activities around Rara National park is regarded as case of the study and selected respondents are unit of analysis. A rationale for choosing this method is multifold. As researcher understood an advantage of the case study approach is that it can fit well with the needs of small-scale research through concentrating effort on one research site case study method helps a researcher to directly examine the data within a specific context (Denscombe, 1998).

3.2 Nature and Sources of Data

This study is based on primary as well as secondary information. The primary information's were collect through field survey using different data collection methods such as observation, questionnaire survey and interview. Similarly, the secondary data were collected from tourism related organizations, libraries; publication literature published and unpublished papers and articles.

3.3 Field of the Study

Purposively, Rara National Park of Chhyanath Rara Municipality has been selected for the study. The national park and Rara Lake have been attracting both international and national guests since many years. It is a unique place where there are many natural, cultural and other attractions. The rural life styles of the local people and their traditional cultural activities as well as natural attractions are attracting numbers of visitors day by

day. Even government and non-government stakeholders are also supporting to promote ecotourism activities directly or indirectly for forest resource conservation and mobilization. Thereby, Rara National Park has been selected as a field of the study.

As Mahendra Daha, lies in Mugu District. It is one of the biggest districts of Nepal.

3.4 Sampling and Population

There are all total 246 households in the study area (Municipality Profile, 2018). They are directly and indirectly benefited from home stay tourism. So, the 246 total households are regarded as a sample population of the study. Out of them 132 households which is generated with 95% confidence level and 5% marginal error by using sample size determination formula (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). In so doing, the study will follow both purposive and stratified random sampling methods while selecting respondents.

$$\text{Sample size (n)} = \frac{\chi^2 * N * (1-P)^2}{ME^2 (N-1) + (\chi^2 * P * (1-P))}$$

Where,

n = required sample size

χ^2 = Chi square (Value* 3.841 for 5% confidence level with 1 degree of freedom)

N = Population size

ME = Desired Marginal error (expressed as a proportion)

P = Probability of success (0.5 value for unknown population)

Q= (1-P, i.e. 0.5 value for unknown population)

Table 1: Selection of the Respondents

Categories	Respondents	Numbers HHs
Duty Bearers	TDMC members	11
	Local stakeholders	17
Direct Beneficiaries	Homestay, hotel owner and workers	25
	Member of musical group	15
Indirect Beneficiaries	Local guide	09
	Porter, horse rider	09
	Handicraft makers	21
	Local farmers	25
Total		132

(Field Study, 2019)

3.5 Data Collection Techniques and Tools

3.5.1 Household Survey

Survey is a method of collecting data in which a specifically defined group of individuals are asked to answer a number of questions (Baker, 1994, p. 172). Questionnaire survey is the most commonly use method in every kind of research especially in tourism industry. The survey was used to gain primary information from people or respondents who answer questions about themselves, their knowledge of particular subject and their opinion. The questions in the questionnaires were well structured so that each respondent answers in exactly the same way. This enables the researches to compare the data collected form 132 respondents.

3.5.2 Observation

Participant observation helps researchers to experience and observe first hand dimensions of the natural setting (Mason, 2002). Observation is will be use but the result can be record both quantitatively and qualitatively. In tourism, much can be learn about human behaviors by observing it, even at a distance. The researcher himself observed the study area personally to understand the problem and issues of the local peoples and the benefits receive from tourism activities.

3.5.3 Key Informant Interview

Interview is an effective method for capturing the views of interviewees that can ultimately produce some parcel of knowledge. But an effectiveness of interview entails creating a shared concern between interviewer and interviewees to understand the contextual nature of the interview (Kvale, 1996). Key informant interview were conducted with key persons by using interview guidelines. The key informants were local people who run homestay, farmers and stakeholders. In order to collect subjective information key persons such as local representative, tourism entrepreneurs as well as local farmers were selected with help of local intellectuals and member of village assembly (table

Table 2. Selection of the Participants

S. N.	Name	Designation	Female	Male	Age	Total
1	M.C. Rokaya	Local representative		✓	47 Years	
2	N. S. Rokaya	Homestay owner		✓	36 Years	
3	G. Bam	Hotel entrepreneur		✓	32 Years	
4	K. Rokaya	Horse rider		✓	46 Years	
5	D. B. Rokaya	Boating member		✓	31 Years	
6	D. S. Rokaya	Farmer		✓	34 Years	
7	C. K. Rokaya	Farmer	✓		36 Years	
8	N. K. Bishwokarma	Farmer	✓		26 Years	
Total			2	6		8

(Field Study, 2019)

3.6 Data Analysis and Interpretation

This study followed descriptive, analysis and interpretation method for well presenting collected data. Description of data information helped to understand the meaning of the data. Analysis of data information helped to identify underlying meanings of my data to make a systematic description. Interpretation of data information helped to understand processes and meanings in the theoretical context (Yin, 2003). In so doing, all the data are categorize and tabulated according to the objectives of the study. For the purpose of data analysis simple statistical tools such as frequency, average, are presented by using models such a tabular formats, bar graphs, pie charts.

3.7 Reliability and Validity

Data are considered to be valid when they measure what they are supposed to Data are validated through cautions planning questionnaires. To remove systematic prejudices and sampling defect in determining the validity of responses to the situation alerts in writing, pretesting of tools and some statistical techniques have been followed. To eliminate various faults, frequency crosscheck and comparison were made. For the reliability of the data collected, sample was taken. To make the study more effective, both primary secondary data collection techniques would have been implemented and the use of different tools like editing, coding and tabulation of data have been used.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

The status of Nepali people depends upon the social and economic positions of the men in their household-fathers and husbands. The majority of Nepali women live according to traditional roles. Thus, they are expected to do all the household chores,

fetch water, do farm work, and raise the children. Although women work much longer than men do, their economic contributions go largely unnoticed. Employed women receive wages that are twenty-five percent less than that of men. Sincere care has been taken to maintain ethical standard. It is important to establish trust with the research participants, and this was achieved by ensuring anonymity and confidentiality to all respondents; carefully explaining the research process and how the data were presented; provided as much information on the research and its aims and objectives without influencing responses.

