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RESIDENTS' PERCEPTION ON IMAGE OF THE CITY
A case of Bhairahawa City

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ABSTRACT

Urbanization in Asian cities, influenced by Western planning, has led to large, homogeneous structures, creating vulnerability to people. Building inclusive and city with a unique image to solve the problem, is possible by using "People First" participatory planning. A city's image and residents' behavior are influenced by individual perceptions. This thesis takes a different approach by stressing how locals' perspectives influence how cities look and feel, it places a higher priority on unique city identities to improve urban quality of life. The primary objective of the research is to identify both the tangible and intangible dimension associated with the residents' perception on image of the city. Lynch's theory aids in understanding tangible aspects, but placemaking and attachment to a place gives the intangible dimensions of the image.

With the help of qualitative research techniques; literature reviews and case studies, the paper explores the common identity and priorities of urban residents on sense of place and place attachment. Two methods were used, i) Verbal Method: direct interviews and ii) Visual Method: self-observations and photographs of the identified objects/places to further understand the formation of place attachments. The case area Bhairahawa, in Lumbini Province is a well-known industrial and commercial powerhouse. Its cosmopolitan nature is influenced by the population's diversity, which includes five major castes and others. The study was conducted among respondents and triangulated using Group discussions and KIIs.

The key findings are presented in major 4 categories, Physical Environment, Social & cultural factors, Emotional & experiential factors and Socio-economic and Practical factors, each of them having multiple further indicators to identify the objects to reflect the image of the city. This study deepens our understanding of the identity of the city by highlighting the importance of both tangible and intangible elements in daily life in Bhairahawa. Further, the using the Lynch's model was capable enough to capture most elements/objects that make up the image of the city, however, falls short in incorporating some intangibles elements that are crucial part of the image of the Bhairahawa. This acknowledges that a city's identity is molded by tangible and intangible elements, representing the opinions and experiences of its citizens.

Keywords: Image of the city, Perception, Place attachment, Tangible and Intangible aspects.

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Sincerely,

Anup Ghimire

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The rapid influx of population into cities had exerted pressure on building infrastructure and services to meet the demands of the residents in past decades. With limited time and resources for development, urban planning had primarily focused on physical and socio-economic efficiency. Influenced by the modernist movement and planning theories of 20th century (Manzo & Perkins, 2006), Asian countries, including Nepal, have followed the principles developed in Western countries leading to the cities that we live/see today. In those recent years, large buildings and infrastructures have come to dominate cities. With this trend going on, UN-HABITAT mentions that the rapid/haphazard urbanization in Asia has brought significant vulnerabilities to the people (Chepelianskaia, 2019), leading to homogeneity among cities and the loss of their individual identities (Manzo & Perkins, 2006). With people being vulnerable, there is a need to shift the paradigm on how we plan our cities. This requires the change in traditional philosophy of Top-Down to Bottom-Up methods. In today's context, with increasing urbanization, diverse urban challenges, and a greater emphasis on equity and sustainability, the concept of "People First"; the adoption of participatory approaches have gained significant traction in the urban planning field.

In an effort to incorporate this "people-first" philosophy into urban planning, there has been a shift towards an inclusive cities, green cities, and smart cities. While these approaches have indeed empowered communities and increased city resilience, they have also resulted in a sense of detachment among residents towards their rapidly modernizing and urbanizing city. As a result, people feel less connected to the development practices that do not actively reflect their sense of belonging. This disconnect erodes the city's identity, diminishes public satisfaction with development, and negatively impacts overall livability. Addressing these vulnerabilities, various organizations suggest that the primary goal of future cities should be to improve the lives of their residents (Chepelianskaia, 2019), and the development of unique cities is considered to be one possibility, which serve as a pathway to future sustainability.

Unique cities are characterized by their distinct image, which encompasses the beliefs, ideas, and impressions that people associate with a city (Kotler, 1997). This image is influenced by factors such as public spaces, architecture, transportation, and social interactions. The image of the city offers a sense of identity, well-being and belonging (Boyer, 2011). It represents the shared experiences of individuals within the city, describing how they interact with their environment and how their quality of life can be enhanced. Factors such as visual image, identity, places, the regional position of the city, and the vitality of its people contribute to the city's image (Anholt, 2016). City planners

have suggested a correlation between the city's image and its attractiveness as a place to live, invest, and visit (Dastgerdi & Luca, 2019).

Kevin Lynch, a prominent planner and researcher, explored the concept of city image in his book "*The Image of the City*." He argued that a city is an artifact or object perceived by observers, and its imageability can be examined through memory-based experiments that yield a logical and coherent understanding of the city. Building upon Lynch's concept, this research aims to investigate the image of the city based on the experiences of its residents. This research offers an interesting direction for exploration, an exciting opportunity to delve into the subjective experiences and intangible aspects of urban environments. While Kevin Lynch's work primarily focused on the physical elements that contribute to the image of the city, it is indeed valuable to consider the intangible aspects as well, including the perception and subjective experiences of the residents.

When assessing the city image and planning process, it is important to consider the perspectives of the major stakeholders, particularly the residents (Ahmed, 1991). Studying residents' perceptions of the city helps to identify strengths like well-maintained public spaces, efficient transportation, and a strong sense of community. It also reveals weaknesses such as safety concerns, inadequate infrastructure, and social disparities. By assessing quality of life and engaging the community, urban planners can make informed decisions to enhance residents' well-being. This information can inform urban planners and policymakers in creating more inclusive, livable, and sustainable cities that meet the needs and aspirations of the people who inhabit them. These perceptions inform policy and decision-making, ensuring that strategies and initiatives align with the community's needs and aspirations.

City image is subjective but has real consequences on residents' behavior (Gilboa, Jaffe, Vianelli, Pastore, & Herstein, 2015). However, residents' reactions are not uniform, as differences in value systems, benefits, and perceptions shape the way people interpret their experiences (Stylidis, 2018). The influence of residents impacts image formation, on-site experience, satisfaction with city living, and word-of-mouth recommendations for potential migrants (Stylidis, 2018). These senses of belonging and attachment are based on residents' experiential relationships with their surroundings. However, in modern cities, the focus on efficiency-based planning approaches has gradually eroded the connection between people and their urban environment, leaving less room for placemaking aspects. Placemaking emphasizes the relationship between individuals, communities, and urban spaces, promoting engagement, creating inviting and accessible spaces, and fostering a sense of belonging among residents. The diminishing focus on these aspects has resulted in residents feeling less attached to the city they are living and are confused about what is the actual identity of the city which is unique and people oriented.

2. RATIONALE OF THE RESEARCH

2.1 NEED OF THE RESEARCH

With rising population and economic activity placing pressure on city growth, urbanization has emerged as a major national trend. With this race, cities are having a hard time identifying themselves as a unique place to lure new population or hold the existing, as people tend to move towards better opportunities. The negative effects of this progressive loss of identity extend far beyond a loss to culture. They threaten the viability of cities, their economy, and people's quality of life. In fact, the current, rapid urbanization has a significant negative impact on urban ecosystems as well. This kind of development makes cities more vulnerable to climate change, reduces their ability to compete economically, and causes inhabitants to feel physically and emotionally uncomfortable in their built environment, which has a negative impact on their physical and mental health (Chepelianskaia, 2019). In all this process, major challenge is on the city's own image that acts as a brand for livability. Cities need to make their own identity, unique to themselves. Since most of the modern cities will have similar physical and socio-economic attributes, we presume that the uniqueness will be found in the people's experience in the city. The shared experience of residents attached to the spaces/places in the city will help to create the unique image of the city. Although a number of research had been conducted globally about the importance of residents' place image for development (Stylidis, 2018), there is scarcity of research of such kind in Nepal. Residents' perceived image can produce a different meaning attributed to the place and how they are linked with different experiences (Stylidis, 2018). Scarcity of such researches might hinder the implications of development plans and activities.

2.2 IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

Research in urban planning often involves pushing the boundaries of existing knowledge and exploring new dimensions of urban experiences. This thesis demonstrates an innovative approach that recognizes the significance of residents' perceptions in shaping the image and identity of a city. When studying the image of the city, residents' perception is of significant importance as they are the ones who intimately experience and interact with the urban environment on a daily basis. Their perceptions, experiences, and preferences play a vital role in shaping the overall image of the city.

A growing body of research is recognizing the importance of assessing the image residents hold of the place they are living. This research is important as it aims to examine the people's perceived image, whose findings/outputs can give policy maker a matter to preserve in order to protect the unique character of the city. The voices of the people along with the values they attach will be translated into policy and actions. This directly benefit

the decision makers by letting them understand what to protect/preserve in the planning and development process. Thus, can identify emotional bonds to the place and decision maker can act upon them. Moreover, this research can catalyze development of social capital, community mobilization and citizen engagement (Manzo & Perkins, 2006). These kinds of researches can bring the understanding of community empowerment and engagement to facilitate better development process. In addition, the examination of residents' city image can help to understand how to improve their quality of life and welfare and overall citizens' satisfaction is generally related to the development of place attachment and a more positive citizenship behavior (Baratta, Cassia, Vigolo, & Ugolini, 2017).

3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The research on city planning strategies in previous decades in Nepal are majorly focused on the rational beliefs rather than the major stakeholder's (residents) perception. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the residents' place image in the city. The ongoing urban development trend in Nepal has led to uniformity in identity. Planning approaches are fixated on physical & socio-economic aspects and most recent are on the community empowerment. Yet they lack the linkages of emotional motivation for citizen engagement in development process (Manzo & Perkins, 2006). The placelessness created by modern planning principle (esp. to the cities which lacks authenticity of traditional values) has translated into the lacking emotional attachments towards city development in Nepal and cannot create a better city to live. Moreover, major modern cities of Nepal are unable to make their city's image unique to themselves. Building unique cities is necessary to address the issues and improve the quality of life for urban dwellers (Chepeliaskaia, 2019). This is important to the city brand formation such that it highlights strengths (or weaknesses) of that city especially when country's major focus is on the tourism and on the citizens' satisfaction in livability and development progress.

4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the research is to identify the tangible and intangible dimension associated with the residents' perception on image of the city. This objective can be achieved through following sub-objectives:

- To identify the places/objects of attachment to the residents in the city.
- To study the underlying meaning attached to the places and its process of formation.

- To test the theoretical model of Kevin Lynch associated with the image of the city.

5. LITERATURE REVIEW

5.1 IMAGE AND IDENTITY

Although the term "image" is well known, it is nevertheless difficult for everyone to understand. It differs amongst academic disciplines and depends on the subject matter of scholarly inquiries (T.B.C., 1989). The idea of an "image" emphasizes its function as a mental representation derived from cognitive processes, supporting "visual perception" even in the absence of actual ocular input. As a result, the methods used to create images and the process by which they are formed interact with each person's cognitive processes, supporting the theories of cognitive psychology (Matuszynska, Michnik, & Polok, 2019). Both public relations and marketing, which adhere to industry-specific approaches, find use at this junction. An image, it should be noted, is not a static thing; rather, it is the very definition of dynamism, responding to impulses from its surrounds, especially the social context. Organizations have a variety of identities that reflect the diverse social interactions they take part in. Through communication mechanisms, these pictures get fixed inside the sociocultural framework. The integration of the picture into the communication process becomes clear when cognitive processes, social system theory, and communication theory are taken into account, revealing the unique character of this phenomena (Luhmann, 1995).

The perception of a city is shaped by a variety of things. One of the most important components of these is the distinctive identity connected to the location. The city's identity is expressed in many ways, including structural factors (like geography, historical significance, and landmarks), semi-static qualities (like the size of the city, the physical aesthetics of the landscape, and the collective mindset of its citizens), and dynamic features (like symbolic representations, communal behaviors, modes of interaction defining the city's cultural fabric, and its connection to the environment) (Matuszynska, Michnik, & Polok, 2019).

A greater understanding of cities' role as global catalysts for innovation and regional economic progress has emerged during the past few decades. The desire to develop plans for reviving and renewing urban areas has increased at the same time. Urban landscapes are being shaped into more enticing areas, and the urban environment as a whole is being improved. The significance of creating enticing urban settings and the rebirth of interest in the function of cities have resulted in a renewed focus on image of the city (Matuszynska, Michnik, & Polok, 2019). This focus has grown to be a crucial aspect of urban and regional development strategies, going beyond concerns of the physical

infrastructure to include intangible components that help to create and uphold a good identity.

5.2 ASTHETICS OF THE CITY

The city's fabric is modernized and revitalized, and as neighborhoods change, certain historic images of the city are consigned to memory and photographic or motion picture archives. They all work together to create a mosaic that is arranged in sets and is referred to as the image of a specific location (POPCZYK, 2016). The modernization of the city, its expansion, and the vast range of resident activities that fill its fabric, all work together to generate a diversity of realities that make up the city as well as an abundance of viewpoints perceived. The mental representation of the city or place can be seen as a unique collection of memories connected to a certain location. When we discuss the "image of the city," we are either referring to representations based on how each individual perceives a certain location or to signs that, while still rooted in perception, have largely dissociated themselves from it due to their frequent use in diametrically opposed discourses. The residents regularly compare the mental images in their memory with the raw experience and adjusts them if required, but they are always incomplete and full of gaps, as a result of the practice of daily living and the endeavor to maintain a sense of security (POPCZYK, 2016). Every image is original and distinct because each and every resident fills this fundamental picture of the city with the information and feelings that only they can experience. A social image, as a type of reflected picture, becomes a common property, an image of the communal consciousness, whereas a direct perception, a certain representation taking place in the present time is kept as an individual memory subject to ongoing review and updating (POPCZYK, 2016).

The perceived image of the city is much more than just an abstract image or map since it takes on layers of generational significance and emotional connotations. This additional information, which serves as the cornerstone defining a particular community's identity and dictating its behavior and activities, is what distinguishes separate communities from one another. However, the assumption that all of the resident's internal images create a cohesive whole and constitute the center of a strong subject that is identical to and completely integrated with the location and the community is one that is strong but not exactly supported by empirical facts. Two perspectives on the aesthetics of the city can be outlined if we start with the function and personality of the image: the aesthetics of form and legibility, which is the foundation for the experience of spatial order, and the aesthetics of fragments, kaleidoscopic scenes of urban life, which aim to evoke feelings of intensity, surprise, and perilous adventure. Lynch's thesis lies midway between the tactile city experienced and portrayed somatically and the abstract optical perception of the city. When mobility is prioritized over understanding the layout of the city, the road ceases to

function as an organizing axis for the architecture and ceases to be a passage and instead becomes an aim in itself. If they are collected together, the walker's mental and visual impressions are more like a cabinet of curiosities than any kind of map.

In order to expand the discussion of cities beyond purely mathematical and economic parameters without reducing perception to a person's activities intended to adapt to a place, planners are directed toward philosophical argumentation by the holistic view of a human being inhabiting the environment (POPCZYK, 2016). This allows them to strengthen their belief that a place has an existential and metaphysical dimension. While Norbert Schulz accepts the place as it is and within it unearths the existential content forming the phenomenological image given in the description, Lynch believes that the perceptual image of the city should facilitate effective moving around, with emotions, memory, and individual sensations constituting its incidental aspects. The city's aesthetics, when reduced to their descriptive elements, are a unique way of communicating the city's spirit and genius loci. *“According to Pallasmaa, who is influenced by Bachelard, a human being is endowed with a collection of primal pictures (pre-images), which serve as a sort of transcendental umbilical cord that connects him or her to the cosmos as a whole and allow them to understand the reality around them”* (POPCZYK, 2016). The anthropological truth that humans are cognizant beings that live in and experience themselves and places via the use of images loaded with sensations, emotions, and meanings is taken into consideration by the aesthetics of the city focused on the image.

An excerpt from, “The aesthetics of the city-image” by Maria POPCZYK, Journal Article from Argument, 2016.

5.3 KEVIN LYNCH: THE IMAGE OF THE CITY

Kevin Andrew Lynch (January 7, 1918 – April 25, 1984) was an American urban planner and author. He is known for his work on the perceptual form of urban environments and was an early proponent of mental mapping (Andrade, 2005). Kevin Lynch's “The Image of the City” is a book that sets out to show how people in urban settings orient themselves by the use of “mental maps”. The Image of the City, one of Kevin Lynch's most significant theories on spatial cognition and behavioral geography, was published in 1960. Lynch devotes his effort to figuring out how people view and depict a city and where the idea of the city comes from in terms of exterior urban artifacts (Filomena, Verstegen, & Manley, 2019). The image formation includes two parties, “observer” and “environment”.

Lynch focuses on two characteristics of the built environment in particular: *imageability* and *legibility*. He defines imageability as "that quality in an object which gives it a high likelihood of conjuring a vivid image in" the observer." Legibility is defined as "the ease with which its elements may be recognized and can be organized into a cohesive pattern." In his research, he detailed three key characteristics of a place that inform its perceived

mental image. The three key characteristics of a place that inform its perceived mental image are:

- **Identity:** The quality that makes a place unique and memorable.
- **Structure:** The pattern of the environment that provides cues for how to navigate it.
- **Meaning:** The emotional associations that people make with a place.

Lynch's method involved asking people to draw maps of their cities and then analyzing them to identify common elements. He also conducted interviews with people about their perceptions of the city. Using three American cities as examples (Boston, Jersey City and Los Angeles), Lynch reported that users understood their surroundings in consistent and predictable ways, forming mental maps with five elements: paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks.