CHAPTER IV

INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY AREA

4.1 Chhayanath Rara Municipality

Chhayanath Rara Municipality located in Mugu District, of Karnali Province. There are 3 dozens of tourism places and destinations like temples, market, airport, open lands, lakes, caves, mountain ranges. The Chhayanath temple, Kalika Mandir, Mahadev Temple, Malika Temple and most prominently Rara natural lake (largest and deepest lake in the Nepal), Khatyad Khola, Bhawani Temple, Chekheil Himal are the major attractions equally for international and national guests and visitors.

The main occupation of the people living around the studies area is agriculture. People also rear goats and extract medicinal herbs and sell them for their living. Chettri society is dominant in the community. Thakur Baba's Temple is situated in the southeast corner of the lake. Local people believe that the god Thakur shot an arrow to open the passage of the lake reducing the damage caused by flooding.

Locals here mainly grow agriculture crops like Millet, Maize, Paddy, Wheat, Potato, Potato, Vegetable, Fapar, Simi, Apples, Pears for on consumptions as well as for commercial selling. The business motive farming of vegetables like Rayo, Dhaniya, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Tomatoes, Onion, Pumpkin have also begun here. Forests and vegetation products are used in Firewood, Furniture, and food for animal, Herbal production. Radhipakhi Uddhyogs and Apple Firms are contributing in the beneficial consumptions of the local products.

The major rivers flowing through this municipality are Mugu Karnali, Gamgadi River, Walai River, Ghatte Khola, Sima River, Karnali River, Luma River. There are 35 forests in different wards of Chhayanath Rara, among which 34 are community forests. The majority of total land area in Chhayanath Rara Municipality is covered by Forest (i.e. 58.20%). The plant species found here are Sal, Pines, Karm, Chilaune, Siris Banjhi, Sissoo. Major tree species in the area are Sal (Shorearobusta), Asna, Khote Salla, Khair etc. The wild animals found in the municipality are Bat, Bankukoor, Fox, Langur, Jungle Cat, Bwaso/Wolf, Dumsi, Jackle, Monkey etc. Beautiful bird species like Woodpecker, Kalij, Dhukur, Garud, Owl, Dove, Mayur, Myana, Vulture, etc. are even found here.

4.2 Rara National Park

Rara national park is protected area in the Himalayas of Nepal and was established in 1976. Covering an area of 106 km² (41 sq. mi) in the Mugu and Jumla districts, it is the country's smallest national park. Its main feature is Rara lake at an altitude of 2,990 m (9,810 ft.).

The park was established to protect the unique flora and fauna of the Humla–jumla Region of Nepal. Its main feature is

Rara lake at an altitude of 2,990 m (9,810 ft.). The park ranges in elevation from 2,800 m (9,200 ft.) to 4,039 m (13,251 ft.) at Chuchemara Peak on the southern side of Rara Lake. On the northern side, the peaks of Ruma Kand and Malika Kand frame the alpine freshwater lake,



which is the largest lake in Nepal with a surface of 10.8 km² (4.2 sq. mi) and a maximum depth of 167 m (548 Ft.). It is oval-shaped with an east–west axis, a length of 5 kilometers (3.1 mi) and a width of 3 km (1.9 mi) draining into the Mugu-Karnali River via Nijar Khola. In September 2007, it was declared a Ramsar site covering 1,583 ha (6.11 sq. mi) including the surrounding wetland. Rara National Park is managed by the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation and protected with the assistance of the Nepal Army.

One thousand and seventy species of flora are estimated from Rara National Park. Rhododendron, fir, brown oak, and birch species are found in the sub-alpine region. Below 3,200 m (10,500 ft.) the vegetation consists of mainly blue pine (pine excelsa), rhododendron (rhododendron arboretum), west Himalayan spruce, black juniper and Himalayan cypress. Above 3,200 meters (10, 500 ft.), the vegetation changes to a coniferous forest consisting of a mixture of fir, spruce and pine

Fifty-one species of mammals, 241 species of birds, two species of reptiles and amphibians, and three species of fish have been recorded from the park including deer,

red panda, snow leopard, Himalayan black bear, Indian leopard, jackal, Himalayan tahr, yellow-throated marten, otter, dhole, gray langure, and rhesus macaque.

There are 241 recorded species of birds, including 49 wetland species. Coots are often found in the lake. In 1979, three endemic snow trout species were collected in Lake Rara and described as new species. The Nepalese snow trout, the Rara snow trout and Nepalese snow trout. Also in 1979, the frog species has been first recorded as endemic to the lake.

The climate of rara national park is pleasant during the summer, but becomes very cold during the winter, because of the altitude. The best times to visit the park are in September, October, April, and May. During the winter, temperatures drop below freezing, and many high passes become blocked by snow. The summer is warm, but June to August is monsoon season, making the trek to Rara National Park difficult.

Table 3. Climatic Variation Information about Rara National Park

Climate zone	Elevation Range	% of Area
Subtropical	1,000 to 2,000 meters 3,300 to 6,600 ft.	5.6%
Temperate	2,000 to 3,000 meters 6,400 to 9,800 ft.	19.3%
Subalpine	3,000 to 4,000 meters 9,800 to 13,100 ft.	20.6%
Alpine	4,000 to 5,000 meters 13,100 to 16,400 ft.	17.7%
Nival	above 5,000 meters	5.3%
Trans-Himalayan	3,000 to 6,400 meters 9,800 to 21,000 ft.	31.2%

(DNPWC, 2018)

CHAPTER V

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter tried to analyze research the research objectives; to examine the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, to assess ecotourism tourism development and promotion activities around Rara National Park and to analyze economic and livelihood impacts of ecotourism on daily life of the respondents in the study area

4.1 Social Demographic Characteristics

Social and demographic characteristics of the respondents have been presented and analyzed under different study variables such as categories of the respondents; age, gender, caste religion, land holding, educational status , enrollment in different educational institutions and so on. The presentation and analysis of the data on this category has helped to get the clear social picture of the study area.

4.1.1 Age Group of the Respondents

Altogether 132 respondents participated in the survey. Out of this 47% of them were from the age group 21-35 years. Interestingly, two-fifth of them were from the age group 36-50 and above. The figure shows an interesting data that the study area covers the majority of energetic working population.

Table 4: Age Group of the Respondents

Age Category	Frequency	Percent
Less than 20	2	1.5
21-35 yrs	62	47.0
36-50 yrs	58	43.9
51 and above	10	7.6
Total	132	100.0

(Field Survey, 2019)

The economically and physically active population is 15-64 years old and the study area comprising such a large number of population has more chances of getting economic activities in the region, which definitely can boosts the tourism activities in the region.

4.1.2 Gender of the Respondents

The surveyed settlement comprises nearly three-quarters of the male and remaining female population. Although, 22.7 % of the total populations were female, they were found to be engaged in different income generating activities. The following table 3 has presented the composition of the gender in the study area.

Table 5: Gender of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	30	22.7
Male	102	77.3
Total	132	100.0

(Field Survey, 2019)

4.1.3 Caste/Ethnicity, Religion and Mother Tongue

The survey has revealed that the settlement comprises almost 90% of Brahmin, Chhetri and Thakuri (BCT) caste and ethnicity. Rest belongs to the socially discriminated dalit caste group. Interestingly, almost all the respondents have Nepali as their mother tongue. Similarly, the people following hindhu religion dominate the study area. Only a small percent (below 5), follow Buddhist and Christianity.

Table 6: Caste/Ethnicity, Religion and Mother Tongue

Frequency	Caste and ethnicity		Mother tongue	Religion		
	BCT	Dalit	Nepali	Hindhu	Buddhist	Christian
Total	118	12	130	128	2	2
% out of 132 respondents	89.4	9.1	98.5	97.0	1.5	1.5

(Field Survey, 2019)

4.1.4 Land Holding Status

The people residing there are engaged in agricultural activities too. Although the commercial farming practices have recently started there, due to the demand of the organic vegetables and foods in the hotels, people have been practicing subsistence based farming since from generation. The major economic activities in the study area are aligned with tourism services in most of the households. However, the small land holding

has been observed as the major hindrance for the agriculture transformation in the region as shown in below table.

Table 7: Land Holding Size

Land Holding	Frequency	Valid Percent
1-3 Ropani	22	21.2
4-6 Ropani	80	76.9
10 and above Ropani	2	1.9
Total	104	100.0

(Field Survey, 2019)

Above table indicates that, around 77% of the people have 4-6 Ropani of land. Only 2% of them have 10 and above Ropani of land. Land holding is an important adjunct of economic, social or political structure of an agriculture country such as Nepal. These figure show many possibilities of enhancing the livelihood of the people through massive agricultural transformation through the proper utilization of land size in the study area.

4.2 Ecotourism Development and Promotion Activities

The promotion of the environment friendly tourism development activities in the region has been assessed through different indicators. Such as the recipient of any vocational training, category of tourism services, types of direct and indirect tourism services, supplying and production of local products to the local market and in the international market, and support of the local government in promotion of tourism services in the region.

4.2.1 Recipient of Vocational Training

The participants have presented their mixed views regarding the recipient of the trainings. Nearly 60% of the respondents are from direct beneficiary. Out of these, the majority of the participants has received trekking and guide training. Likewise, other training receiving categories are hospitality, crafts making, farming and others. To our dismay, three-quarters of the respondents still do not have any skill trainings.

Table 8: Category of Tourism Services

Category	Frequency	Percent
Direct beneficiary	76	57.6
Indirect beneficiary	28	21.2
Non-beneficiary	28	21.2
Total	132	100.0

(Field Survey, 2019)

Above findings shows that tourism is creating earning opportunities to both direct and indirect beneficiaries. That is why tourism is becoming alternative livelihood strategy in the study area. Government mechanism is also implementing tourism infrastructure development projects. In same way during interaction one of the participant expressed that, *Rara National Park is popular in international tourism market as it is listed in Ramsar site. That is why Central, provincial and local governments are collectively working for development and promotion of tourism activities in periphery areas of Rara National Park* (M.C. Rokaya, Wednesday 13th November, 2019 [KII]).

Table 9: Types of Training Received

Types of training	Frequency	%
Hospitality	2	1.5
Trekking and guide	18	13.6
Crafts	2	1.5
Farming	6	4.5
Others	4	3.0
Not applicable	100	75.8
Total	132	100

(Field Survey, 2019)

The tourism development activities in the region have relations with the recipients of the skill trainings of the participants. The skill know how can promote the business in the region. But, this is limited to only one-quarter of the respondents.

4.2.2 Direct tourism services

People, in the study area are engaged in different occupation related direct tourism services. Out of these, half of them have established hotels. Likewise, nearly one-fifth of them have operated home-stay business. Same number of them has opened the

guesthouses to serve the tourists. Few of them have opened paying guest and resorts. The details is presented in the below table.

Table 10: Category of Tourism Services

Direct tourism services	Frequency	Percent
Home stay	14	18.4
Paying guest	2	2.6
Guest house	14	18.4
Hotel	40	52.6
Resort	2	2.6
Restaurant	4	5.3
Total	76	100.0

(Field Survey, 2019)

Likewise the data shows that majority of participants began the tourism services in the year 2070 B.S on wards. In same connection one of the participants shared that, *Local people are directly and indirectly benefitted from tourism service that helping improving the rural livelihoods but still local government need to improve road networking as well as construction of foot trail around the Rara National Park and Murma Hill top* (M.C. Rokaya, Wednesday 13th November, 2019 [KII]).