- **Paths:** the streets, sidewalks, trails, and other channels in which people travel.
- **Nodes:** focal points, intersections or loci.
- **Landmarks:** readily identifiable objects which serve as external reference points.
- **Edges:** perceived boundaries such as walls, buildings, and shorelines.
- **Districts:** relatively large sections of the city distinguished by some identity or character.



Figure 1: Kevin Lynch's 5 Components of Image of the City

He argues that these elements are used by people to create mental images of their cities. These five components that Lynch suggests are mainly controlled by government organizations who are at the forefront of city building. Cleanliness of the streets is also a function Lynch highlighted that can impact people's perception and use of the streets on a regular basis. These features give the city a character and identity that provides for pleasurable activities in a person's life. Lynch highlights that imageability and wayfinding within the cities are influenced not only through maps, but also our everyday perceptions of our streets and geographical boundaries.

21st-century concepts of placemaking and place design are highly based on Lynch's work and even participatory and co-design principles in Urban Planning have the basis in Lynch's work. GIS and creative map-making were also tools that were developed after Lynch's concepts of mental maps, design and how people perceive their environment. It is important to understand the ways in which people perceive their environments to gain a deeper understanding of constructing cities that impact humans navigate their cities on a daily basis.

In case of this research, instead of memory based experiment of physical objects, emphasis will be on the attachment based on the experience in living in the city. Overall idea is that, the image formation will not only identify the tangible but also intangible attachments in the city as these are important for city planners to consider when designing new urban developments. These identified objects/places will be analyzed in context of the city residents which then help to create a clear, distinct and unique image.

5.4 PLACE ATTACHMENT AND ASSOCIATION OF MEANING

Recent concepts in urban planning, emphasize the compassionate perspective of the city. The citizens and their experiences of feeling at home and at ease in the urban environment are the main emphasis of these concepts, as are the opportunities for leisure time in the city center. Place image is frequently described in literature as the combination of people's beliefs, ideas, and impressions of a location; it is a mental construction built on several impressions selected from the abundance of information available about a location (Stylidis, 2018). A common definition of place attachment is a feeling of attachment to a location or a group of people.

Place attachment has many sides, making it difficult to understand through a simple cause-and-effect dynamic. Instead, it depends on how behavior and interactions interact and influence one another. Organizational models have been rather rare until recently because of the wide range of different viewpoints on the definition and components of place attachment. The Tripartite Model, developed by Scannell and Gifford (2010), is a significant conceptual framework that defines the components of place attachment via the prism of the three Ps: Person, Process, and Place. A variety of terminology and models that try to clarify these deep linkages have emerged as a result of the development of the literature on sense of place, frequently acting as instruments for empirical study. The phrases "place attachment," "place meaning," "place identity," "settlement attachment," "place satisfaction," and "community sentiment," among others, stand out particularly among these terms. Place attachment is an integrative notion that encompasses attachment patterns that include affect, cognition, and action (Altman & Low, 1992). It applies to many different kinds of locations, varied in scale, specificity, and tangibility, involving a number of different actors, including people from different cultures and groups, and embracing a range of social connections.

5.4.1 Person

The Person dimension demonstrates that place attachment may occur at both the individual and communal levels, as witnessed within communities, in response to the question "Who is attached?" Depending on the identities of the persons or organizations involved, different implications emerge from this bond. When examined personally, locations frequently acquire meaning as a result of unique encounters, significant life moments, and

examples of personal growth. But in the context of communities, sites frequently take on a religious, historical, or cultural significance. Community actions have an impact on residents' feelings on an individual level in addition to the collective place connection they feel as a community (Shetty, 2022). Aspirations to preserve a place's ecological or architectural features, for example, have a direct effect on how strongly people feel a sense of place, particularly when it comes to developing self-pride and self-esteem. People often develop closer ties to areas they can identify with or are proud to be affiliated with.

5.4.2 Process

The answer to the question "How does the attachment exist?" comes from the Process dimension. Similar to most social psychology idea, this dimension is dependent on the interactions between emotional, cognitive, and behavioral factors (Altman & Low, 1992).

i. Affect

Positive emotions, like joy and love, are frequently the dominant feelings associated with the connection between people and places (Altman & Low, 1992). However, unfavorable feelings and experiences may also give places meaning. But it's important to remember that, in general, bad feelings don't go hand in hand with people's attachment to locations. This is due to the fact that place attachment mostly reflects people's wishes to reproduce fulfilling experiences and feelings.

ii. Cognition

The storage of information, memories, and meanings that people or groups identify with certain locations is referred to as cognition. These cognitive elements specifically capture the characteristics that provide certain places enough significance for the establishment of people-place connections (Altman & Low, 1992). Many terminology with roots in the idea of familiarity have been coined by academics, including "settlement identity" and "generic place dependence. (Shetty, 2022)"

iii. Behavior

Behavior is the outward manifestation of place attachment and can represent both the cognitive and emotional components of a person's connection to a place (Altman & Low, 1992). Similar to interpersonal attachments, sustaining proximity-focused actions have been observed to be prevalent among those with strong place attachments. The act of reconstructing one's immediate surroundings is known as "reconstruction of place," and it is a prominent action that results from place attachment (Altman & Low, 1992). Strangely, trips and even pilgrimages away from a location might strengthen a person's connection to that location. This is due to the fact that these experiences usually raise a greater appreciation for the places left behind by recalling the sentiments of nostalgia that frequently go along with connection and the memories connected to certain locations.

5.4.3 Place

The "What is attached?" issue is explored in depth by the Place dimension, which may be used in a number of geographical situations. Numerous scholars stress that a combination of physical and social factors play a role in developing place attachment (Shetty, 2022). The ability to promote connections between people and places exists in both natural and manmade contexts. There is a debate over whether place attachment results more from the interpersonal connections found inside a person's significant location or from the natural physical characteristics of the setting. Researchers found that while social influences had a bigger impact than physical ones, both components contributed to the total bond between a person and a location (Shetty, 2022). The tangible components most capable of evoking connection are the resources provided by these surroundings. Place dependency shows a decreased link with environmental pressures, which include the demands and stressors that an environment places on people on a physical, interpersonal, or social level. On the other hand, intangible elements of surroundings also contribute to the development of attachment. The characteristics and symbolic associations that a person associates with their self-perceptions have a significant role in determining the relationship between a person and a location (Altman & Low, 1992).

5.4.4 Place Meanings

In 1992, Altman and Low investigated into the subject of place meaning and proposed six (6) typologies of socio-cultural place attachment. They are:

1. Genealogical link through family
2. Link through loss of land or destruction of community
3. Economic link through ownership or politics
4. Cosmological link through spiritual or mythological significance
5. Link as pilgrimage or cultural site
6. Narrative link through storytelling and place naming

However, this perspective deviates from the individual experiences focusing instead on socially constructed meanings as the foundation of attachment. These typologies are helpful in providing insights, but they fall short in addressing the significance of amenities and usefulness, which may both foster strong attachments. Later, building on Low's meaning typologies, sociologist Cross (2015) offers a set of typologies for attachment processes. 'Process' and 'meaning' play a comparable causal function in this situation, where cognition results in affect (attachment). According to Cross (2015), the place meaning and attachment are manifested on individual and group based on following:

1. Sensory: The embodied and physical attachment.
2. Narrative: The imaginary and place identity attachment
3. Historical: The personal or family historical attachment

4. Spiritual: The deep sense of belonging attachment
5. Ideological: The moral or ethical commitment
6. Commodifying: The place is assessed as best able to meet individual's preferences
7. Material Dependence: The reliance on material features.

Compared to the meanings by Low, Cross takes an interactional approach to the topic, which is a component of sociological theory that analyzes place meanings as having been shaped by social interactions in the past and likely to occur again in the future. This change puts more emphasis on the importance of relationships and social ties than it does on the individual. Cross's propositions fit better to understand the place attachment meaning in the exercise like identifying the holistic image of the city, therefore are primarily used in the meaning assessment in the research methodology.

Studies in social and environmental psychology indicate that a person's perception of their physical surroundings and their relationships with it have a significant impact on their behavior, including whether or not they intend to move and whether or not they support or oppose development projects. Similar to this, place attachment has been researched in regard to locals' perspectives on tourism development (Draper, Woosnam, & Norman, 2011). Researches show that people who are more attached have a tendency to be less supportive of the growth of tourism. Studies in environmental psychology imply that the more positively a place is viewed, the stronger the levels of connection there are. This is in reference to the relationship between inhabitants' place image and their level of place attachment (Stylidis, 2018). The ability to navigate the city efficiently and the readability of its surroundings are not only guiding principles in the design of the city but also factors that influence how residents evaluate the realities of living there. It also determines the degree of enjoyment on the aesthetic, sensory, and cognitive levels (POPCZYK, 2016).

5.5 PLACEMAKING AND SENSE OF BELONGING

Understanding the relationship between people and their living spaces is crucial for addressing issues of identity and image. Place attachment and a sense of belonging are key factors in fostering community connections, active participation, and feelings of safety and identity. Comfort and a sense of security contribute to people's sense of belonging and attachment to a particular space or city. In heterogeneous cities, the social order evolves, leading to the need for new social policies and adaptive urban design. Placemaking, a collaborative process, enhances the shared value of public spaces by considering physical, cultural, and social identities (Project for Public Spaces, 2008). It encourages creativity in the use of everyday spaces and promotes the potential of various urban areas such as parks, waterfronts, plazas, neighborhoods, and public buildings.

Assigning meaning to a space creates a place, which can be based on personal experience or emotional attachment. Placemaking is the process of connecting people with a place. According to William Whyte, diversity in people using a place increases its value. Connections such as people, greenscape, bluescape, seating, and activities are essential for fostering attachment between people and the place (Project for Public Spaces, 2008). Placemaking gained momentum in the 1960s with the pioneering work of Jane Jacobs and William H. Whyte, who emphasized designing cities for people and creating inviting public spaces. Project for Public Spaces has further developed a comprehensive approach to Placemaking since 1975, incorporating the wisdom of these urban pioneers.

Placemaking is centered on observing, listening to, and asking questions of the people who live, work, and play in a particular space in order to understand their needs and aspirations for that space and for their community as a whole. With this knowledge, we can come together to create a common vision for that place. The vision can evolve quickly into an implementation strategy, beginning with small-scale "Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper" improvements that bring immediate benefits both to the spaces themselves and the people who use them. Unfortunately, the rigid planning processes of past decades have become so institutionalized that community stakeholders rarely have the chance to voice their own ideas and aspirations about the places they inhabit. Placemaking can break down these silos by showing planners, designers, and engineers the broad value of moving beyond the narrow focus of their own professions, disciplines, agendas. Even though cities ultimately fail or succeed at the scale of "place," this is the scale that is so often overlooked.

Key Principles of Placemaking

Placemaking involves understanding the needs and aspirations of people in a space and creating a shared vision. It emphasizes small-scale, immediate improvements and challenges traditional planning processes. By breaking down silos and considering the value of vibrant places, Placemaking highlights the importance of "place" in the success of cities. The Project for Public Spaces' placemaking approach can ignite community revitalization.

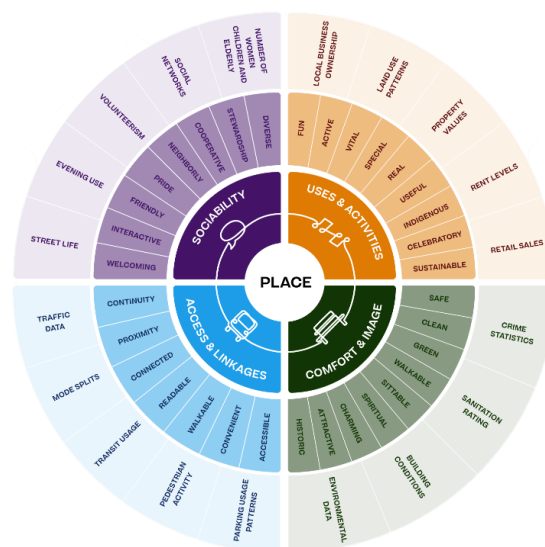


Figure 2: Place Diagram
Image source: (Project for Public Spaces, 2008)

The Principles of Placemaking provide guidance for integrating diverse opinions into a unified vision, translating it into a plan and program, and ensuring sustainable implementation. Community input and understanding the positive impact of great places on social networks and multiple stakeholders are crucial aspects of the process.

The Place Diagram is one of the tools Project for Public Spaces has developed to help communities evaluate places. The inner ring represents a place's key attributes, the middle ring its intangible qualities, and the outer ring its measurable data.

A great public space cannot be measured by its physical attributes alone; it must also serve people as a vital community resource in which function always trumps form. When people of all ages, abilities, and socio-economic backgrounds can not only access and enjoy a place, but also play a key role in its identity, creation, and maintenance, that is when we see genuine placemaking in action. Placemaking pays close attention to the myriad ways in which the physical, social, ecological, cultural, and even spiritual qualities of a place are intimately intertwined.

5.6 POWER OF 10+

Urban planners play the role of facilitators in placemaking, collaborating with the community to elicit ideas and wishes and so assisting in the development and reinforcement of urban resilience. One instrument stands out particularly among the many used in this complicated process: the Power of 10+. Project for Public Spaces developed a conceptual framework called "The Power of 10+" to evaluate and support placemaking efforts at various sizes within a city. It has significant sway since it is an effective tool for inciting fruitful discussions and identifying particular placemaking initiatives. The Power of 10+'s key message emphasizes the significant value of emphasizing the human experience while planning and designing a city's hotspots and neighborhoods. This concept's primary assumption is based on the notion that locations only genuinely flourish when they provide visitors a wide variety of reasons (preferably, 10 or more) to go to and interact with them. These factors cover a wide range of experiences, including the availability of comfortable seating, recreational areas, interactive art installations, live music performances, gastronomic treats to savor, chances to immerse oneself in history, and the opportunity to interact with other people. Ideally, some of these activities will be exclusive to the area and represent the distinctive personality and identity of the neighborhood. Local folks who utilize these areas the most become important sources of inspiration since they have insights into what applications would be most popular with their neighbors. Cities begin to see a noticeable shift in public opinion as soon as there are at least 10 such dynamic destinations or areas. Urban areas that are endowed with this diversity of experiences are better able to support resiliency and innovation, which improves their all-around allure and sustainability. The Power of 10+ essentially acts as a

catalyst for the development of urban settings, driving them toward more inclusion, vitality, and flexibility while also fostering a strong sense of place among individuals who call them home.

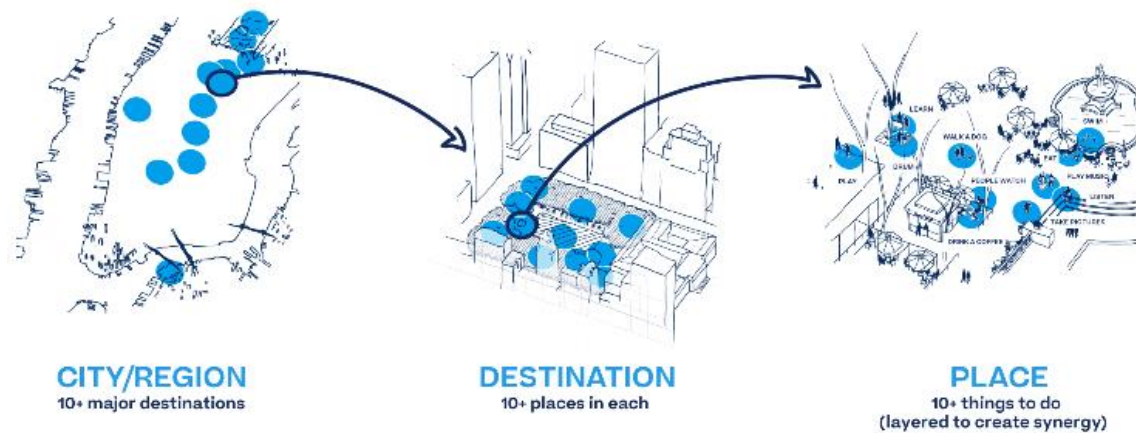


Figure 3: How cities transform through Placemaking
Image source: (Project for Public Spaces, 2008)

The Power of 10+ idea was developed by Project for Public Spaces (PPS) after careful consideration of the fundamental components that genuinely set extraordinary locations apart from the ordinary. This idea's core is based on the fundamental idea of providing a wide variety of activities in a single location, thus changing it into something more than the sum of its parts. Consider the concept of a park, for instance. Undoubtedly, a park by itself may be entertaining and advantageous to a neighborhood. The park becomes more than simply a green area, though, and that is when the real magic happens. Imagine it with a fun fountain, a well-planned playground for kids to run about in, and a popcorn seller selling a tasty treat. This park suddenly improves, going from nice to unquestionably better. By going one step further and adding a library just across the street, the whole experience would be much improved. With its variety of services and resources, the library transforms into a supplemental attraction. It improves the cultural and educational components of the entire neighborhood if it offers riveting storytelling sessions for children and fascinating exhibitions on local history. Imagine a bustling sidewalk café nearby, a bus station that makes it easy to go to other areas of the city, a beautiful bike path that encourages bikers to explore, and an attractive ice cream shop that offers delectable frozen treats. You have what most people would without a doubt deem to be a fantastic location in this case. The Power of 10+ emphasizes the concept that a place's life and richness are influenced by its many opportunities for experiences as well as its physical characteristics. It flourishes when it gives people a wide range of compelling reasons to stop by, connect with it, and keep coming back. This open-minded strategy for placemaking captures the spirit of making places that have a profound impact on the

neighborhood, encouraging relationships, and cultivating a feeling of belonging in the center of the city.