Table 11: Years of Business Establishment

Year (B.S)	Frequency	Percent
2057	2	2.6
2062	2	2.6
2064	2	2.6
2065	2	2.6
2067	4	5.3
2068	4	5.3
2069	5	6.6
2070	12	15.8
2071	12	15.8
2072	8	10.5
2073	10	13.2
2074	7	9.2
2075	4	5.3
2076	2	2.6
Total	76	100.0

(Field Survey, 2019)

4.2.3 Indirect Tourism Services

Out of the surveyed respondents, 42.4% of them belong to indirect and non-beneficiary. Due to the rugged topography in the region, the horse - riding has become the highest indirect tourism service, contributing 43% among the indirect and non-beneficiaries services. This is followed by the farming related services, which contributes 35.7%. Other services belonging to this category are employment (11%) and craft making (11%). The details is presented in the below table.

Table 12: Indirect Tourism Services

Indirect and non-beneficiaries	Frequency	Percent
Farming	20	35.7
Employment	6	10.7
Craft making	6	10.7
Horse riding	24	42.9
Total	56	100.0

(Field Survey, 2019)

The horse riding and boating facilities offering around national park have been generating self employment and earning opportunities to the local people. In same theme the research participants reflected that, *we have two boats only. During season time we cannot offer entertainment to all the visitors. We are planning and coordinating with national park authority for extensions of boating facilities* (K. Rokaya, Thursday 14th November, 2019 [KII]). *Fifty plus local people are providing horse riding services around national park. This service is becoming more attractive to the local people with development and promoting of tourism activities* (D. B. Rokaya, Thursday 14th November, 2019 [KII]).

4.2.4 Local or Indigenous Products

The respondents have are supplying local or indigenous products to the guests. However, this proportion is very less, which is only 12.1%. In this regards, the percentage of selling locally grown products to the international and national markets is also quite low, which is just 3%. The respondents having plan to sell such products is also very less, which is 1.5%.

Table 13: Supply of Local Products

Statistics	Are you supplying local or indigenous products to the guests?			Are you supplying local indigenous products in inter/national markets?		
	Yes	No	On plan	Yes	No	On plan
Frequency	16	116	2	4	126	2
%	12.1	87.9	1.5	3.0	95.5	1.5

(Field Survey, 2019)

The above finding also can be triangulated by following remarks: *Hotel entrepreneurs are supplying local organic products such as rice, lentil, vegetable, mutton and lamb, honey and fruits to the tourists since the beginning. It is in increasing order due to the expansions of commercial farming activities in the village* (G. Bam, Thursday 14th November, 2019 [KII]). *I am a role model farmer of Murma village that is popular for crop, vegetable and goat farming. I have been involving in commercial vegetable farming and supplying my products in hotels, restaurants and homestay* (D. S. Rokaya, Friday 15th November, 2019 [KII]).

4.2.5 Support of the Local Government in Tourism Promotion

The newly formed local government was expected to bring reform in the tourism promotion in the region. Regarding the technical support of the local representatives, the tourism service providers are quite dissatisfied with their government. Only 7.6% of them agree that the support is helpful in bringing the development of the tourism promotion in the region. Similarly, the financial support of the local governments is a bit more than the technical support by still very less, which is agreed by more than 85% of the respondents.

Table 14: Support of Local Government

Statistics	Do you agree that technical support of local government helped to sustain your occupation/profession?		Do you agree that financial support of local government helped to sustain your occupation/profession?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Frequency	10	122	19	113
%	7.6	92.4	14.4	85.6

(Field Survey, 2019)

4.3 Livelihood Impacts of Ecotourism

The livelihood impacts of ecotourism in the study area have been assessed through different variables. Such as for the economic impact, investment cost in the beginning, having bank account, annual expenditure for different tourism service, annual family earning, annual expenditures in different categories, focuses of local government. Similarly, the social impacts have been assessed through women participation in the tourism services, role of CBOs in tourism promotion, changing habits among local peoples after the increased flow of the tourists. Also, the economic impact has been assessed through assessing the impact of climate change in the number of tourists coming to the national park and other promoting sustainable rural tourism by minimizing the possible natural hazards.

4.3.1 Economic Impacts of Ecotourism

The data has already revealed that 58% of the respondents are providing the direct tourism services. The average initial investment of opening tourism related business is above three lakh. This could be due to the high flow of national as well as international tourists in the region and arranging them several modern facilities locally. Of course, the average annual income from the tourism sector is NRs 215735, which is five times more than the income from non-tourism sector. Regarding the family expenditure, the data shows that the investment is comparatively higher in curing different diseases, which is 64, 263 per HH. In the education also, a family is investing 36888 per annum. The investment in food is 43,015.

Table 15: Earning and Expenditure

Statistics	Initial investment	Family earning		Family expenditure			
		Tourism sector	Non-tourism sector	Food	Clothes	Medicine	Education
Mean	337750	215735	42879	43015	23864	64263	36888

(Field Survey, 2019)

The data has revealed another fact that, only 56.1% of the respondents have their bank account. It signifies that still more than 40% of them do not opened the bank account, which could have hampered them in borrowing loans to expand their business or

saving the earned money in the reliable institution. In same theme the research participants happily shared that, *primary occupation of my family is agriculture. Tourism activities developing around Rara National Park encouraged us to make our farming system more commercialized before couple of years. Since then I have been supplying crop, vegetable, local cocks and goats to the hotel and restaurant owner* (C. K. Rokaya, Friday 15th November, 2019 [KII]).

My family livelihood is improving after my involvement in goat farming. I understood tourism is creating earning opportunities to the local people but we need to involve in commercial farming for better family income (N. K. Bishwokarma, Friday 15th November, 2019 [KII]).

Table 16. Information on Bank Account of the Respondents

Having bank account	Frequency	Percent
Yes	74	56.1
No	56	42.4
On plan	2	1.5
Total	132	100.0

(Field Survey, 2019)

Likewise, the local people perceive that the local government should have the following priorities in promoting the economic activities through tourism services in the region. Out of these, majority have expressed that there should have good road accessibility (39.6%). This view is followed by another perception of promoting home stay tourism related services in the region (31%). Remaining other perceptions is encouraging in establishing new hotels and resorts and promoting organic farming should be the priorities of locally elected representatives.