In fact, the Power of 10+ idea envisions a spilling impact that benefits whole communities, cities, and regions, extending its influence well beyond the boundaries of specific locations. A neighborhood reaches what can be called a critical mass of energy and interest when it can claim not just one exceptional location but a network of many. Residents and visitors alike deeply integrate into the city's life and culture in such a setting, resulting in a vibrant and active urban experience. Imagine the possibilities once a city can proudly boast ten such exceptional neighborhoods. In this case, every homeowner has the benefit of being able to use first-rate public places that are only a leisurely walk from their residences. The whole metropolitan environment will be transformed into a collage of connected neighborhoods, each with its own distinct character and attraction, thanks to this equal distribution of unique locations. The main objective of creating a wonderful city is to provide a variety of activities that appeal to the many needs and interests of its residents rather than just having one dominating usage in one particular area. It's about realizing that a vibrant community isn't built from a single good location in a neighborhood, but rather from the synergy produced by several excellent locations working together.

Additionally, this idea goes beyond just one outstanding area in a metropolis to encompass the entire metropolitan environment. Close-to-home options for enjoyment and involvement must be weaved throughout the city, available to citizens from all corners, in order to properly develop a dynamic and inclusive public life. When you zoom out to a regional view, it's clear that striving for greatness goes beyond city bounds. A variety of intriguing and lively villages is necessary to build a flourishing and linked area. Each neighborhood adds its distinct personality and assets, weaving a more varied and appealing landscape. The Power of 10+ is essentially a blueprint for designing amazing urban experiences at every size, from the tiniest neighborhood to the largest region, with the ultimate goal of promoting resilient, creative, and livable cities and towns. It's not simply a formula for making individual excellent locations, though.

5.7 PUBLIC SPACE AND SOCIAL INTERACTIONS

People gather in public places for a variety of purposes that are influenced by their needs. Certain need, like shopping, have a basic status and depend on how well the area works. Others, however, depend on the environment's quality. Whether these conditions are met or not depends on the availability of certain facilities and the overall spatial capacity (Gehl, 2013). The cultural factors also define public life and dictate people's participation in those venues. Distinct socioeconomic classes often engage in distinct social interactions in public spaces. The following components must generally be included in order to create an

effective public place that may host various organizations and people; security, proper facilities, environmental excitement and opportunity for social interactions (Hatefishojae, Islami, & Rezaei, 2021).

In outdoor spaces, physical characteristics become essential design components with a purposeful focus on encouraging social interaction. These characteristics have the power to entice people to stay outside and converse. Public places are used more frequently when interesting objects or features, such as strategically placed seating arrangements and artificial water features, are present (Hatefishojae, Islami, & Rezaei, 2021). The addition of green areas to residential neighborhoods expands people's options for social interaction and strengthens their sense of community (Chun, 2006). Traditional urban areas' unique characteristics have always encouraged social interactions. The facilitation of numerous activities, events, and the creation of collective memories inside traditional communities has been greatly aided by these neighborhood features (Hatefishojae, Islami, & Rezaei, 2021). Direct, face-to-face contacts take place in places like mosques, marketplaces, parks, walkways, and other places of a similar kind. Considering a neighborhood's physical characteristics as a way to organize social ties can promote the building of social capital. A neighborhood's boundaries operate as a restraint on its people. The neighborhood's primary public space has a second-largest impact (Ardeshiri, Hajipoor, & Hakimi, 2013).

Social contact and community formation require public areas. They offer a venue for individuals to interact, exchange ideas, and take part in activities that support social cohesion. Parks, plazas, streets, and other open areas that are accessible to all count as public spaces. They are crucial because they enable individuals to interact, form bonds with one another, and establish a feeling of community. New friendships, information and idea sharing, and the development of new possibilities can all result from social encounters in public areas. Additionally essential to fostering physical exercise and good living are public areas.

5.8 PLACE AND PLACELESSNESS

Yi-Fu Tuan's book *Place to Placelessness* delves into the concept of place and its significance in human experiences and perceptions of the environment. Yi-Fu Tuan explores the idea that places have more to them than simply their outward appearance; they also have intangible features that influence our relationship with them. He looks at how people interpret their surroundings, how culture and personal experiences affect our affinity to certain places, and how place affects how we see ourselves. The book covers a wide range of topics related to place, such as the sensory and emotional impressions we have of various environments, the function of memory and imagination in shaping our perception of places, and the effects of modernization and globalization on the disappearance of distinctive features of particular places.

The uniformity of settings and the loss of distinguishing characteristics, which undermine our sense of place and attachment, are further topics Yi-Fu Tuan investigates. He looks at the difficulties brought on by placelessness as well as the need of protecting and developing meaningful places. It provides perceptive insights about the value of place in our lives and the intangible elements that affect how we comprehend, attach to, and develop our identities in various surroundings. It continues to be an important contribution to the study of human geography and serves as a starting point for further research on place-related ideas.

Placelessness has the ability to diminish a city's distinguishing identity and character, resulting in the loss of such attributes. Lack of distinguishing characteristics, cultural legacy, and historical importance can make it difficult for locals and tourists to have a true connection to or sense of belonging to the city. Cities that have a strong sense of identity and connection frequently encourage interpersonal relationships and promote communal cohesiveness. Placelessness, on the other hand, may lead to social isolation and a diminished sense of community because people may feel cut off from their surroundings, which limits possibilities for shared experiences. Placelessness can cause feelings of confusion, alienation, and separation. Generic and homogeneous surroundings can be bad for people's wellbeing, mental health, and general quality of life.

Placelessness frequently occurs in conjunction with the spread of uniform constructed environments marked by sprawl, a dearth of green space, and a disproportionate reliance on vehicles. This may have detrimental effects on the environment, such as higher energy use, higher carbon emissions, and lower ecological sustainability. A purposeful focus on creating meaningful, distinctive, and locally anchored venues is necessary to address placelessness. Cities may lessen the negative consequences of placelessness by fostering a sense of identity, encouraging community engagement, protecting cultural heritage, and incorporating sustainable design principles, eventually improving the overall livability and vitality of their urban environments. By addressing placelessness as soon as possible, cities can proactively work towards creating meaningful, inclusive, and sustainable urban environments that foster a strong sense of place and improve the overall well-being of their residents.

5.9 RESIDENTS' PERCEPTION

The study of the residents' perceived image of the city can provide valuable insights into how they emotionally, socially, and culturally connect with their urban environment. By exploring their perceptions, attitudes, and associations with different elements of the city, we can gain a deeper understanding of how residents construct their mental maps and how those perceptions influence their interactions and behaviors within the urban space. The

focus on residents' perceptions can shed light on their lived experiences, emotional attachments, and social connections within the city.

Rashid Bin Embi & Zainol (2014) suggest how residents' perceptions influence urban development and planning decisions. They discuss the need to incorporate local knowledge and perspectives to create sustainable and livable urban environments. The consideration of residents' perceptions helps urban planners and designers to create cities that are more livable and responsive to the needs and aspirations of the people who live there. The understanding of how residents experience and perceive different aspects of the city, such as public spaces, transportation systems, or architectural design, urban planners can make informed decisions regarding the layout, aesthetics, and functionality of urban environments. This can lead to more user-centered design approaches that enhance residents' satisfaction and well-being. (Rashid Bin Embi & Zainol, 2014) (Ansari, 2021) (Shen, Yang, Bao c, Xiaoy, & He, 2023)

Individuals' subjective assessments of their physical environment often yield insights that statistical and economic models are unable to fully account for. Due to their distinct perspectives and lived experiences, urban residents, who are the main participants in urban activities, contribute greatly to and are in turn influenced by urban development, resulting in a complex interplay (Shen, Yang, Bao c, Xiaoy, & He, 2023). Planning and redevelopment attempts for neighborhoods might be influenced by locals' perspectives. Urban planners can pinpoint areas that need upgrading, such as infrastructure, facilities, or community services, by learning how individuals view their neighborhoods. With the help of this data, targeted interventions and revitalization initiatives can be used to allay people' worries, improve neighborhood livability, and promote community growth. Residents' views play a role in their emotional ties to their city and feeling of place attachment. It might be beneficial to citizens' sense of community and belonging to know how they view and value certain features of the urban environment.

It is possible to have a better knowledge of how various social groups feel and move throughout the city by looking at inhabitants' perceptions. Promoting social equality and inclusive planning techniques heavily relies on residents' perspectives. It aids in the detection of potential differences, obstacles, or discrepancies in the accessibility of resources, services, and opportunities. This information can help guide initiatives to design inclusive and equitable urban landscapes. Participatory planning techniques that take into account locals' opinions encourage citizen involvement, empowerment, and ownership over how their city will evolve in the future. It guarantees that local expertise and collective wisdom of locals are considered when making planning choices.

Ansari (2021) suggest that civic participation is essential for achieving socially just urbanization. It offers the potential for an effective break from the conventional state-

market dynamics that now support versions of neoliberal urbanism in developing nations, if properly exploited. In order to build a sustainable built environment that meets people's needs, their article argues for mainstreaming citizen participation in urban development. Residents' perceptions are a crucial factor in determining how well urban planning programs function. By regularly assessing residents' satisfaction, perception of changes over time, and the effectiveness of implemented strategies, urban planners can monitor progress and make data-driven adjustments to their plans. This iterative approach allows for continuous improvement and accountability in urban planning practices.

5.10 INDICATORS AND VARIABLES FOR RESIDENTS' PERCEIVED IMAGE

The major five dimensions associated with the image of the city has already been proposed by Kevin Lynch in his book. As this research strive for a holistic understanding of the image incorporating the intangible dimensions are mandatory. The five dimensions of image are Pathway, Landmark, District, Node and Edge." Yi-Fu Tuan discusses various intangible dimensions related to the concept of place:

- **Meaning and Symbolism:** Tuan emphasizes that places hold symbolic meanings beyond their physical attributes. He explores how people attach cultural, historical, and personal significance to places, which influences their perception and attachment.
- **Experience and Emotion:** The book delves into the experiential aspects of place, focusing on how sensory experiences, emotions, and personal memories shape our connection to specific locations. Tuan examines how our encounters with places create a sense of belonging, attachment, or detachment.
- **Identity and Self-Reflection:** Tuan explores the role of place in shaping individual and collective identities. He discusses how places contribute to the construction of personal narratives, self-identity, and a sense of rootedness or displacement.
- **Social Interaction and Relationships:** The book highlights the importance of social interactions in the formation of place. Tuan discusses how relationships with others, such as family, friends, or community members, contribute to the sense of place and create a shared sense of belonging.
- **Spatial Order and Patterns:** Tuan examines the significance of spatial organization and patterns in creating meaningful places. He explores how the arrangement of physical elements, such as buildings, streets, and landscapes, influences our perception, movement, and use of space.
- **Placelessness and Loss of Identity:** Tuan addresses the concept of placelessness, which refers to environments lacking distinctive characteristics or a sense of place. He discusses the challenges posed by placelessness, such as the loss of identity, detachment, and the erosion of meaningful connections to the built environment.

These intangible dimensions highlight the complex and multifaceted nature of place, beyond its physical attributes. They emphasize the role of human experiences, meanings, and emotions in shaping our understanding and attachment to specific locations. To incorporate intangible dimensions into the research, different articles suggest various aspects, including the prominent by Tuan. Among them, shortlisting for this research, researcher selected following dimensions:

- Cultural Identity: To explore how the city's cultural heritage, traditions, and symbolism shape residents' perceptions. How do cultural events, festivals, and historical narratives contribute to their image of the city?
- Social Interaction: To investigate how social interactions, community engagement, and the sense of belonging influence residents' perceptions. Do people feel a strong connection to certain neighborhoods due to the social networks they've built?
- Emotional Attachments: To study residents' emotional connections to different areas of the city. How do memories, personal experiences, and significant life events contribute to their image of the city?
- Perceived Safety and Security: To examine how perceptions of safety and security impact how residents view various parts of the city. Are there areas that are perceived as unsafe or areas where residents feel a strong sense of security?
- Environmental Sustainability: To explore how a city's efforts toward sustainability, green spaces, and environmental consciousness shape residents' perceptions. Do residents value and identify with eco-friendly initiatives?
- Economic Factors: To consider how economic disparities and opportunities influence residents' views of different parts of the city. Are there areas that are associated with affluence or economic struggle?

With all these dimensions selected, researcher then prepared a framework with major four (4) categories that assists in data collection and findings, followed by dimensions previously mentioned. The dimensions include both the tangible factors and intangible factors to get a holistic image of the city.

A. Physical Environment:

The physical environment category include following dimensions:

- Landmarks: Identify significant landmarks or iconic structures that hold cultural or historical importance in the city. Examples may include famous buildings, monuments, or natural features.
- Paths and Connectivity: how residents perceive different transportation routes, walkability, and connectivity between various areas of the city.

- **Public Spaces:** the usage and perception of parks, plazas, squares, and other public spaces. Consider factors such as accessibility, design, and social activities within these spaces.

Questions Associated: See Annex 1.

B. Social and Cultural Factors:

The Social and Cultural category include following dimensions:

- **Neighborhoods and Districts:** Residents' attachment to specific neighborhoods or districts within the city. Analyze the distinct cultural, social, or economic characteristics of these areas and their impact on residents' perceptions.
- **Community Identity:** how residents' sense of community and belonging influence their image of the city. This can include factors such as shared values, traditions, or social interactions within the community.
- **Diversity and Inclusivity:** how residents perceive and value the diversity and inclusivity of the city, including aspects such as multiculturalism, tolerance, and social integration.

Questions Associated: See Annex 1.

C. Emotional and Experiential Factors:

- **Affective Attachments:** the emotional connections residents have with specific places, objects, or experiences within the city. This can include sentimental or nostalgic associations.
- **Events and Festivals:** residents' experiences and perceptions of events and festivals held in the city. How these events contribute to their overall image of the city.
- **Sense of Safety:** residents' perceptions of safety within the city and how it influences their experiences and image. This can include aspects such as personal security, crime rates, and public safety measures.

Questions Associated: See Annex 1.

D. Socioeconomic and Practical Factors:

- **Amenities and Services:** the availability and quality of amenities and services, such as healthcare facilities, educational institutions, shopping centers, and public infrastructure. How these factors shape residents' perceptions and choices.
- **Housing and Affordability:** residents' experiences and opinions regarding housing options, affordability, and quality of living conditions within the city.
- **Employment and Economic Opportunities:** residents' perceptions of employment opportunities, economic development, and the overall economic vibrancy of the city.

Questions Associated: See Annex 1.

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

6.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The research on Sense of place and place attachment reveals common identity and priorities of people in the city. It deals with sense of place. It is multidisciplinary that incorporates urban planning, sociology, urban design, geography, anthropology and more. Thus, makes it different from scientific research. The research seeks to reveal the realities that are most probably true underlying these events. The study of sense of place and place attachment produces probabilistic idea of truth associated with the phenomenon, thus, falls under the social science research. The **ontological position** of the research is that the people form a unique mental image of the city and peoples' perspectives also triggers the image in return. In order to form a unique city image and achieve citizens' satisfaction in livability, identification of the image of the city through residents' perspective is required for which cities should recognize the places that residents have attached value in the city. The **epistemological position** of the research is that in order to reveal the image, the study requires understanding people's place value through qualitative interpretation of their experience in living in the city. To recognize the places that residents attach value, a research of this kind which examines the sense of place and place attachment in the city needs to be conducted. The study of place attachment and sense of place inquiries about the social construct that are context dependent and are relative in nature. This research tends to understand the people-place relationship in the city that gives the city its identity from the perspective of the local people themselves. These place values are translated into the city planning policy which are then converted into the physical reality. The understanding of the realities are possible through only qualitative interpretation which is subjective in nature. Therefore, this research tends to fit best under the **interpretivist /constructivist paradigm**.

6.2 METHODOLOGY

With the above mentioned context, this research tends to understand the people-place relationship in the city that gives the city its identity from the perspective of the local people themselves. One way to do this is through community engagement. By involving the community in the research process, the final product will reflect the needs and desires of the people who live there. This requires a qualitative research method, completely subjective in nature. Mainly two methodologies will be used: **Literature review** and **Case Study**. The Literature review uses the deductive logic system that help to deduce the findings from multiple other similar researches. Secondary data from the documents from publications, online/offline will be used for literature review.

On the other hand, case study will produce case specific (residents) observed facts and the data collected from case study will form of logical inference that seeks the simplest and most likely conclusion from a set of observations. Thus, is analyzed through abductive reasoning system. The abductive logic system is used in research under interpretivist paradigm to produce scientific accounts of social life by drawing on the concepts and meanings used by social actors and the activities in which they engage (Uprety, 2022).

6.3 SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

The background of the research emphasizes the placelessness of the modern cities. Unlike historic cities, they do not have a long term heritage, traditional or cultural pre-image. With city growth being guided by economical aspects and migratory population, the modern cities in Terai Regions do not particularly have an image. Moreover, the cities look very similar regardless of its regional position in the country. For the academic exercise, the criteria mentioned below will be ease off the exercise due to time and budgetary constraints. The criteria for selection includes:

- Having modern development and maximum population migration from outside of the city.
- City does not stand out in terms of heritage/historic significance.
- Preferably having smaller area with few multi-nuclei pattern.
- Having increasing population and growth rate.
- Having potential development prospects and assisting in the National Growth.

With above mentioned criteria, the city selected for the research is Bhairahawa.

6.4 METHODS

For case study, mainly two methods of data collection will be used:

a. Verbal Methods

Verbal method produces data in the form of texts and following two methods are used,

- i. Questionnaire: Here, the traditional written responses from the respondents is substituted for direct interviews. In direct interviews, researcher elicit the places of attachment to the respondents using a set of questions See Annex 1. The questionnaire follows after the explanation about the whole exercise and educating about the concept of image. This verbal method assists in achieving the first objective of the research, i.e., identifying the places/objects of attachment to the residents in the city.

b. Visual Methods

The verbal method is very common in researches in Nepal, however, the visual method is absolutely unique. Although the method is practiced since couple of decades in

international cases, it was not tested yet in Nepal, therefore required a pre-testing before going to the final survey and data collection. One of the Visual method was Go-Along and another was Resident-Employed Photography (REP).

i. Go-Along:

It is a qualitative method approach to understanding of the people-place relationship (Adams & Larkham, 2016). This kind of data is useful for context-sensitive research as in this research's case. However, after pre-testing, the respondents did not comply with the method. This method would assist in fulfilling the second objective, i.e., to study the underlying meaning attached to the places and its process of formation.

ii. Resident-Employed Photography:

A unique method that utilizes participants who would take the pictures themselves. With the assumption that most people today uses smart phones equipped with computational photography are capable to capture the essence of their desire. The pictures of same space will be taken by the researcher in case the participant narration and image will form discrepancy. This is done to ensure that the intention of the method is to focus on the subject (image/experience) than the skill of photography. The method uses participants' photograph and experience keeping them at foreground as experts suggesting the relocation of research power from outsider to the residents themselves. In study for the sustainable Forest Management Network, they used REP, citing its proven effectiveness in "capturing and communicating socio-cultural and biophysical elements of a place (Korpa & Sustainable Forest Network, 2006). Van Auken conclude that REP (or as they call is, PDPE) "holds outstanding promise, not only for social science research but also for application in land-use planning, visioning and other attempts to achieve sustainable community development (Van Auken, Frisvoll, & Stewart, 2010). This method would assist in fulfilling the second objective, i.e., to study the underlying meaning attached to the places and its process of formation.

However, after pre-testing, the respondents did not comply with the visual method and researcher had to perform the same process. Here, researcher performed the activity through the lens of the respondents to ensure the unbiased data collection. In a variation on the **Go-Along**, researcher used the self-reconnaissance, walkthrough through the object/places identified by the respondents and observe how the place attachments are formed. In a variation of **Resident-Employed Photography**, researcher took photography of the objects/places identified by the respondents and observe how the place attachments are formed. The purpose of this method is to develop ideas and elicit knowledge.

7. SITE CONTEXT

7.1 OVERVIEW

Siddharthanagar is a municipality lying in the Lumbini Province and is the administrative headquarter of Rupandehi District on the Outer Terai plains of Nepal, 265 km (165 mi) west of Kathmandu. It is the closest city to Lumbini, the birthplace of Gautama Buddha, which is located 22 km (14 mi) to the west. Among five major entry points of Nepal – India Border, Siddharthanagar Municipality is the one, located at the southern part of Rupandehi District of Nepal as an important commercial and industrial city.



Figure 4: Lumbini Gate from Buddha Chowk of Bhairahawa

Image source: Adobe Stock

The city is among the major industrial power house in the country impacting major economic aspects of Nepal. It has the second largest rate of border trade with India after Birgunj border in the country. Bhairahawa is under the administration of Siddharthanagar Nagarpalika (municipality) so often known as Siddharthanagar. Area of Siddharthanagar Municipality is 36.03 Sq. Km and has 13 ward in total. It is surrounded by Rohini & Omsatiya in the East, Mayadevi in the West, Mayadevi & Omsatiya in the North and Sunauli of India in South.

7.2 DEMOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

The population census of Nepal 2021 has been recently published. The new population of Nepal according to the census 2021 is 29.164 million. It is the first census report after the federalism in country, therefore, data contains information regarding the seven provinces and 753 local units as well. It can be used by the federal, state, and local governments to access important information. The average annual growth rate is 0.92%, a decrease from the data reported in the last census reports. In 2011 the population growth rate was 1.35%, which was also a decline from previous census of 2001 which was 2.3%. The decline in the population growth rate is the lowest in 80 years and is the result of several factors including decreasing fertility rate, increasing migration, public health, and urbanization (Central Bureau of Statistics, National Population and Housing Census 2078, Preliminary Report, 2022).

Table 1: Population Census of Nepal and Siddharthanagar

Census	Population 2011	Population 2021
Nepal	26,494,504	29,164,578
Siddharthanagar Municipality	63,483	74,436

According to the 2021 census, the city of Siddharthanagar Municipality has 74,436 inhabitants and is thriving. The detailed table below provides a wealth of critical information, including the ratio of men to women in the population, population density, and the number of homes. There are 37,187 females and 37,249 men in this demographic makeup, which reflects a favorable gender balance in the city. These people live in one of 15,871 households, each of which contributes to the social fabric of the city.

This data reveals an interesting pattern that points to a consistent population increase throughout time. Given that Rupandehi stands out as a magnet for immigrants from mountainous areas, this occurrence is very relevant. The census results support this increase in migration, establishing Rupandehi and, therefore, Siddharthanagar as top travel destinations for those looking for new experiences and possibilities. Along with the Tilottama Municipality and the Butwal Sub-Metro, Siddharthanagar has become a major urban draw. These three attractions together draw a sizeable section of the local population, which promotes the area's general dynamism and growth. The infusion of people from various origins broadens Siddharthanagar's cultural spectrum, creating a lively and diversified metropolitan environment.

Table 2: Male Female Population distribution of Siddharthanagar

Particulars	2011	2021
Male	31,673	37,249
Female	31,810	37,187
Sex-Ratio	99.57	100.17
Density	~1,761	~2,066
Households	12,497	15,871

Five major castes are represented in the city, including the Brahmin, Muslim, Chhetri, Magar, and Yadav. A variety of religious groups, notably Hindus, Muslims, Kirat believers, Buddhists, and others, coexist with these castes. This diverse population, as seen in Table 3 (NSO, 2023), is an excellent example of the city's complex demographic makeup. Table 3 provides information on their distribution by delving into the characteristics of this merged population. It demonstrates that the Brahman (Hill) caste has the majority shareholding, demonstrating their dominating position. Surprisingly, there is little any difference between the Muslim community and the Brahmins. The Kshetri, Magar, and other castes come after that, each adding to the city's tapestry of variety. The cohabitation and interaction of these many groups are highlighted by this multicultural array, which is symbolic of the city's identity. This historical and culturally rich social synthesis has contributed to the city's reputation as a peaceful and welcoming metropolitan setting.

Table 3: Population distribution based on Ethnicity

Categories	% of population
Brahman - Hill	13.7
Musalman	13.2
Kshetri	8.3
Magar	7
Yadav	5.7
Gurung	4
Brahman - Terai	3.8
Chamar/Harijan/Ram	3.2
Teli	3.2
Newa: (Newar)	3.2

7.3 HISTORY OF BHAIRAHAWA

Nomenclature

The region of Rupandehi, situated in Province No. 5 of Nepal, holds a significant historical, cultural, and religious importance due to being the birthplace of Siddhartha Gautam Buddha. This remarkable city, known as Siddhartha Nagar, derives its name from the illustrious figure Siddhartha Gautam Buddha. The origins of this city, steeped in antiquity, can be traced back to 2024 B.S. It's noteworthy that among Nepal's old urban centers, Siddharthanagar occupies a distinctive and eminent position. A pivotal transition in the nomenclature of the city occurred in the year 2047 B.S. when it was re-designated as Bhairahawa Municipality. However, as the 21st century unfolded, a respectful step was taken, leading to the recalling of the city as Siddharthanagar, after the people's movement for multiparty democracy, which it has kept ever since. This name change was a deliberate to pay respect to the historical significance embedded within the city's fabric. Over the years, the city of Siddharthanagar has evolved as a testament to the enduring legacy of Siddhartha Gautam Buddha. Its transformation from old times to the modern era encapsulates a narrative that interlinks history, culture, and spirituality. This city stands as a living witness to the profound impact of Siddhartha Gautam Buddha's birth, showcasing how historical heritage can continue to shape and enrich the present.

Highway

The Siddhartha Highway, previously known as H10 (now renamed NH 047) and known as in Nepali, is a well-known and important road in Nepal. By acting as a link between the lush Terai area in the south and the spectacular mountainous expanse in the north, this roadway is crucial in bringing together the country's many geographical regions. The origin of this major thoroughfare is at Siddharthanagar, which serves as its beginning point. Its destination is the charming city of Pokhara. This road crosses across the east-west Mahendra Highway as it travels along its course, forming a junction of paths at Butwal where stories of many routes merge and represent the intricate connection of Nepal's road network, covering a distance of 181 kilometers. It is noteworthy that the Siddhartha Highway, one of Nepal's top five busiest thoroughfares, holds a prominent place in the country's infrastructure. Its fundamental role as a route for the transit of necessary goods, notably food and agricultural products, highlights its vitality. This artery represents the function of a lifeline that connects areas, livelihoods, and ambitions. It preserves the flow of nourishment while nurturing the communities it passes through.

The enormous project of building the Siddhartha Highway started its revolutionary journey in 1964, a monument to the will of a country yearning for improved connection. This enormous task was finally completed in 1971 as a consequence of tireless work and

unflinching commitment. The grand opening of this roadway took place on May 9th, 1972 CE, and is remembered as an important event in Nepal's history. King Birendra visited the city of Pokhara on this momentous day to give the highway an auspicious opening. The day, 25th Baisakh 2029 BS, rang with the zeal of success and the hope of a linked future.

This road passes through a number of noteworthy towns along the route, which are the lifeblood of the area. These include Siddharthanagar, which shares the name of the highway, Butwal, a busy city, Tansen, a historic settlement, Waling, a rural oasis, Putalibazar, a growing community, Syangja, a region renowned for its cultural diversity, and Pokhara, the picturesque destination that serves as the trip's culmination. Similar to how Siddhartha Gautam set out on his quest for enlightenment, this route also illuminates the road toward better connectedness and invites people to travel between the Terai and the highlands' varied landscapes. The highway reflects the principles of its namesake in this intersection of history and infrastructure, standing for the unification of many communities and landscapes under the overarching banner of progress.

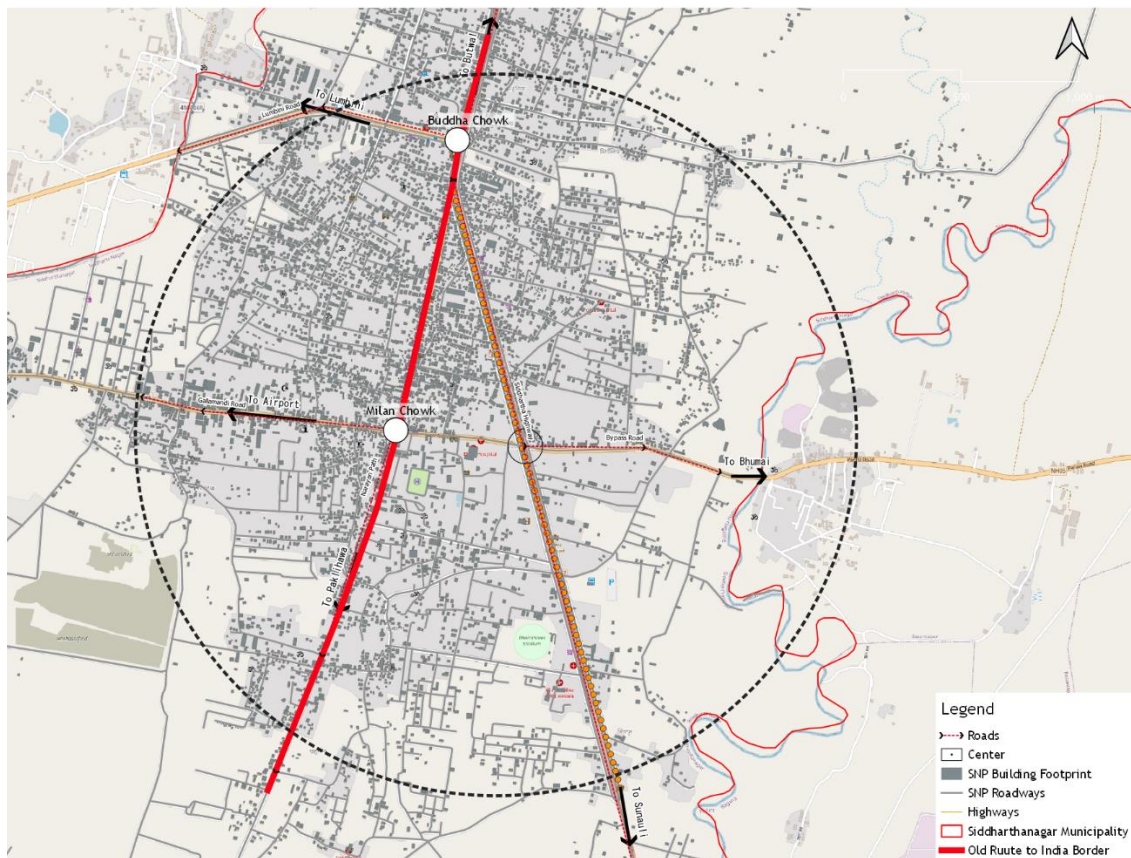


Figure 5: Map Showing Old Route and New Highway

Old settlements

Siddharthanagar, which carries the weight of its function as a prominent customs junction, sits as a central center at a vital border crossing point. The Narayanpath route started from

the city's northern extent in the early days, when connection followed a different route. At that time, Milan Chowk ruled as the principal intersection that coordinated traffic patterns throughout the city. It was a busy intersection that provided access to the southern border as well as a route to the west, pointing travelers in the direction of important locations like Lumbini.

This city has long been more than just a gathering place for roadways, immersed as it is inside its historical growth. A monument to the diversified population, Siddharthanagar fostered a settlement of Gurung and Magar villages along the path to its former customs crossing with India. Local legend claims that a deliberate decision was made to reinforce the border via this community. The purpose of this strategy was to protect the integrity of the country's boundaries. But eventually, the trend of development required a change in the highway's route. This new path, which is now part of the city's environment, cut through the center of it, creating a new narrative of connectedness.

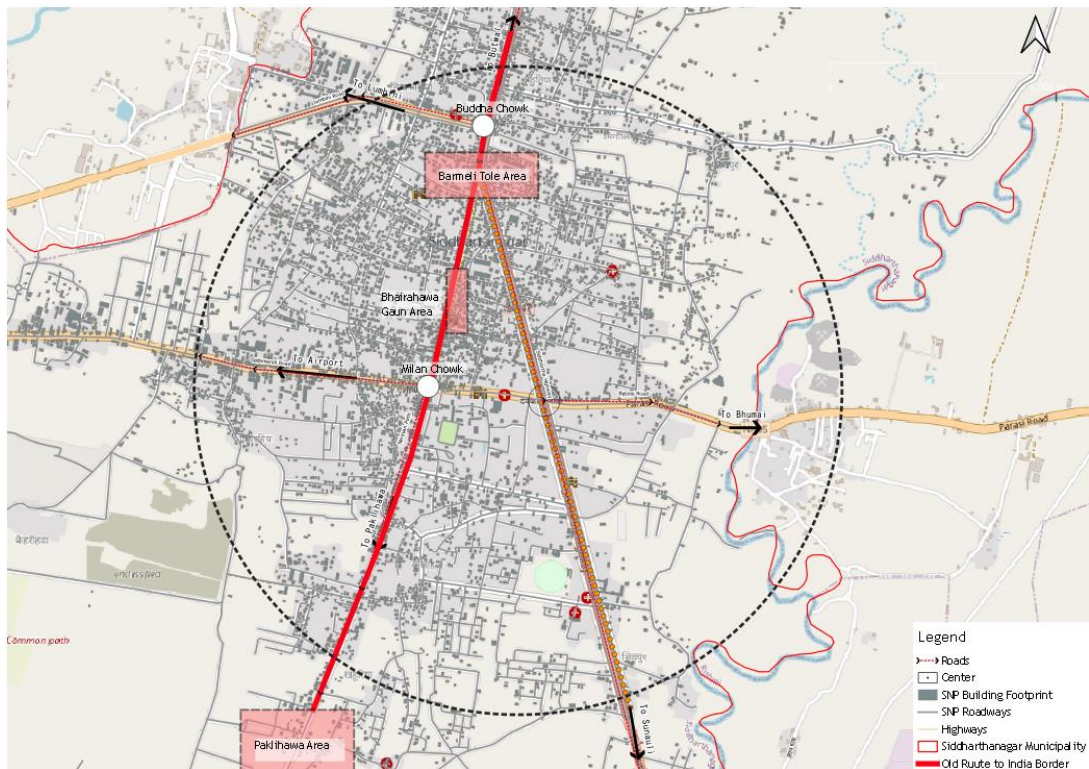


Figure 6: Map of Bhairahawa with old settlements

This redesigned roadway created new features that became hallmarks of the modern era as it traced its north-south path through the city. The city's urban topography changed as prominent crossroads like Buddha Chowk and Devkota Chowk gained shape. These junctions, which are now more than simply gathering places, are emblematic of Siddharthanagar's development as a border city into a hub of development, culture, and connectivity.