Table 17: Priority of Local Government

Categories	Frequency	%
Establish hotel and resorts	20	17.2
Promote home stay	36	31.0
Improve road accessibility	46	39.6
Promote organic farming	14	12.0
Total	116	100

(Field Survey, 2019)

4.3.2 Social Impacts of the Tourism

In order to assess the social impacts of the tourism, different indicating questions were asked to the respondents and their responses were collected through a 5-point likert scale: strongly agree-1, agree-2, disagree-3, strongly disagree-4 and I cannot say-5.

Regarding to the women participation in tourism-based service/products has been increased; the average perception of the respondent is 2.09, which means the view is closer to agree. Likewise, regarding the relationship with the top-level bureaucrats and politicians, the average view is 3.92, which is closer to the strongly disagree.

This shows the local level network of the tourism entrepreneurs with the policy makers and planners is not cordial, which could have hampered in the smooth development in the region. Interestingly, the data shows that the role of CBOS in preserving the cultural values of the region is not satisfactory. In addition, the change in reading habits and developing interacting habits among the youths is not increased after the flow of tourists in the national park area.

Table 18: Social Impact of Tourism

Statistics	You believe that women participation in tourism based service products has been increased	In your view, hosts have good relationships with top level politicians and bureaucrats for tourism promotion.	You affirm that CBOs are preserving cultural norms/values for nation-state.	In your view, villagers are acquiring reading/travelling habits from tourists.	You believe that local children, youths and women are becoming interactive.
Mean	2.09	3.92	4.68	4.44	3.02
Remarks	Closer to Agree	Closer to Strongly disagree	In between strongly disagree and I can't say	In between strongly disagree and I can't say	Closer to disagree

(Field Survey, 2019)

Regarding the priority of local government, nearly 88% of the respondents believe that there should be motivation of local youth and women to become direct beneficiaries of tourism. Secondly, the provision of other technical and financial support to the non-beneficiaries is helpful in mounting the social benefits of rural tourism. During interaction one of the participants also shared that; *the trend of local people involvement*

in homestay tourism is also increasing in recent days. It helps enlarging accommodation facilities equally to national and international tourists (N. S. Rokaya, Wednesday 13th November, 2019 [KII]). I have good relationships with Dalits and non-Dalits people in my village and neighboring village. It was poor during my miserable family livelihood before five years ago. My involving in commercial vegetable farming not only provides me income options but also changing my social status and prestige. It is possible with tourism activates promoting around Rara National park and its peripheral areas (N. K. Bishwokarma, Friday 15th November, 2019 [KII]).

Table 19: Priority of Local Government

S. N	Priority of Local Government	Frequency	%
1	Provide financial support to the local entrepreneurs	2	1.5
2	Provide technical and financial support to the non-beneficiaries of tourism	8	6.1
3	Forster social inclusion through tourism	2	1.5
4	Motivate local youth and women to become direct beneficiaries of tourism	116	87.9
5	Motivate local youth and women to become indirect beneficiaries of tourism	4	3.0
	Total	132	100

(Field Survey, 2019)

Similarly, regarding the focusing area of local government for mounting cultural benefit of rural tourism, more than 90% of the respondents have stressed on financing support to the cultural institutions. Rest other views are establishing cultural museum (3.1%), conducting cultural ceremony (1.6%), focusing on religious tourist (1.6%) and focus on cultural tourists (1.6%).

Table 20: Priority of Local Government

Focus of Local Government	Frequency	%
Cultural museum	4	3.1
Conduct cultural ceremony	2	1.6
Financial support to cultural institutions	118	92.2
Focus on religious tourist	2	1.6
Focus on cultural tourists	2	1.6
Total	128	100.0

(Field Survey, 2019)

Along with that private sector are also contributing for promoting tourism infrastructure development activities. For example one of the participants shared that, *private sectors are also investing in tourism sector. Well equipped star hotel and resort are constructing nearby Talcha airport and salleri. This will definitely help to attract quality tourist in near future* (G. Bam, Thursday 14th November, 2019 [KII]).

4.3.3 Environmental Impacts of the Tourism

Regarding the environmental impacts of the tourism and vice versa various questions were asked with the respondents. Such as their perception on the negative impact of tourism on environment, provision of climate change related trainings, role of national park management committee in minimizing the possible environmental hazards through building infrastructures and investing in IGAs of the people.

Regarding the negative impact climate change on the tourism activities, the average views of the respondents is closer to the agree. It means the changing environmental activities have impacted the flow to tourists in the region. However, the participants could not present their views about provision of climate change impact minimizing related training in the region. Similarly they are totally unaware, whether the tourism related committees are investing in building the community infrastructures and in income generating activities that can minimize the risk of environmental degradation in the region.

Table 21: Environmental Impacts of Tourism

Statistics	You affirm that there is a negative impact of climate change on tourism.	You believe that climate change related training conducted in the local level is helping for sustaining ecotourism.	You affirm that Rara National Park and Rara Tourism committees are investing for tourism infrastructure development projects	You affirm that Rara National Park and Rara Tourism committees are investing for in IGAs
Mean	2.46	4.64	4.85	4.95
Remarks	Closer to agree	Closer to "I can't say"	Closer to "I can't say"	Closer to "I can't say"

(Field Survey, 2019)

Interestingly, nearly cent percent of the respondents believe that local government should focus on eco-tourism related activities to promote the tourism friendly sustainable development in the region.

4.4 Hypothesis Testing

Does category of tourism matters the land holding size of the respondents?

Regarding the above mentioned statement, the alternative hypothesis was set as there is significance difference between the category of tourism services (direct, indirect and non-beneficiary and having large land holding. Both being categorical data, chi-square test was done

Table 22: Hypothesis Testing

Category	Land holding			Total
	1-3 Ropani	4-6 Ropani	10 and above Ropani	
Direct beneficiary	10	52	2	64
Indirect beneficiary	8	20	0	28
Non-beneficiary	2	8	0	10
Total	20	80	2	102

(Field Survey, 2019)

Chi-Square Tests

Statistics	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.096 ^a	4	.542
Likelihood Ratio	3.674	4	.452
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.744	1	.187
N of Valid Cases	102		
a. 4 cells (44.4%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .20.			