7.4 INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The municipality has assumed the burden of accountability for school-level education, demonstrating its dedication to promoting knowledge and enlightenment. This involves managing a variety of educational aspects, from the official curriculum to more specialized fields. Preschool facilities that establish the groundwork for young minds and mold them for their future educational path are something the city is proud to provide. To further demonstrate its recognition that education is a lifelong pursuit that transcends age limits, the municipality has invested in adult literacy initiatives. The municipality has assumed the burden of accountability for school-level education, demonstrating its dedication to promoting knowledge and enlightenment. This involves managing a variety of educational aspects, from the official curriculum to more specialized fields. Preschool facilities that establish the groundwork for young minds and mold them for their future educational path are something the city is proud to provide. To further demonstrate its recognition that education is a lifelong pursuit that transcends age limits, the municipality has invested in adult literacy initiatives. In particular, the Universal College of Medical Sciences and Teaching Hospital stands out among these organizations as an excellent example of medical education and healthcare delivery.

Table 4: Educational Institutes in Siddharthanagar Municipality

	Private	Government	Total
Pre-Primary	5	6	11
Primary School	2	3	5
Secondary	16	6	22
Higher Secondary	4	2	6
College	6	4	10
Deemed University	-	-	-
Library	1	-	1
Special Education (Blind/Deaf)	-	1	1
Technical School CTEVT	-	-	-
Madarsa	--	10	10
Total			66

Data Source: IUDP Siddharthanagar Municipality, 2021; update with field survey

The administration of a varied educational network by Siddharthanagar Municipality reflects this dedication. It is in charge of 42 institutes, 13 regional schools, 17 community schools, and one Sanskrit school. The results of these efforts are clearly seen in Siddharthanagar literacy rates, which are higher than the country as a whole (59.63%). The city's outstanding 86.1% overall literacy rate stands as a symbol of its commitment to fostering intellectual aptitude. If you look closer, this proportion reveals subtleties that

draw attention to gender differences. The literacy rate for men is staggering at 92.5%, while the rate for women is at 79.8%. This contrast highlights the need for further progress toward gender parity in education, as the development of the city continues to be a story of inclusiveness and empowerment.

Siddharthanagar Municipality has created a network of five primary healthcare facilities, which are strategically positioned throughout wards 1, 3, 9, 10, and 11. This is in keeping with its dedication to health and wellbeing. This strategic positioning guarantees that people of the city have easy access to vital medical services, facilitating quick access to treatment and creating a culture of wellbeing. With famous hospitals that care for its citizens' health, Siddharthanagar has a strong and modern healthcare system. Among these, Bhim Hospital, a District Government Hospital that serves as a beacon of medical excellence, stands out. The Universal College of Medical Science Hospital has also made a reputation for itself in the history of medical treatment, demonstrating the city's dedication to holistic well-being.

Table 5: Health Facilities in Siddharthanagar Municipality

Health Facilities	Number
Government	
Hospital	1
Urban Health Center	2
EPI Clinic	10
Basic Health Service Center	3
Birthing Center	1
Private	
Hospital and Nursing Home	1
Polyclinic	4
Medical/Drug Shop	22
Others	
Microscopy Center	2
ART Center	1
HTC Center	1
TB Treatment Center	4
Eye Hospital	4
Total	56
Public Hospital Beds	50
Private Hospital Beds	800

Data Source: Siddharthanagar Municipality, 2023

Siddharthanagar takes pride in having a modern airport that has been given the name Gautam Buddha International Airport. This renovated facility has evolved into a crucial lifeline, providing significant connection with frequent flights to Kathmandu, the nation's capital, as well as sporadic flights to Pokhara. Being the principal industrial and economic hub in Nepal's Western Terai region, Siddharthanagar enjoys this status. This city, which epitomizes corporate dynamism, hums with brisk economic activity. Siddharthanagar, which is located not far from the border between India and Nepal, is important to the dynamics of the country's trade. In addition, it is essential for enabling imports and acting as a gateway for commodities that bolster the home market. Siddharthanagar's twin function as a bridge and a gateway strengthens its status as a crucial link in Nepal's economic chain.

Within the Siddharthanagar Municipality, Siddhartha Rangasala proudly serves as the center of sports activity. The city's love of competitiveness and athleticism is embodied in this arena, which acts as the focal point of sporting activities. These areas are devoted to encouraging young people to engage in physical activity and good sportsmanship.

The Danda River and the Ghahgar River serve as the city of Siddharthanagar's natural borders, which define its southern, eastern, and western edges, respectively. The city's water supply plan makes use of the copious groundwater resources available to it, depending only on this subterranean source to fulfill all of the city's water needs. The town's water supply is dependent only on groundwater. Before 1981, the Department of Water Supply and Sewerage (DWSS) was in charge of overseeing the water supply system. However, the Nepal Water Supply Corporation (NWSC), a body charged with the crucial responsibility of delivering this necessary resource to the population, has been in charge since 1981. Three deep boreholes, two above tanks, and a substantial network of pipelines covering around 51 kilometers, with a range of materials and dimensions, make up the infrastructure NWSC developed. A testament to its relevance in fostering the city's growth is the fact that this comprehensive system has the potential to service nearly 38% of the city's present population. There are few families and other parts of the population that are not connected to the NWSC system, despite the fact that it serves a sizable section of the population. These organizations obtain water for their requirements from manually drilled tube wells using privately owned hand pumps. This comparison highlights the city's continual effort to provide everyone with access to water resources, where advancement is tempered by an understanding of the gaps still in place.

7.5 IDENTITY, NARRATIVE AND CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

Unity

A strong and unchanging feeling of community pride unites the people of Siddharthanagar. A grassroots organizing heritage that highlights their dedication to many causes and situations is ingrained in this solid foundation. This common philosophy of community participation goes beyond personal preferences to support worthwhile projects as a group. The city vibrates with lively social activities that serve as ties that bring the neighborhood together. Festivities are opportunities for joyful gatherings that cross boundaries and create bonds amongst neighbors. The community's common dedication to encouraging good change is shown in projects like tree planting, anti-drug campaigns, and cleaning campaigns. Local organizations that are essential in forming the character of the city are where this sense of unification may be seen. Information is shared and cooperative efforts are supported by groups like Mahila/Aama Samuha (Women's Groups), Lions Club, Leo Club, Rotary Club, Bhairahawa Toastmasters Club and others. These organizations serve as avenues for the diffusion of information, promoting public awareness and informed participation.

The people of Siddharthanagar are united in a way that goes beyond simple participation; it is evidence of their persistent commitment to forging a society based on teamwork. This dedication can be seen in their active social calendar and the efforts made by neighborhood organizations to promote unity and advancement. A noteworthy occurrence occurred during the economic blockade. Despite being a border city, the populace banded together to drive away the fictitious protesters who were only engaging in public anger. The incident increased the community's harmony and understanding.

Environmental Aspects

The Danda River, a lifeline that cuts across the municipality's breadth and reflects the interaction of water and land, is a blessing. A rich mosaic of woods and trees, which thrive in the area and provide a touch of greenery to the urban fabric, embrace this aquatic presence. Due to its ability to absorb substances, the soil serves two purposes. It not only efficiently controls groundwater levels and water absorption, but also serves as fertile land for farming, promoting the growth of crops that feed the neighborhood. The city's development is not without difficulties, though. Urban population growth has ushered in a complicated environmental story that is dominated by pollution-related problems. The Danda River, which runs through the city, is a witness to the effects of human activity since solid waste and sewage contribute to the contamination of this important waterway. Beyond riverbanks, pollution affects the land and the atmosphere. Air pollution is caused by a combination of reasons. Industries, which are important for the city's economy, also

produce pollutants that are bad for the air. Industries that produce pipes, make food, and grow crops all create pollutants that pollute the air. The issue is made worse by automobile pollution and chimneys from the brick industry. The story of air pollution is furthered by the expanding urban environment and the rise in vehicle density. The problem is made worse by development activities including road building and expansion as well as open burning of solid trash by families and businesses.

Socio-Cultural Characteristics

Hindus make up the majority in Siddharthanagar, which has a rich history of religious and cultural diversity. In addition to this, the majority of the population is Hindu, followed by Muslims and Buddhists, the latter of whom are intimately associated with locations honoring the life and remains of Gautam Buddha. This peaceful cohabitation of faiths adds to the cultural tapestry of the city and paints a picture of unity in the midst of diversity. Siddharthanagar's cultural environment is a microcosm of Nepal's own variety. People from all across the country visit the city, resulting in a colorful mingling of customs and practices. The Awadhi and Bhojpuri cultures, which are integral to the city's cultural fabric, are in tune with the native identity. Numerous religious buildings stand as symbols of adoration and respect within this cultural landscape. The terrain is dotted with temples, monasteries, and mosques that act as pillars of spirituality. Narayansthan, Radha Krishna Temple, Karanimai Temple, Durga Temple, Basdilwa Shivalaya Temple, Bishwokarma Temple, Shanti Buddha Bihar, Shree Hanuman Temple, Puspa Kriti Bihar, Sunni Masjid, Jama Masjid, Mohamdiya Jama Masjid, Baijanath Temple, and others are a few of these holy places. Each of these places of worship acts as the center for religious rituals, providing consolation, direction, and a feeling of community to its particular adherents.

Economic Development

Siddharthanagar has made a name for itself as Nepal's most important industrial hub. According to information from the Directory of Manufacturing Establishments 2064 published by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) Nepal, the municipality has 47 registered industries as of 2006. A continuous increase in industrial endeavors was made possible by the advantageous location and growth-friendly climate. The number of industrial enterprises increased along this growth trajectory, going from 47 in 2006 to 75 by 2010, mostly consisting of small-scale industries. These industries have an effect outside of the municipal limits. The steep and hilly areas of the western region received around 60% of the overall produce from these industrial activities, which aided in the economic survival of the area. Furthermore, 15% of the outputs were sent toward Kathmandu, with the other 15% being eaten locally. Notably, 10% of the productions traveled beyond borders to find consumers in India's neighbor. Small-scale industries are quite prominent in this industrial environment. The town is home to a variety of

businesses, including wood and steel furniture producers, food and beverage companies, and rice mills. Brick-related industries hold a notable position as well.



Figure 7: Example of Informal market in the city

A Special Economic Zone (SEZ) was envisioned as a stimulant for economic progress when the plan was first introduced over two decades ago. The execution of this concept, however, has been a work in progress. Siddharthanagar's economic dynamics, however, continue to be strong, primarily because to a variety of variables. The city's broad economic structure is to be commended for the reasonably healthy job environment. Small enterprises, border commerce, jobs in the service sector, the development of infrastructure, and other factors all work together to create a vibrant environment. Siddharthanagar's value as a center for several businesses doesn't change when it shifts from having a large number of factories and industries to a more selected landscape.



*Figure 8: Bhairahawa SEZ
Image Source: The Kathmandu Post*

Accommodation

Due to its advantageous regional position, Siddharthanagar has the distinction of serving as the entrance to Lumbini, a place that attracts pilgrims looking to visit significant sacred sites. This pilgrimage path passes via a variety of spiritually significant tourist attractions:

- a. Lumbini Garden: Echoing with the sanctity of Lord Buddha's birthplace, Lumbini Garden envelops visitors in its serene embrace. Here, myriad temples, monasteries, and holy ponds provide a haven for spiritual reflection and reverence.
- b. Devdaha: This archaeological site holds historical ties to the Koliya tribe, the maternal lineage of Lord Buddha. The site resonates with the significance of receiving corporeal relics after Buddha's passing at Kushinagar.
- c. Ramgram: At the heart of the Koliya Kingdom, Ramgram unveils a stupa mound, standing ten meters tall and spanning a diameter of twenty meters. It serves as a tangible testament to the ancient legacy of the region.
- d. Kapilbastu: Enveloped by the kingdom of the Shakya, the paternal royal family of Lord Buddha, Kapilbastu boasts a plethora of archaeological marvels. The kingdom's remnants echo the narrative of Lord Buddha's formative years.
- e. Triveni Ghat: Situated along the Narayani River, this auspicious bathing site draws pilgrims by the hundreds of thousands, especially during the revered Maghe Sankranti festival.
- f. Valmiki Ashram: This hallowed ground near Triveni Ghat is believed to be the location where Prince Siddhartha embarked on his spiritual journey, stepping away from his horse and delving into the wilderness in search of answers.
- g. Lumbini Museum, Lumbini International Research Institute, and Kapilbastu Museum: These repositories of ancient wisdom house literature related to Buddha and offer glimpses into the historic tapestry of his life. The ruins of the ancient capital of the Shakya Kingdom, where Buddha spent his youth as Prince Siddhartha, further enrich the experience.

Siddharthanagar not only promotes spiritual discovery but also acts as the entry point to Chitwan National Park, a famous location that displays the splendor of Nepal's animals and natural beauty and Palpa, the historically, culturally and naturally rich places. Geographical borders cannot capture the significance of the municipality, which embodies both historical resonance and a vital relationship to the natural environment. The hotel scene in Siddharthanagar is proof of the city's development as a popular tourist and spiritual destination. The Nepal Pashupati Lodge, which was Nepal's first hotel, is located in Siddharthanagar. This establishment marks a significant turning point in the growth of the city's tourist industry by demonstrating the introduction of lodgings specifically designed to meet the changing demands of visitors. This landmark highlights the city's

contribution to the development of Nepal's tourism sector. After the Pashupati Lodge was built, the city's lodging options grew to include a varied selection of hotels with ratings ranging from 2 to 5 stars. These businesses stand like pillars, prepared to provide their services to the stream of tourists traveling to Lumbini, a place of great spiritual and cultural value. A few famous hotels stand out among the others. A pleasant and enjoyable stay is guaranteed at the Nirvana Hotel, Yeti Hotel, Nansc Hotel, Mourya Hotel, and Pauwa Hotel, which are all shining examples of hospitality. These hotels are more than just places to sleep; they are entryways to immersive experiences that let visitors feel the spirit of the city while enjoying in first-rate facilities and services. These accommodations, each with their unique charm, embody the city's commitment to providing exceptional hospitality, ensuring that every traveler's journey is enriched by their stay.

Architecture and Neighborhood character

Although Siddharthanagar's architectural environment isn't characterized by a single notable building, it formerly radiated Terai architecture. The city's architectural scene has always incorporated traditional elements. Locally manufactured bricks, strong plastered walls, and clay tiles were typical building materials. Due to its versatility, bamboo served as both the structural structure and the roofing material, playing a dual purpose. These regional construction characteristics, which include mud, *taati*, sun-dried bricks, and clay roofing tiles known as Khapada and Thatch, may be seen in traditional structures. The historical foundation of the city was built using these conventional building materials and methods.



Figure 9: Traditional Terai Building

Image Source: alamy



Figure 10: Old Image of settlement in terai

Image Source: alamy

The architecture also reflected the day-to-day rural lifestyles that were prevalent two to three decades ago by including functional aspects like shelters for animals. Homes were scattered around the terrain, each surrounded by an agricultural patch, blending everyday living and subsistence together. In addition to offering shelter, these buildings acted as physical links to the land that sustained the community, particularly in the outlying areas of the city and the few traditional homes in the Bhairahawa Gaun region.



Figure 11: Agricultural Field with houses and farmer

Image Source: (Caveman, 2018)



Figure 12: Agricultural Field in Bhairahawa

Image Source: (Caveman, 2018)

Local architectural story underwent a dramatic transition as a result of urbanization. The modernization that the city experienced as a result of its urban development marked a break from earlier architectural trends. The architectural environment changed from the cozy embrace of traditional materials to the clean lines and sleek forms of modern structures as livelihoods varied and urban living assumed center stage. This city's transformation from an agricultural civilization to a contemporary metropolitan hub is reflected in its architectural development. The architectural development of Siddharthanagar represents the retreat and flow of time, the hold of advancement, and the persistence of a city's character despite change.

When traveling through the Terai area of our nation in the past, a singular sight would welcome you: the pervasiveness of the "बुडा साईकल" or the "elderly man's cycle," as it is more well known. The atlas cycle, a unique means of transportation, is still a noticeable element of the Terai environment. Every demography participates in the experience of cycling over the Bhairahawa, demonstrating that this cycling culture crosses age limits. This bicycle culture, which had formerly been ingrained in particular social groups, had developed into a common activity. It had integrated itself into daily life and established itself as a symbol of mobility for people of all ages. This cultural phenomenon, in which cycles act as the unifying factor among generations, provides a clear picture of society change.



Figure 13: Cycling culture in Bhairahawa

Image Source: (Caveman, 2018)

Changes are already occurring in the Terai region's contemporary landscape in locations like Bhairahawa, a center of modernity. The progressive substitution of the old manual rickshaws with electric tempos is a noticeable change in this area. This change represents both advancement and an ecologically responsible option. An important feature of these electric tempos is their affordability; their adoption hasn't been constrained by exorbitant prices. Therefore, take advantage of the chance to totally immerse yourself as you enter the Bhairahawa today. Experiencing the electrifying tempos and distinctive cycles that reflect the rapid development of this region's transportation culture. It's a voyage through time and modernity, where the Bhairahawa's roadways smoothly bring the past and present together.

Local Song:

Hamro Bhairahawa (Our Bhairahawa) by DJ ANURAG N MR. NITESH-2010

Original Lyrics	English Translation
<p>भैरहवा भैरहवा हाम्रो प्यारो सहर भैरहवा x2 भैरहवाको अर्को नाम हो सिद्धार्थनगर, बस्छन् यहाँ बाहुन, छेत्री, गुरुङ, मगर माडे अनि भेले बाट प्याक भयो सहर बईकहरु को एकदम सरो बढ्यो लहर यहाको आधा मान्छेहरु are the part of city, Most of the girls lose their vir**y बढ्न थाल्यो यहाँ Vulgarity Listen up maan this is the fu**g reality पहिलेको महेन्द्र पार्क भयो अहिले अर्कै truck हरु गुड्छन् यहाँ बाटो चर्काई चर्काई बैंकहरु धेरै भयो अनि ATM भिड अनि फोहोर भयो like in KTM भैरहवा भैरहवा हाम्रो प्यारो सहर भैरहवा x2 आकाशिदो आजकल समान को भाउ सानो झगडामा देखाउछन् खोडा र दाउ अलि तल गयो भने आउछ पक्लिया केटाहरु देखाउछन् त्यहाँ stunt mania मेरो बाउ के को कम किन्देउ R15, जाऔन् साथी हानम मिलि dam मा dive बिहान पख बस्छन् भेले बाटो छेउ Hey Dear friend गएर तेस्लाई लोटा देउ के भन्नु अजिब छ यहाँ को खेल चक्रे मिलन आएपछि यहि को जेल भैरहवा भैरहवा हाम्रो प्यारो सहर भैरहवा x2 भैरहवा को side मा पर्छ India, गाडी गुड्ने road मा हिड्छ लडिया, पानले बनायो बाटोलाई रातो, भेलेहरुलाई हेर्दा जान्छ हाम्रो सातो, फिलिम हेर्न जान्छौ हामी सिद्धार्थ हल माया लाग्छ मलाई यसको हरपल I can't go anywhere Bhairahawa छोडेर, राम्रो बनाउनु छ यसलाई हामी मिलेर हामी सबै मिलि गर्नु पर्छ राम्रो काम राम्रो कामले हुन्छ सुनौलो भैरहवा को नाम, एक दिन हुन्छ भैरहवा नेपाल को शान</p>	<p>Bhairahawa, Bhairahawa, Our Beloved City Bhairahawa x2 Another name of Bhairahawa is Siddhartha Nagar. Bahun, Chhetri, Gurung, Magar live here The city is packed by <i>Made</i> and <i>Vele</i> The wave of bikes has increased quite a bit Half of the people here are the part of city, Most of the girls lose their vir**ity Vulgarity started to grow here Listen up maan this is the fu**g reality The former Mahendra Park is now different Trucks move here, the road becomes creaky There are many banks and ATMs Crowded and dirty like in KTM Bhairahawa, Bhairahawa, Our Beloved City Bhairahawa x2 The price of goods have skyrocketed these days In a small fight, people show the trunk and stake If it goes down a little, it will reach Paklihawa The boys show stunt mania there Oh my father buy me R15, Let's go together friends to dive in dam <i>Vele</i> sit on the side of the road in the morning Hey dear friend go and give him water pot What a strange game here Once Chakre Milan came to Bhairahawa's Jail Bhairahawa ,Bhairahawa, Our Beloved City Bhairahawa x2 Bhairahawa is on the side of India, Pulling cart rides in the road instead of motor vehicles, <i>Paan</i> has made the road red, We get scared looking at the <i>Vele</i> We go to see a movie at Siddhartha Hall I love every bit of this city all the time I can't go anywhere leaving Bhairahawa, Let's make it better together We all have to do a good job together The name of Bhairahawa becomes golden with good deeds, One day Bhairahawa will be the pride of Nepal And the name of Nepal becomes famous in the world</p>

अनि World मा Famous हुन्छ नेपालको नाम, भैरहवा भैरहवा हाम्रो प्यारो सहर भैरहवा x2 भैरहवा भैरहवा हाम्रो प्यारो सहर भैरहवा x2 भैरहवा भैरहवा हाम्रो प्यारो सहर भैरहवा x2 भैरहवा भैरहवा हाम्रो प्यारो सहर भैरहवा x2	Bhairahawa, Bhairahawa, Our Beloved City Bhairahawa x2 Bhairahawa, Bhairahawa, Our Beloved City Bhairahawa x2 Bhairahawa, Bhairahawa, Our Beloved City Bhairahawa x2
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Identity, attachment and meaning of the song:

The song honors the colorful, various people that reside in this city. The Paklihawa area is a notable conglomeration of people who come together for various activities, ranging from leisurely pastimes to hangouts, inside this city's complex ecology. These shared experiences include thrilling activities like dam diving and the high-adrenaline world of bike stunts. Such links highlight the importance of group efforts in forming a community's identity. In this vibrant environment, Siddhartha Hall also stands out as a beloved center for entertainment and leisure where people gather to unwind and seek refuge from the city's bustle. It is clear that the beloved Mahendra Park has experienced radical alterations that many have not yet come to terms with.

Despite these encouraging developments, there are still issues that are similar to those experienced by bigger metropolitan areas like Kathmandu City. Concerns need to be addressed due to the growing population growth and trash production. Unfortunately, some locals still use open defecation, which highlights a lack of sanitary facilities and knowledge. The Paan-eating habit, which has unintentionally added to the chaos by staining the city's surfaces, notably the roadways, with hues of red, is a distinctive and unsettling addition to the urban scene. Another depressing development is that some young people exhibit violent conduct and utilize guns in even minor altercations. The significance of fostering a culture of negotiation and constructive interaction is shown by this phenomena.

Even though development has come a long way, more work has to be done. Notably, the persistent reliance on pushing carts rather than automobiles in some locations demonstrates both ingenuity and the need for infrastructure upgrades. Surprisingly, despite difficulties and modifications, the locals' passion for this city endures unabated. They all refuse to even contemplate moving elsewhere, demonstrating their steadfast attachment to this place. This attitude underlines their resolve to work together, struggle, and together build this city into a source of national pride. Although there are challenges on the way to achieving this objective, the spirit of this community is still at its core in its determination to face them head-on and have a positive influence.

Development Challenges

Over the years, Siddharthanagar has faced a variety of difficulties as it has grown and developed, including social problems and criminality. The problem of drug addiction and the dowry system have both been significant obstacles, especially in the last ten years. These difficulties have hindered the city's development and damaged its social fabric. Unintentionally, the city's open border has made it easier for narcotics to be supplied and used. Due to this terrible condition, there is a misguided belief that drug-related issues are more common in border regions, which contributes to an unfavorable view. The community, law enforcement, and municipal government have all worked together to significantly reduce such problems over time, though.

The history of crime in Siddharthanagar once included stealing, chain snatching, and even gun-related occurrences. It is encouraging to note, nevertheless, that these illegal acts have greatly decreased, demonstrating the success of steps made to improve safety and security. The nature of safety and security concerns has changed as the city has grown. The city is currently dealing with a different set of issues. Suicide rates, financial crimes, and crimes involving social media have all attracted attention. Road traffic collisions have also become a safety issue. These difficulties highlight the significance of continual efforts to maintain the safety and well-being of city dwellers as they reflect the dynamic, ever-changing nature of urban life. The city's ongoing transition to a safer, more secure, and harmonious environment is being shaped by the coordinated efforts to address crime and safety problems, adapt to changing circumstances, and safeguard the welfare of its residents.

8. STUDY AREA AND SAMPLING

8.1 SITE AREA DIVISION

Devkota Chowk has been carefully selected as the main focus of our site analysis. It was initially planned to use a circular area selection technique with regular grids of 800m by 800m. The goal of this strategy was to mimic the organized block distribution used frequently in grid-pattern planning. This strategy produced a large area, which turned out to be overwhelming and unworkable given the limitations of time and money inherent to this thesis. In response, an alteration was made, switching from the circular plan to a rectangular choice. But the fundamental ideas remained the same: the highway served as the clear dividing line, not the central point. By spanning 800 meters in both the eastern and western directions from the highway, and mirroring this span to the north and south with Buddha Chowk as the reference, an effective rectangular area was delineated.

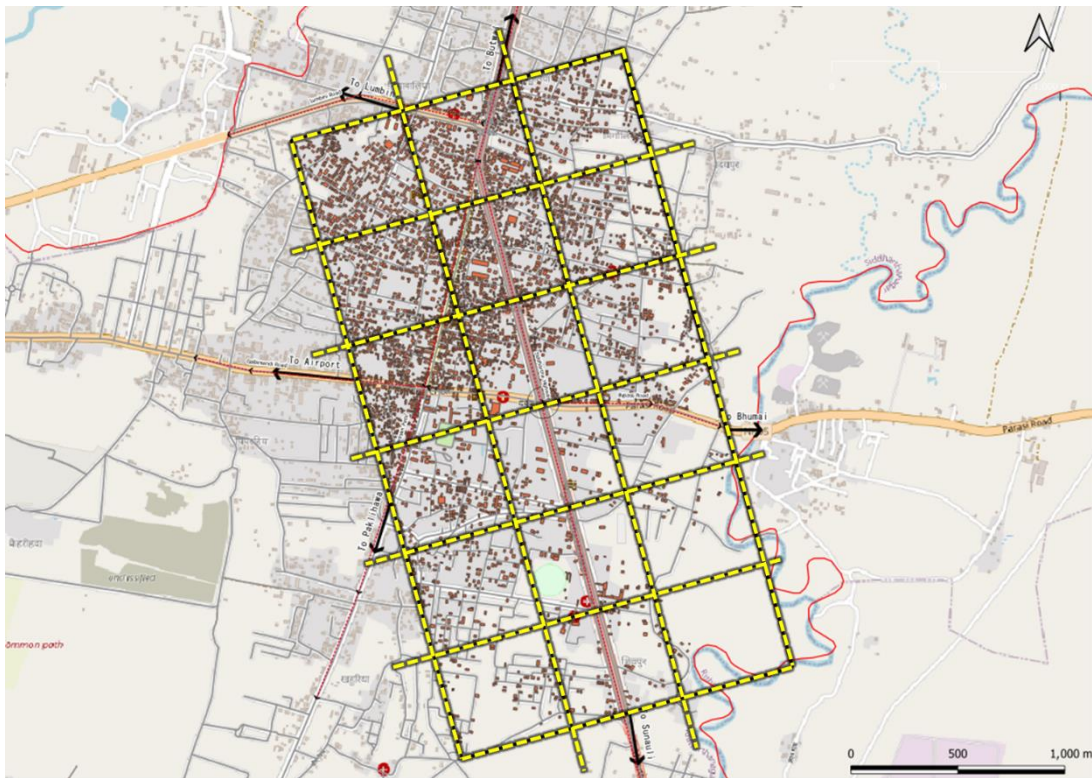


Figure 14: Site Map with imaginary grids for survey works

This vast rectangular area was subsequently partitioned into more manageable grids to create a data collecting structure. Our strategy focused on a random procedure within each of these smaller grids. Sample homes were picked to provide a balanced and representative sampling of the built environment along the streets' paths. This grid-based plan, as shown in the map, offers an organized framework for our site investigation, making it easier to explore the selected region methodically. The random selection of sample homes assures

that our observations and analyses are grounded in a clearly defined geographical context and that our conclusions are fair and objective. This well planned strategy perfectly complements the goals of our thesis while maximizing the effectiveness of our investigation within the constraints provided.

8.2 RESPONDENTS' CHARACTERISTICS

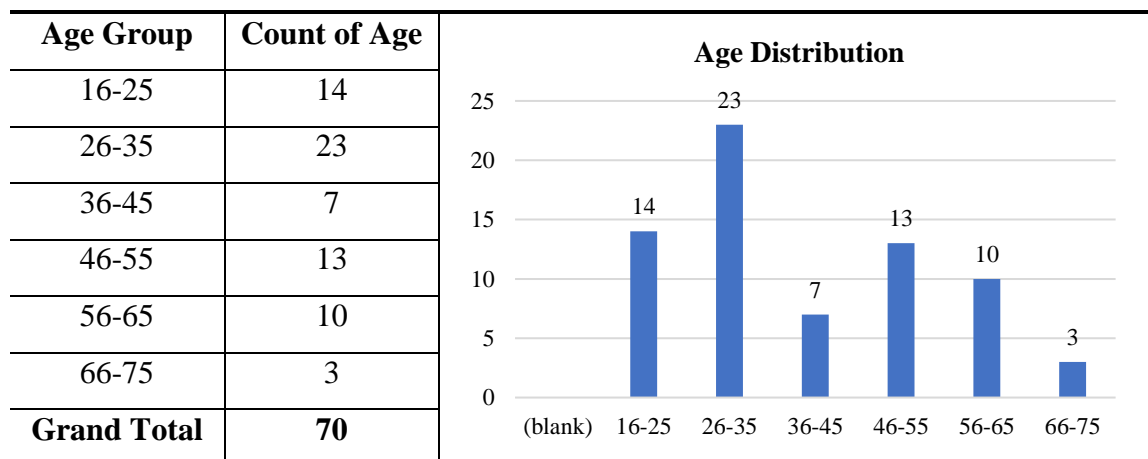
For the selection of respondents, some criteria are set which includes:

- Having a permanent residency.
- At least over 16 years of age.
- Would be less likely to move out of the city.

Establishing a relationship between the demographic distribution of our selected samples and the real demographic make-up of the city is the main goal. The municipal data has been used as a basic reference in order to accomplish this alignment. Our criteria, although assuring the authenticity and integrity of our study, does reduce the number of possible volunteers since it calls for a time commitment of several hours and a sincere interest in our project. Basically, participating in this process requires a certain amount of commitment, passion, and attention to this specific kind of action. Although it does provide a threshold, this reality ultimately serves to support the validity of our conclusions.

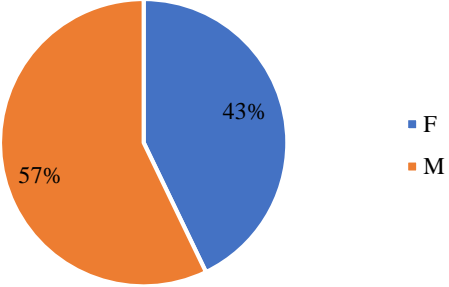
Starting with our current network of local connections, the initial outreach is deliberately organized to find such people. This network consists of people who live close by, have same friends, and work with or for the same company. Together, these strategies guarantee a broad and representative group of participants, each of whom contributes a different perspective on the city's demographics. As a consequence, our survey becomes more thorough, real, and pertinent, with results that may actually reflect the city's true demographic makeup.

Table 6: Age Group Distribution of Respondents



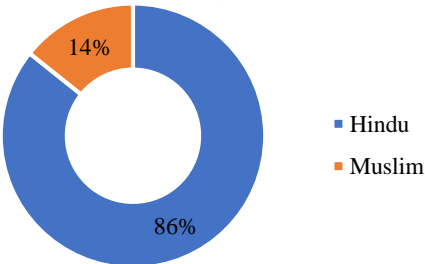
The table shown above highlights how inclusive our sample selection method was, including a wide range of age groups from 16 to 75. Notably, the age range of 26 to 35 emerges with the largest participation within this wide range, with a total of 23 participants. This specific distribution demonstrates our dedication to get the viewpoints of people from all age groups. By encompassing individuals from such a wide age range, our data collection holds the diverse viewpoints, experiences, and insights of people at various life stages.

Table 7: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Count of Gender	<p style="text-align: center;">Count of Gender</p> 
Female	30	
Male	40	
Grand Total	70	

The gender breakdown of our respondents is seen in the table below. There were 60 competitors total, including 30 women and 40 men. It's important to note that while the city's gender composition is evenly equal, with 50% men and 50% women, our sample makes a concerted effort to reflect this balance. Although exact representation is impossible, the sample composition has been carefully chosen to roughly approximate the gender distribution of the city. This deliberate effort is aimed at capturing the diverse perspectives, opinions, and experiences of both male and female residents.

Table 8: Religion Distribution of Respondents

Religion	Count of Religion	<p style="text-align: center;">Count of Religion</p> 
Hindu	60	
Muslim	10	
Grand Total	70	

The information in the table shows how the participants are divided into different religious groups. Ten participants—14% of the total—identified as Muslims, making up the whole sample. 60 individuals, or 86% of the group, declared themselves to be Hindus in contrast. The congruence between the religious makeup of our sample and the municipality's general religious mix is particularly striking. Our sample's 14% Muslim population roughly reflects the municipality's 13.2% Muslim population as a whole. In conclusion,

the consistency between the religious composition of our sample and the wider religious distribution of the municipality strengthens the reliability of our findings and confirms that our study provides an accurate representation of the city's complex demographic landscape.