(Field Survey, 2019)

On this, we got p value =0.542, which is more that alpha value =0.05. It means the statistical test fail to reject null hypothesis. Thus the no significant difference observed between the category of the respondents (direct, indirect and non-beneficiary) and the size of the land they hold.

b) Does the earning from tourism sector relate with the investment in the education of the child? Regarding the above mentioned statement, a correlation test was done among tourism related income and expenditure in children education.

Table 23: Hypothesis Testing

Correlations		How much is your annual family earning from tourism and other sector? From tourism sector	How much is your annual family expenditure in different purposes? For child education
How much is your annual family earning from tourism and other sector? From tourism sector	Pearson Correlation	1	.154
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.224
	N	98	64
How much is your annual family expenditure in different purposes? For child education	Pearson Correlation	.154	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.224	
	N	64	80

(Field Survey, 2019)

As presented in the table above, we got $r = 0.154$. The correlation value was positive. The value shows weak correlation. It shows there is no significant impact of the tourism related earnings and investment in the education of the children. This could be due to the different other priorities of the family in investing such as food, medicine, and other accessories than in education. This could be also due to the free education policy of Nepal government up to secondary level, so that most of the parents enrolling their children in public school need not have to worry on the education expense of their children.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter presents the summary, conclusion and recommendation of the research work. The respondents involved in the survey of livelihood impact of ecotourism in Rara national park buffer zone area has expressed their valuable views regarding the role of tourism activities in the peripheral settlement areas of the national park. The settlement being itself the buffer zone has high potentiality of tourism development.

6.1 Summary of Findings

6.1.1 Social and Demographic Characteristics

- Altogether 132 respondents participated in the survey. Out of this 47% of them were from the age group 21-35 years.
- Although, 22.7 % of the total populations were female, they were found to be engaged in different income generating activities.
- The settlement comprises almost 90% of Brahmin, Chhetri and Thakuri (BCT) caste and ethnicity. Rest belongs to the socially discriminated Dalit caste group.
- Around 77% of the people have 4-6 Ropani of land. Only 2% of them have 10 and above Ropani of land.

6.1.2 Ecotourism Development and Promotion Activities

- Majority of the participants has received trekking and guide training. Around 76% have not received any kind of skill training.
- Nearly 57% of the respondents are from direct category. On this category, respondents having hotel business are majority in number.
- 42.4% of them belong to indirect and non-beneficiary. On this category, horse riding is the largest services provided.
- The respondents have are supplying local or indigenous products to the guests. However, this proportion is very less, which is only 12.1%.

6.1.3 Livelihood Impact of Ecotourism

- The average initial investment of opening tourism related business is above three lakh.

- Average annual income from the tourism sector is NRs 215735, which is five times more than the income from non-tourism sector
- The data shows that the investment is comparatively higher in curing different diseases, which is 64, 263 per HH.
- Only 56.1% of the respondents have their bank account.
- 39% of the respondents have expressed that there should have good road accessibility (39.6%).
- The women participation in tourism-based service/products has been increased, the average perception of the respondent is 2.09, which means the view is closer to agree.
- 88% of the respondents believe that there should be motivation of local youth and women to become direct beneficiaries of tourism.
- More than 90% of the respondents have stressed on financing support to the cultural institutions by the local government.
- The changing environmental activities have impacted the flow to tourists in the region. However, the participants could not presented their views about provision of climate change impact minimizing related training in the region.

6.2 Conclusions

The study area Rara national park has high potentiality of tourism development in the region. Besides natural beauties, the study area has several social and cultural features to attract more number of tourists in the region. The study area comprises economically active working population in large number. Likewise, the participation of the female in tourism business is quite impressing. Similarly, the settlement comprises the homogenous ethnic communities of Chhetri and Dalit. These caste groups of people have their own local culture, traditions and local farm productions to impress the new people coming to the area. They have inborn good hospitability characters. Also, most of the people there have years of long experience this unexplored sector has high potentiality to develop the tourism sector in Nepal. Similarly a large number of people have land holding size 4-6 Ropani. The small land holding size has become hindrance for promoting organic farming, local breeds of crops, livestock rearing, horticulture, which also could be the alternative source of income for the settlement dwellers. However, it needs massive planning in the agriculture transformation in the region. The belonging of

large land holding size is also not determined by the category of the tourism services (direct, indirect non-beneficiary). This could be due to the late development of the tourism activities in the region, primarily after 2070s, as presented by the data.

The livelihood impact of the tourism was clearly visible in the region. Nearly 6 out of 10 respondents are from direct beneficiaries, providing different services like hotel, home stay, resorts, restaurants, teashops etc. However, the tourism related enterprise establishment cost is quite high, i.e. 3 lakh on average. This could be due to the rugged topography, inaccessible roads for transporting touristic goods. Other reasons could be due to the high flow of national as well as international tourists in the region and arranging them several modern facilities locally. The encouraging data shows that the income from touristic services is five times more than the income from non-tourism sector. Interestingly, the investment is comparatively higher in curing different diseases, than in food, education and other utilities. This could be due to not good hospitals in the district and high travelling cost to reach nearby cities like Surkhet, Nepalgunj for the treatment. To our dismay, still a large section of people do not have their bank account. This could be due to less number of banks in the periphery of the national park and due to the growing number of cooperatives in the region. This could have hampered them in borrowing loans to expand their business or saving the earned money in the reliable institution. Amazingly, the tourism related earning does not have any relation with the spending in children education, due to the free education policy of the government in the public schools.