Table 9: Duration of Stay of Respondents in the city

Stay	Count of Stay
5+	1
10+	3
15+	7
20+	6
25+	1
30+	11
40+	1
50+	1
Birth	39
Grand Total	70

The tabulated data gives a clear picture of how long the respondents had lived in the city. Notably, 39 people, who made up the largest contingent, were born in the city. This large number highlights the city's function as a gathering place for locals. The data also shows separate groupings based on the length of stay. 11 of these respondents have lived in the city for 30 years or more, demonstrating a strong bond with the community. Six people have lived in this country for more than 20 years out of the group of those who have been here for 15 years or longer. Three respondents had been employed for ten years or more, which indicates a more recent but still significant level of participation in city life. The other categories are made up of a string of lone comments, with one person responding under each of the following categories: 5+, 25+, 40+, and 50+ years of residence, each of which adds to the city's fascinating history of evolution. It offers a comprehensive picture of the city's inhabitants, from those who have lived there for centuries to immigrants who have assimilated through time. This range of encounters deepens our comprehension of the character and development of the city.

This concerted effort aims to document the many viewpoints, beliefs, and experiences of various age groups, genders, religions, ethnicities, and levels of experience in the city. Our data collection contains the many perspectives, experiences, and insights of people at various life phases since it includes people from such a wide spectrum. By using a systematic approach, we can guarantee that the demographic makeup of our sample is consistent with the distribution of the people in the city and that we can get valuable

information. However, the all-encompassing breadth of our participant pool confirms that our study comprises a well-rounded representation rather than only focusing on a specific bracket. This methodology is based on the belief that each group makes a distinctive contribution to the perception of the city, and our sampling strategy fully captures this variety.

9. DATA DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

I explore some of the most important items that have been discovered throughout the investigation in this section. In order to vividly convey the complex and multi-layered relationships that interlink with these things, I also offer verbal descriptions and demonstrative photographic samples. The frequency with which these items were cited by the respondents reflects the quantification of significance. Following the discovery of these items, the emphasis shifts to the complex network of meanings that collectively contribute to the strong bonds that the city's citizens have.

9.1 CATEGORY A: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The term "physical environment" refers to things that make up a place's outward appearance and contribute to its usability and visibility in the urban landscape. This category includes open public places as well as Landmarks, Nodes, Paths, and connections. The following tabled data illustrates the most common items in the respondents' reported physical environment category. Please see ANNEX 4 for a complete list of these items and the respondents' related valuations.

Objects/Places of Value

Indicators	Objects
Landmarks, Nodes, Paths & connectivity, Public Spaces	Airport, Rangasala, Lumbini, Buddha Chowk, Bank road, Buddha Park, Haat bazaar, Narayansthan, Jama Masjid

The catchphrase "Gateway to Lumbini," which reverberates across the entire city, was brought up by a number of people. Small Buddha sculptures that line the streets and the ubiquitous use of the characteristic Gerua hue in the exterior walls are just two examples of how its presence is made known in different ways. Notably, there is an unusual relationship in which people consider Lumbini to be a crucial part of their own Bhairahawa identity despite the fact that it is located 20 kilometers away.

A few of the many well-known entities, such as Buddha Chowk, Milan Chowk, Rangasala, etc. These chowks in different places within the city give people a sense of recognition and easier navigation. These chowks have different meaning in themselves. While Buddha

Chowk represents the starting point for departure to Lumbini, Milan chowk represents the major commercial chowk prevalent since a long time and has been considered the major junction in the city.



Figure 15: Buddha Chowk

The Bhairahawa airport used to operate in a more basic capacity, mostly serving domestic aircraft, and featured a smaller infrastructure. With enlarged facilities, improved services, and greater international connectivity, the airport has recently undergone an overhaul and evolved into a Regional International Airport. Despite being only recently finished, the neighborhood has already developed a strong bond with their own sense of self as Bhairahawa.

Another valued object in the city is Siddhartha Rangasala. Sports, in all of its varied forms, play a significant part in the social structure of city. It goes beyond athletic prowess to strengthen social cohesion and unity. Siddharthanagar has made a name for itself as a venue for both domestic and foreign athletic events.



Figure 16: Parapet of Siddhartha Rangasala

Buddha Park, Darkachuwa Park, Children Park, and Mahendra Park stand out among the city's public parks as each exudes a strong presence within the urban environment. Particularly in the southern parts of the city are Buddha Park and Darkachuwa Park. These parks have quickly become well-liked gathering places for city dwellers, drawing frequent visitors who set aside time in their daily schedules to relax in their lush surroundings.



Figure 17: Children enjoying in Darkachuwa Park

It's important to note that Mahendra Park and Children Park, which were formerly located in the city's northern precincts, no longer exist. A once-notable landmark, Mahendra Park, was treasured by locals as a source of love and pride for the community. Sadly, a road expansion forced its destruction, changing the city's physical environment. These changes in the urban fabric is a representation of how development is dynamic and sometimes calls for changes like these.



Figure 18: Converted Hotel Pauwa

The Haat Bazar, a vibrant market that comes to life twice a week, is another feature that the citizens of the city appreciate. The Haat bazaar that runs every Sunday and Thursday features a variety of goods including fresh vegetables, fish, sweets and clothes. Visiting the haat bazaar is an excellent opportunity for people to get in touch with locals and observe the broad spectrum of languages, cultures and food Bhairahawa has to offer. Due to its constant presence, its significance is profoundly engrained in the urban fabric and continually resonates with residents. The designated bazaar days, however, see an even greater increase in its brightness. This market acts as a center of activity, encouraging community interaction and trading.

The people's identities place a special emphasis on religious institutions like mosques and temples. Well-known temples like Shiva Mandir, Narayansthan, and Krishna Mandir have a significant impact on society. In addition to having spiritual value, these holy places have a big influence on how society as a whole thinks. People interact with these locations

frequently, whether it is through daily rituals, weekly ceremonies, or infrequent visits, strengthening their connection to these respected locations. For the city's Muslim community, the Jama Masjid has a similar impact. This mosque, used by local Muslims as a place of worship, has grown to be an important part of their feeling of community. These places of worship are crucial in determining how people relate to the city since they cross religious lines and serve as links between various populations.

Meaning Association

The attitude expressed in words like "proud" and "lucky," which are regularly used to convey the profound sense of privilege attributable to the city's closeness to the holy grounds of Lumbini, is a recurrent theme that emerges from these dialogues. One of the key components in meaning association was the idea of convenience, which included things like being close to grocery stores and freeways with good connections. Participants also emphasized the value of corridors, calling attention to particular arteries in the urban fabric. Bank Road, Narayan Path, and Gallamandi Road stand out among these thoroughfares as important arteries that cut through the city's topography. These streets have a prime central location and are collectively referred to as the city's major commercial centers. Their ability to meet the inhabitants' daily requirements is enhanced by their location. The proximity of these business hubs allows for frictionless access, which significantly improves the quality of life for city residents. One of the most popular and highly appreciated meanings linked with the city arose as walkability. Despite the availability of numerous forms of transportation, the people has a strong affinity for walking. The activity of ambling through the city's streets and shopping has a strong allure. By enabling inhabitants to explore their surroundings at their own leisure and increasing engagement with other city dwellers, this experience offers a special sense of freedom. The landscape is pedestrian-friendly, which not only promotes mobility but also fosters a sense of community whereby the simple act of walking becomes a conduit for relationships and shared experiences.

The stadium at Siddharthanagar and the sporting events it organizes stand for more than just exercise. They personify the spirit of cooperation, the thrill of competition, and the togetherness that beats at the center of the town. The transition of airport serves as a reminder of the influence that infrastructure improvements have on a city's identity. The airport's transformation from a domestic hub to a regional international gateway reflects not just changes in transportation but also in the relationships and aspirations of the city on a global scale. The upgraded airport has quickly emerged as a representation of Bhairahawa's development and a point of pride for the community. The municipal authority made the choice to convert the former site of the Haat Bazar into a Ward office structure. This change is representative of a larger urban trend. This choice was made with

the intention of adopting a more modern strategy and a structure resembling a supermarket. This change prompts discussion of the dynamic interaction between tradition and modernity as well as the ever-changing urban environment. The parks serve a wide range of demographics, from children and youth to the elderly, and cross generational barriers. These areas have developed into treasured gathering places for leisure and recreation, not just isolated patches of greenery. These parks provide a variety of activities for people of all ages and have seating areas and social spaces. These spaces enable a range of activities, from vigorous play to peaceful reflection, creating a vibrant social value at the city's center.

The replies of the inhabitants show a pattern of resemblance within the category of physical settings. The three most common dimensions to which people have links are *sensory attachment*, *narrative attachment*, and *commodifying attachment*, it is clear from analyzing these reactions in light of the seven different definitions of attachment. These three factors together form the basis of attachment, providing understanding of the causes of and mechanisms underlying the formation of these ties.

Residents' preferences for these items are influenced by their sensory encounters, the stories that surround them, and the economic value they have. A complex spectrum of connection is created by the combination of these aspects, highlighting the varied ways in which people interact with and take meaning from their physical surroundings. We are better able to comprehend the extensive web of interactions that inhabitants have with their environment by distinguishing the interactions of sensory, narrative, and commoditizing attachments.

9.2 CATEGORY B: SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FACTORS

Aspects that enhance understanding of ties with neighbors, the complicated web of everyday contacts, neighborhood dynamics, and the rich diversity that defines the population are included in the category of social and cultural aspects. Neighborhood & District, Community Identity, and Diversity & Inclusivity are included in this broad category. The following tabled data illustrates the most common items in the respondents' reported social and cultural category. Please see ANNEX 4 for a complete list of these items and the respondents' related valuations.

Objects/Places of Value

Indicators	Objects
Neighborhood & district, community identity, Diversity & Inclusivity	Annapurna tole, Barmeli tole, Diversity of caste, religion and origin, Social Cohesion

This particular category was created with the goal of encapsulating the essence of neighborhood characteristics, including perceptions of streetscapes, residents' emotional resonance within their neighborhoods, and architectural styles, urban planning, and the modern movement that shapes the urban landscape. It sought to learn people's opinions about how the various neighborhoods coexisted within the city limits. Furthermore, the residents seem to have embraced and been deeply imprinted by the emotional resonance inside their own areas. It's interesting to note that a noticeable pattern showed up when a hypothetical question about possible migration inside the city was asked. The majority of respondents named Annapurna Tole as their top travel choice.

Residents associate specific neighborhoods with the identity of the city, such as Barmeli Tole, Bank Colony, Paklihawa, and Bhairahawa Gaun. Each of these neighborhoods has distinctive characteristics that help people identify them in relation to the city's landscape. Due to its historical significance and the intriguing tale of people who returned from Burma who wove its fabric, Barmeli Tole distinguishes out. The older community, Bhairahawa Gaun, has a bad reputation for being filthy and lacking in hygiene. Thoughts have changed recently as a result of community-driven reforms that have improved the neighborhood's reputation.

The demographic facts reflect the city's vibrant mingling of various ethnic groups, as was discussed in the previous chapter. Both the study's participants and the data gathering procedure itself show this pattern. Notably, residents of the city do not automatically associate different areas of the city with certain communities. One such example is Barmeli Tole, which was once connected with particular people but is now home to a mix of long-term and new residents from various backgrounds. This tendency of mixing communities and nationalities also occurs in other contexts.

Meaning Association

Regrettably, modern designs have gradually replaced the traditional terai architectural features. The locals' devotion to those qualities was not as strong as it could have seemed from a technical standpoint, which is noteworthy. This finding highlights an important trend: locals are welcoming new architectural designs as a way to improve their neighborhoods. This implies that the altered architectural landscape is seen as a positive development, a conclusion that says a lot about how adaptable and understanding the city's populace is about the changing urban scene. Talking about the neighborhood, the majority of respondents named Annapurna Tole as their top choice. This decision was made for its calm atmosphere, which is distinguished by a calm setting and wider roads. This preference for Annapurna Tole emphasizes the appeal of a peaceful home and the importance of wide-open spaces in the decision-making process of the city's citizens.

The neighborhood makeover demonstrates how dynamic areas can be and is proof of the power of change for the better brought about by group initiatives. Due to its historical significance, it stands out from other urban structures and is easily recognized. In a sense, each of these neighborhoods carries its own history, character, and evolution, acting as microcosms that add to the complex identity of the city.

The residents of any specific neighborhood may share a certain regionalism, but it's interesting to note that there is an innate understanding among them that the entire city is a spectrum of diversity. This attitude is pervasive; locals are aware subliminally that the city is distinguished by its multicultural nature, where people from different origins cohabit together. It's interesting to note that responders usually underline that the city's strength lies in its ability to promote social unity and cohesion. A shared awareness of each other's identities, which fosters a sense of oneness that transcends personal backgrounds, is an essential component of the fabric of Bhairahawa. The city's reputation as a pillar of openness and peaceful coexistence is further cemented by the fact that social interactions and activities prioritize this shared identity as Bhairahawa inhabitants.

The input from the respondents reveals a pattern of congruity in the social and cultural contexts. The three main types of attachment that dominate in this pattern *are narrative attachment, spiritual attachment*, which denotes a strong sense of belonging, and *ideological attachment*. This is clear when looking at these comments in the context of the seven various definitions of attachment. Together, these three factors form the basis of residents' affinities for the various neighborhoods within the city. Residents have a strong sense of place identification and a strong bond with the areas they call home. In addition, there is a strong positive attitude toward the aforementioned communities. It's interesting to note that this dynamic of attachment includes the entire city. Residents share and comprehend one another's ideals, promoting an atmosphere of harmony and respect. A cohesive and well-balanced urban environment is the product of this mutual regard for ideals. The complex interactions that establish the groundwork for residents' loyalty to their communities and to the larger identity of Bhairahawa are essentially captured by this interplay of narrative, spiritual, and ideological affiliations.

9.3 CATEGORY C: EMOTIONAL AND EXPERIENTIAL FACTORS

A person's inner affection for the locations, items, and experiences found in the city can be sparked by the emotional and sensory components. This broad category includes emotional ties, the resonance of occasions and celebrations, a deep sense of belonging, worries about safety and security, and the ease of living in a city. The following table of data highlights the most common elements in the respondents' reported emotional and experience category. Please see ANNEX 4 for a detailed list of these goods and the pertinent valuations provided by the respondents.

Objects/Places of Value

Indicators	Objects
Affective Attachments, Events & Festivals, Sense of Belongingness, Safety and Comfort	Affection towards public spaces, association with local groups and clubs, Street market, festivals and programs, unity in difficult times, Local Cuisines, Pawan sweets, hot served <i>Fulki</i> . Reduced/controlled crimes.

The affection exhibited for public spaces is a recurring theme in the spatial attachment dimension. It's crucial to highlight that this trend might be affected in part by the participant pool's demographics, which emphasize the person-place interactions of the participants. In the course of their everyday activities, several participants painted scenes of various locations, frequently emphasizing their experiences as parents and the support these locations provided for their duties as care takers. In fact, social interactions and relationships have the capacity to give locations a sense of significance and are crucial in the development of place attachment. These relationships spontaneously develop and strengthen through time, providing understanding of the importance of length of residency for conventional types of attachment.

The idea of a place setting for interaction involves both places that serve specific social purposes as well as memories of interactions that have shaped the meaning of a place. The city's identity places a special significance on the street market and street festivals. This shows, unsurprisingly, a strong relationship with the idea of community. The street market and the variety of activities that take place during different occasions and festivals are perfect examples of the city's dynamic nature.



Figure 19: Street Market during occasion

Image: YouTube: Sahe Alam



Figure 20: Vibrant Street life during occasion

Image: YouTube: Sahe Alam

Another significant topic raised by the respondents is the involvement of neighborhood groups and clubs. These organizations and clubs exhibit an impressive level of activity, planning a variety of initiatives in areas like women's empowerment, anti-drug abuse campaigns, tree planting drives, city cleaning campaigns, and awareness campaigns addressing important social issues, to name a few.

When it comes to their emotional encounters with the city, citizens' feelings of safety and security seem to be in general. It is commonly acknowledged that Bhairahawa stands apart from other border cities due to its reputation as a safe haven. The residents' collective mentality is firmly imbued with this sense of security.

Advocacy Forum - Nepal Hands Over Computers to the Child Correction Home, Bhairahawa



With an aim to bridge communication gaps between families and children of Child Correction Home, Bhairahawa, on 16 December 2021 Advocacy Forum- Nepal (AF)



Figure 21: Organizations active in different programs

All age groups of residents of Bhairahawa now incorporate *fulki* into their everyday routines, making it a key consumable. Its sizzling appearance is the distinguishing quality that makes it stand out. The Bhairahawa variation adds a twist to the standard "*panipuri*" seen elsewhere, which is often served cold and has a filling of mashed potatoes and acidic broth. Here, piping-hot "*aaloo-matar*" gravy and a dab of sour soup are served alongside

the fulki. This distinctive recipe has actually come to symbolize the city's culinary scene, drawing not just locals but also tourists from all around the country and even from India.



Figure 22: Fulki from Bhairahawa

Image Source: Instagram: @ghumdai.khadai

In a similar vein, the Pawan Peda is another well-known food item that has solidified its position in Bhairahawa's identity. Most people think of pedas when they think of Bhairahawa. Bhairahawa is home to the famous pedas from Pawan Mithan Bhandar, a vegetarian restaurant that specializes in traditional desserts. The Peda stands out as the brand's crowning achievement, although Pawan Sweets as a whole has gained recognition for its mouthwatering assortment of delights. This reputation is well-earned, as shown by the fact that a sizable portion of locals believe Peda to be the best Pawan Sweets has to offer. This idea is further supported by the custom of locals bringing these candies home with them after visiting a renowned candy store.