6.3 Recommendations

Regarding the ecotourism development and promotion in the region, very few people have got the opportunity of skill training programs to enhance their skill know how. The learning of vocational skills in the hospitality sector is quite essential to attract the national as well as international tourists. The hotel business is gradually grooming in the area as the large number of the direct tourism service providers are engaged on it. Similarly, in indirect tourism service, majority of people has secured their livelihood through horse riding profession, as there are very limited numbers of public vehicles in the area. To our dismay, the supply of locally grown products to the incoming guests and national as well as international guests is quite less. This could be due to the import of

necessary touristic goods (including fast foods) from the nearby markets such as Jumla, Kalikot, Surkhet and Nepalgunj. These aspects should be seriously considered as the rural livelihoods cannot be improved through eco-rural tourism, until the locally grown farm related products do not get the market in the tourism industry. Therefore based on research findings this study came up with following recommendations:

- Regarding the aspiration from the local government, majority have expressed that there should have good road accessibility signifies the poor transportation network in the district, which is repelling the large flow of the tourists in the region.
- Foot trail must be constructed around Rara Lake and upside Murma Top for attracting national and international guests.
- Cultural museum, fun parks, view towers and learning resource centers must be constructed around Rara Lake for upgrading tourism attractions.
- Motor boat facilities can be offered without hampering Lake Ecosystem this will provide entertainment to the guests fond in water sports.
- The women participation in tourism-based service/products has been increased. Hence, special package must be provided to the local women for their motivation.
- The provision of other technical and financial support to the non-beneficiaries is helpful in mounting the social benefits of rural tourism.
- Role of CBOS in preserving the cultural values of the region is not satisfactory. In order to make the local tourism activities, pro-towards the people the motivation of local youth and women is to be prioritized for becoming direct beneficiaries of tourism.
- Regarding the environmental impacts of the tourism, large number of respondents believes that the changing environmental activities have impacted the flow to tourists in the region. However, they are not conscious about the different environment related hazard minimization campaigns by the local government, which could secure their livelihood.
- The local government should focus on eco-tourism related activities to promote the tourism friendly sustainable development in the region.
- Ecotourism is a good tourism, ethical and eco-citizenship, which aims to limit the human pressure on the environment while contributing to its development.

- In the Rara National park settlement areas, the tourism activities have increased economic standard of the people. Their opening of bank account, earning, spending, saving habits through tourism business have economically empowered them. Hence, tourism activities must be promoted by public and private sectors involvement.
- Environmental degradation is the gradually being observed in the region, which is hampering in the flow of the tourists in the region.
- The most challenging fact is that, most of the people are still not conscious or unaware about the different risk minimization campaigns being organized at the local level to secure the livelihood and make tourism business sustainable.
- The people center development should not undermine the role of local people in protecting the natural surroundings.
- Local level tourism development and management committee must be formed for planning, implementing and monitoring tourism development related projects.
- Sustainable livelihood program can be implemented for promoting organic and commercial vegetable and crop farming activities.
- The planners and policy makers should work together with local people and possible local solutions in minimizing the risk hazards of environment degradation.
- Local level network of the tourism entrepreneurs with the policy makers and planners is not cordial, which could have hampered in the smooth development in the region.

6.4 Scope for the Further Study

The study confined itself to Rara National park only, so complying the result of the research may not suit other national parks buffer zone area. Therefore similar research should be conducted in other regions, to extend the bounds of the current study into additional geographical populations, choosing more settlements and buffer zone areas by comparing and determining determine whether there is consistency among the studies.

It is also suggested that studies on indigenous ideas to protect the local biodiversity, role of education in promoting tourism business, role of gender in expansion of tourism enterprise, trend of expenditures in a Nepali household, potentiality of the religious tourism etc can be conducted.

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APPENDICES

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF ECO-TOURISM AROUND RARA NATIONAL PARK

Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire

Dear respondent,

This is completely a field study work. It does not carry any official record. You are requested to answer the question honestly. The importance of this study depends on your valuable answers. Your privacy will be secured and information you provide does not effect on it. So, please answer the following questions on your knowledge and practice as far as possible.

Name of the Respondent:

Contact Number:

Code Number:

Interview Date and Time:

Section A: General Information of the Respondents

Q . N .	Socio- Demography (Variables 1-21)	Response Categories and Possible Responses							
		Address Details						Response	
1	What is your Permanent address?	Rural Municipality						1	
		District							
2	How old are you?								
3	What is your sex group?	Female	Male	Others					
4	What is your caste and ethnicity?								
5	What is your mother tongue?								
6	What is your religion?	Hindu	Buddhist	Islam	Kirat	Christianity	Others		
7	What is your marital status?	Unmarried	Married	Separated	Divorced	Widowed	Never married and living with family		
8	What are your family occupations?	Agriculture	Business	Foreign Employment	Govt.job	Army/Police	Pension	Others	

9	How many members are working outside from the village?				
10	Where are they working?	In own District	In own Province	In Foreign Country	
11	What is land holding status of your family?	Ropani →	Aana →	Paisa →	
		Bigha →	Kathha →	Dhur →	
12	What is the highest educational grade you completed?	Grade	Subject		
13	How many living children do you have?	<5 Years	5-9 Years	10-18 Years	>
14	Where are your schools going children studying?	In public or community school	In private or boarding school	Not studying	
15	Where are your colleges going children studying?	In public/community college	In private college	Abroad	N

	Tourism Related Variables (13-21)	Response Categories and Possible Responses						
16	Have you completed any vocational training?	Hospitality	Culinary art	Trekking	Crafts	Farming	Others	None
17	What is your category related to tourism?	Direct beneficiary		Indirect beneficiary		Non-beneficiary		
18	What is your direct tourism service (DTS)	Homestay	Paying guest	Guest house	Hotel	Resort	Teahop	Restaurant
19	Is this registered then?	Yes	No	On plan				
20	Did your parents also involved in DTS?	Yes	No					
21	What is your in direct tourism service (IDTS)	Farming	Craft making	Employment	Guide/Porter	Medical Healer	Horse riding	Others

2 2	Is this registered then?	Yes	No	On plan
2 3	Did your parents also involved in IDTS?	Yes	No	
2 4	When did you involve in tourism related profession?	Year		
		Month		
2 5	Are you supplying local or indigenous products to the guests?	Yes	No	On Plan
2 6	Are you supplying local indigenous products in inter/national markets?	Yes	No	On Plan
2 7	Are you planning to change your profession or job?	Yes	No	On Plan
2 8	Are you motivating your children to start their career in your profession?	Yes	No	On Plan
2 9	Do you agree that technical support of local government helped to sustain your occupation/profession?	Yes	No	On Plan
3 0	Do you agree that final support of local government helped to sustain your occupation/profession?	Yes	No	On Plan

Section C: Impacts of Rural Tourism

.	Economic Benefits (Variables 46-55)	Response Categories and Responses		
3 1	Do you have your bank account?	Yes	No	On Plan
3 2	How much was you investment cost at the beginning?	Rs.		
3 3	How much is your annual expenditure for this particular tourism service?	Buying local products		Rs.
		Buying non-local products		Rs.
		Salary to the staffs		Rs.
		Tax payment		Rs.
3 4	How much is your annual family earning from tourism and other sector?	Earning from tourism sector		Rs.
		Earning from non-tourism sector		Rs.

3 5	How much is your annual family expenditure in different purposes?	Fooding	Rs.	
		Clothing	Rs.	
		Medicine	Rs.	
		Child education	Rs.	
		Worship and travelling	Rs.	
		Electronic accessories	Rs.	
		Cosmetic and jewellery	Rs.	

36	Did you bought any fixed assets like; land, house, cattle etc?	Yes		No		On Plan	
		Land				Land	
		House				House	
		Cattles				Cattles	
37	In your view, tourism is creating earning opportunities to the local people.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I can't say	
38	What can be the focusing areas of local government for mounting economic benefit of rural tourism?	Establish division office			Improve road accessibility		
		Offer off season package			Promote organic farming		
		Establish hotel and resorts			Establish agro based enterprises		
		Promote homestay			Upgrade banking & remittance		
39	You believe that women participation in tourism based service products has been increased.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I can't say	
40	You believe that identity of this tourism destination has been established in inter/national market.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I can't say	
41	In your view, hosts have good relationships with top level politicians and bureaucrats for tourism promotion.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I can't say	
42	In your view believe, community fund generated from tourism is investing for physical infrastructure projects.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I can't say	
43	What can be the focusing areas of local government for mounting social benefit of rural tourism?	Provide financial support to the local entrepreneurs			Peace and management		conflict
		Provide appreciation letters to the role model entrepreneurs			Foster social through tourism		inclusion
		Provide technical and financial supports to the non-beneficiaries of tourism			Motivate local youth and women to become direct beneficiaries of tourism		
		Provide technical/financial supports to community run homestay			Motivate local youth and women to become indirect beneficiaries of tourism		
44	In your view, most of the tourists visit the village during cultural festivals.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I can't say	
45	You affirm that CBOs are preserving cultural norms/values for nation-state.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I can't say	

46	In your view, villagers are acquiring reading/travelling habits from tourists.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I can't say
47	You believe that local children, youths and women are becoming interactive.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I can't say

48	What can be the focusing areas of local government for mounting cultural benefit of rural tourism?	Establish cultural museum			Focus on religious tourists	
		Conduct tourism trade fair			Shooting documentary	
		Conduct cultural ceremony			Focus on cultural tourists	
		Financial support to cultural institutions			Cultural code of conducts to the tourists	
49	You affirm that there is a negative impact of climate change on tourism.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I can't say
50	You believe that climate change related training conducted in the local level is helping for sustaining rural tourism.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I can't say
51	You affirm that Rara National Park and Rara Tourism Committee are investing for tourism infrastructure development projects	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I can't say
52	You affirm that Rara National Park and Rara Tourism Committee are investing in IGAs	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I can't say
53	You affirm that Rara National Park and Rara Tourism Committee are investing for local community development projects	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I can't say
54	You believe that awareness level of villagers on good health and hygiene has been increased due to tourism.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I can't say
55	What can be the focusing areas of local government for mounting environmental benefit of rural tourism?	Eco-tourism		Waste processing center		
		Park people harmony		Assess agricultural impact change		
		Organic farming		Assess tourism impact of climate		
		Integrated farming		Focus on environment friendly		

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Appendix B: Observation Guidelines for Tourism Activities

Date:	Time:
Venue:	Ward Number:

○ **Tourism Components**

- Accessibility (road networking and airport facility)
- Accommodation (hotel, guest house, home stay and camping)
- Attraction (natural, cultural and religious)
- Amenities(cultural program, sports competition)
- Actors (human resources for tourism management)
- Activities (trekking, sight-seeing, religious tour and research)
- Affinities (natural resources and environmental management)
- Advertisement (websites, brochures, banner, articles, tour and travels)

○ **Flow of Tourists and Visitors**

- Types of international tourists
- Types of domestic tourists
- Student and researchers

○ **Guest and Host Relationships**

- Well come program and well come drink
- Guest and host interactions during service delivery
- Guest and host interactions during sight seeing
- Marital relationship between gust and host
- See off program

○ **Impact of Village Tourism Activities**

- Household earning and daily life activities of tourism service providers
- Household earning and daily life activities of local farmers
- Social support and cultural integration of local people
- Health and hygiene of local people

Appendix C: Key Informant Interview Guidelines

Date:		Time:
Village:	Ward Number:	Participants:

1. What is the current status of cultural tourism in this village?
 2. How local people are offering cultural tourism services?
 3. Why community participation is essential for tourism development and management?
 4. What are the positive impacts of cultural tourism in this village?
 5. What are the negative impacts of cultural tourism in this village?
 6. What are the major challenges for promoting tourism activities?
 7. How local stakeholders are planning for sustaining tourism activities?
 8. What are the changing economic structures of the village?
 9. What are the changing cultural structures of the village?
 10. How cultural tourism has been transforming livelihood of the local people?
 11. Why local people are involving in environmental conservation practices?
 12. Why institutional supports are essential for environment conservation?
 13. How local stakeholders are mobilizing natural resources?
 14. How local stakeholders are preserving traditional culture?
 15. What are the environmental conservation practices in this village?
- Descriptive note:
 - Reflective note:
 - Thematic note

Appendix D: Photographs of the Field Activities