Figure 23: Pawan Peda

Meaning Association

The residents' emotional and experience based factors are the dynamic character of place attachment, which involves the engagement of people with their environment as well as the social interactions and shared experiences that strengthen their bond with the city. The participant's stories highlight how these connections are woven into the fabric of their life, reinforcing their emotional connection to the city and its various venues. The places where the social events take place frequently have value attached to them because of their specific significance. Additionally, these occasions present a chance for enjoyment and involvement that enhances the lives of the locals. Associating the location of these events with value reflects the mutually beneficial link that exists between the city's physical spaces and the social activities that take place there. This supports the view that a city's identity is influenced by a variety of factors, including lively interactions and exciting events that give its citizens a strong sense of belonging and a common experience.

The active participation of neighborhood organizations and groups highlights the city's people' proactive attitude towards encouraging good change and community development. These organizations make a substantial contribution to the character and prestige of the city by putting together a wide variety of programs. Their dedication to improving different facets of city life not only fosters the sense of community and shared responsibility but also enhances the physical environment. This phenomena highlights how the proactive spirit of the people of Bhairahawa, who strive diligently to bring about significant changes within their city, is intrinsically linked to the city's character.

The city's multicultural population contributes significantly to the development of the sense of security and safety. Residents believe that the blending of diverse cultures and backgrounds has created a peaceful environment. This peaceful coexistence contrasts sharply with the idea of internal strife. This sense of security is further enhanced by the

perception that crime rates are dropping compared to 20 years ago. This opinion is supported by verification from several families and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), including comments from an Inspector of the Crime Investigation Department in the Rupandehi District. It is not purely anecdotal in nature. The congruence of these viewpoints strengthens the idea that Bhairahawa's identity is inextricably tied to the sense of security and community felt by its citizens, transforming the city into a refuge where various groups live in peace and harmony.

One respondent recalled a 15-year-old incident by saying, "I used to live in Kotihawa, a town that's about 8 kilometers away. I used to travel to Bhairahawa for business every day, and I would always have this fulki on the way home. This fulki was a must-eat whenever my family and I went shopping in Bhairahawa on the weekends. The Milan Chowk station was my favorite. This tale serves as a monument to how this basic gastronomic delight has woven itself into the fabric of everyday life and priceless memories, becoming synonymous with the city's character and giving both locals and tourists a taste of its distinctive culinary culture.

What stands out in particular is how Pawan Peda has affected the city's cultural landscape more broadly. It has developed into something more than just a delicious delicacy; it now holds a concrete link to Bhairahawa's identity. During visits to relatives, it is customary to give Pawan Peda as a present. This practice weaves a strong feeling of community and family ties by signifying love and respect in addition to appreciation for the taste of the sweets. These food items have somehow evolved into strong representations of the city's identity, encapsulating not only the gastronomic diversity of the city but also the warmth and comradery that characterize its inhabitants.

A common thread in the area of emotional and experiential elements is revealed by the insights gleaned from the respondents. Four main types of attachment clearly emerge within this pattern, illuminating residents' strong bonds. *Narrative attachment*, *spiritual attachment* enhanced by a strong sense of belonging, *commodifying attachment*, and *material dependency* are these four main characteristics. When these statements are examined through the prism of the seven various meanings of attachment, this becomes clear. These four characteristics work as the cornerstones of the city's inhabitants' attraction for its intangible characteristics. People display a strong sense of place identification and an intense connection to these experience characteristics. What makes this dynamic of attachment so remarkable is that it extends beyond the bounds of certain neighborhoods to encompass the entire city and beyond. This idea was beautifully expressed by a participant who described the city's "iconic beauty of integration with others." In sharp contrast to other border cities with comparable demographics, Bhairahawa maintains a peaceful cohabitation. People establish strong relationships with

their surroundings through the use of these emotional and sensory components. Together, they weave together to form a complex tapestry of feelings, perceptions, and experiences that affects how citizens relate to the city's many different facets.

9.4 CATEGORY D: SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND PRACTICAL FACTORS

The variety of government-provided amenities, services, and infrastructure are included in the socioeconomic and practical considerations. This category also explores the availability of work opportunities, housing affordability, and future economic prospects. Amenities and Services, Housing and Affordability, and Employment and Economic Opportunities are the three subcategories it encompasses. The data shown below was created based on responses from respondents to give a visual depiction of the most common elements within the socio-economic and practical aspects category. I point you to ANNEX 4 for a complete list of these items and the corresponding valuations offered by the respondents.

Objects/Places of Value

Indicators	Objects
Amenities and services Housing and affordability Employment and economic opportunities	UCMS, Bhim Hospital, Water Supply, Availability of basic infrastructure, Affordability, Accommodation, Job Opportunity

Unquestionably, the availability of essential infrastructure is a significant motivator for migrants choosing Bhairahawa as their final destination. Several of these infrastructural resources are of significant importance in the view of the locals. Notable examples are the Bhairahawa Multiple Campus, Lumbini Eye Hospital, and Universal College of Medical Sciences (UCMS), all of which have become integral parts of the city's identity.

A strong selling factor for the city is its ample supply of drinking water, which also includes alternate sources like underground water. The city's livability is directly influenced by the accessibility of vital resources, which is widely cited by locals as one of its greatest advantages. It is also highly regarded that various government services and infrastructure be accessible. Residents value how easy it is to visit district offices and other government buildings in the city. This accessibility improves daily living by streamlining administrative procedures. Connectivity inside Nepal and to the adjacent India is greatly facilitated by the bus park's location in the city. The airport is another essential tool for boosting connectivity, ensuring citizens' convenience when traveling to diverse locations.



Figure 24: Government Hospital, Bhim Hospital

The benefit of a level topography has a significant influence on citizens' choices for dwelling and transportation inside the city. The selection criteria people must take into account when choosing a place to dwell are made simpler by the absence of geographic complexity. Additionally, the city's flat terrain makes navigating it a seamless experience. The likelihood of difficulties impeding people's mobility and everyday activities is reduced by the absence of steep hills and rough terrain. This geographical feature not only improves the city's general navigability but also adds to a feeling of accessibility and ease. A more inclusive and user-friendly environment is created as a result of residents being able to move across the urban landscape without being hindered by difficult topography. One of which was reflected on the cycling culture of Bhairahawa, although that is fading way in recent times.

Within Bhairahawa, economic opportunity shines out as a strong and distinguishing affinity. The city has gained reputation as a center for employment opportunities and

means of economic development. Strategically speaking, being close to the border helps businesses source supplies and provides a variety of job opportunities. Due to Bhairahawa's proximity to the border, it is easy for enterprises to get the materials and resources they require for operations. This convenience increases the city's allure as a hub for business enterprises and employment opportunities.

The responders' attention is drawn to the intriguing feature of the lodging industry. The location of Bhairahawa, which is impacted by the airport's presence and its proximity to the well-known Lumbini, has made way for a wide range of housing alternatives, from budget-friendly hostels to opulent 5-star hotels. The city is well-positioned to welcome tourists and travelers thanks to this geographical advantage.

Meaning Association

An individual who moved there about eight years ago provided insight into their choice, saying, "A big factor that influenced my choice was the presence of vital infrastructure within a short distance. Additionally, there are some district-level offices nearby. The participant's experience highlights the value of proximity, especially when compared to auto-centric metropolitan settings. The simplicity and accessibility it provides, traits that frequently stand in stark contrast to developments that favor motorized transit, are at the heart of walkability's attractiveness. This concept of walkability fits within a broader vision of urban living that places an emphasis on both practicality and a closer connection to one's surroundings. In essence, the availability of these key infrastructural elements significantly shapes the city's appeal, extending a warm invitation to both migrants and residents. The city's progressive infrastructure, along with its inherent connectivity, contributes substantially to its identity as a hub of convenience, opportunity, and resourcefulness.

In the end, the city's identity as a place where citizens can easily go about their everyday lives, unencumbered by topographical difficulties, and enjoy a seamless living experience is largely shaped by this flat topography.

Numerous small enterprises and factories that create employment opportunities dot the landscape of the city. This abundance of business ventures helps the city maintain its reputation as a vibrant center where people can discover opportunities for professional and personal development. In summary, Bhairahawa's status as a city that offers not just job opportunities but also a climate conducive to economic thriving makes it a top choice for people looking for financial success and professional advancement. This advantageous geographic location enhances the city's potential for economic growth and development.

In addition to making it simple for tourists to visit, Bhairahawa's strategic location on the map has greatly aided the creation of jobs and the city's general economic growth. The

city's booming lodging industry has sparked job opportunities, giving many people a means of support and fostering the local economy. This symbiotic relationship between the lodging industry, economic growth, and tourism illustrates how Bhairahawa's identity is closely tied to its function as a warm and inviting vacation destination. The range of housing alternatives offered improves the city's reputation while also strengthening its identity as a destination that welcomes both its citizens and the larger community of tourists from across the world.

The responses reveal a coherence among the socioeconomic and practical aspects. Four unique basic types of attachment clearly emerge from this, illuminating the robust and deep connections among inhabitants. These four dominant traits are *material dependence*, *narrative attachment*, *sensory attachment*, and *commodifying attachment*. This association is strengthened when these statements are looked at more closely through the prism of the seven different types of attachment. Together, these four traits serve as the city's residents' main draws in terms of their needs for economic and fundamental infrastructure. Residents place a strong value on the accessibility of services that meet their basic needs. Similar to this, the possibility of economic growth and the chance for personal growth create another potent connection point. The respondents place a lot of stress on the idea of inexpensive and living conditions. This comprehensive view of socio-economic and practical factors demonstrates how these aspects shape residents' perspectives and experiences within the city. These components are integral in fostering a holistic sense of well-being and quality of life among the city's inhabitants.

9.5 NEGATIVE IMAGE

There is nothing in the world that do not has positive and negative sides both. The advancement in development in the city has also come up with some negative impact on to the residents. Even though some would see the development of super market by removing the haat bazaar as a modernity, it's vital to note that not all locals agree with this concept. Some people voiced their disapproval, saying things like, "The old haat bazaar captured the exact heart of a local market for me. However, unlike the Bhatbhateni concept, the shopping experience would now be limited to one particular building. If people prefer that strategy, they might as well choose Bhatbhateni rather than this new building." A closer examination reveals that the haat bazaar's essential worth lies in its ability to foster relationships between locals and between buyers and vendors. The community element of the market experience is inextricably related to its core. The supermarket-style paradigm, on the other hand, could not encourage the same level of human engagement. The transformation prompts important discussions about how to maintain community dynamics and local culture in the face of shifting business paradigms.



Figure 25: Old Haat Bazaar



Figure 26: New Haat Bazaar building

Mahendra Park, a once-famous landmark, was valued by locals as a source of affection and pride for the neighborhood. Unfortunately, a road extension forced its demise, altering the city's physical landscape. Similar to this, Children Park underwent its own change,

going from being a specific recreational area to a business. The park's primary goal was altered when it was decided to lease it to Hotel Pauwa for business purposes. Once upon a time, both of these parks served as priceless assets for social pleasure. Their functions and accessibility have recently changed somewhat as a result of recent development, which has caused people to consider how the urban environment is changing and what that means for the neighborhood.



Figure 27: Old Picture of Mahendra Park

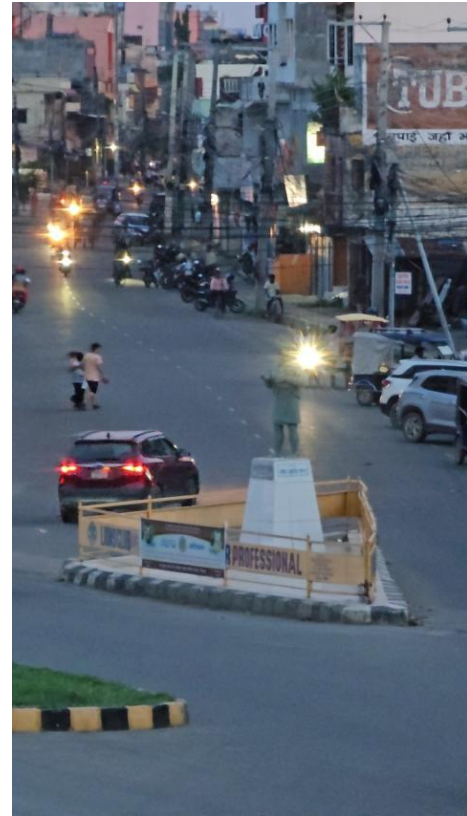


Figure 28: Converted Mahendra Park

Image source: Facebook: भैरहबा हाम्रो प्यारो सहर भैरहबा I love Bhairahawa

Among the challenges discussed by the respondents, two notable concerns have surfaced: waste management and vehicle parking. While these problems are widespread across the nation's cities, they have also had an impact on Bhairahawa. For the city, the issue of trash management presents a considerable challenge. Effective garbage management and disposal have emerged as critical challenges in many metropolitan areas. This problem is a good representation of the larger environmental and infrastructure issues that modern cities face. The problem of parking cars is also becoming more and more of a concern. The demand for suitable parking facilities has grown as the city continues to develop and draw more inhabitants and tourists. This difficulty highlights the fine line that cities must

walk when it comes to balancing urban development with the construction of crucial infrastructure for efficient transit and mobility.



Figure 29: Congestion due to parking



Figure 30: Waste dumping problem

A positive development has been discovered after further enquiry with local representatives: significant efforts are being made to solve these difficulties in a proactive manner. This dedication to finding answers demonstrates the city's commitment to improving its overall sustainability and livability. In addition, the Mayor's proactive attitude to the parking issue is reflected in the start of a central parking system by designating land for this purpose. But as with any change, opposition has surfaced, especially from nearby businesses and neighbors. Even though these disagreements are common, they highlight the difficulties that can occur while planning for and implementing urban revitalization projects.

9.6 GROUP DISCUSSIONS

To have a thorough grasp of the topic, conducting group discussions (GD) and key informant interviews (KII) is unquestionably a useful approach of triangulating data. The participants, their observations, and the main ideas from the group talks are summarized below:

Table 10: Participants of Group Discussion 1

S.No.	Name	Age	Relation	Gender	Stay
GD 1	Ganesh	68	Owner	M	25+
	Thakur	45	Owner	M	20+
	Ram Prasad	60	Owner	M	30+
	Hari	65	Owner	M	20+
	Birendra	50	Owner	M	30+

The group discussion, which was comprised entirely of male senior citizens and the elderly, serves as an important confirmation of the results of the individual surveys. Their observations and deductions closely match the summary formed from the responses of various respondents. They particularly emphasized how strongly citizens feel a connection to public areas, the accessibility of necessary infrastructure, and the growth of the city's economy. But their conversations also highlighted issues with governance and management. Participants expressed concern over the government's alleged inefficiency and seeming lack of concern for the changing dynamics of the city. This feeling is representative of a more general dissatisfaction with administrative procedures and decision-making.

The observations of the participants reveal a perceived disconnect between the needs and preferences of the population and the decisions made by the government. They observed that rather than considering the welfare of the city and its citizens, choices appeared to be motivated by personal benefit. This worry underlines the requirement for better interaction and comprehension between citizens and the authorities. It's interesting how the conversation decided to focus heavily on politics. This shift to political subjects emphasizes the complex interrelationship between a city's identity and its political environment. It highlights how a city's citizens' attachment to it is influenced by its government and policies as well as its physical features and lived experiences. These observations from the elderly participants deepen our understanding of the identity of the city by exposing layers of attachment, worry, and a need for better administration that together form the identity of Bhairahawa as a whole.

Table 11: Participants of Group Discussion 2

S.No.	Name	Age	Relation	Gender	Stay
GD 2	Hari Maya	65	Wife	F	30+
	Sangeeta	60	Owner	F	15+

	Srijana	55	Wife	F	30+
	Sumita	55	Daughter I.L	F	Birth

The group conversation among the female participants offers a unique viewpoint on the reputation and character of the city. Despite being narrowly focused on particulars, their observations provide insightful information about the subtleties of attachment and worries that affect how Bhairahawa is perceived by them. The participants' focus on the importance of temples and other religious elements shows how closely connected the female residents are spiritually. Temples act as crucial hubs that promote a feeling of identity and belonging within the city.

The participants' concerns about their family's overall welfare highlight the significance of kinship and communal ties in determining the character of the city. The focus on family well-being shows that citizens are tied to the city not only as individuals, but also as essential members of a greater family. It is noteworthy that the participants give local organizations like "Aama Samuha" (the mother's group) and "Mahila Samuha" (the women's group) a lot of importance. These groups provide crucial venues for promoting interpersonal relationships and cultural pursuits. The group singing and performing activities that these organizations host on various occasions underline the importance of shared experiences and community involvement in creating a city's identity. The female participants' observations offer a special perspective from which to view Bhairahawa's identity. They offer a multifaceted perspective that complements and enhances the larger understanding of the city's identity as a complex diverse personal experiences and connections. This includes their attachment to religious elements, concerns for family well-being, and appreciation of the significance of community groups.

Table 12: Participants of Group Discussion 3

S.No.	Name	Age	Relation	Gender	Stay
GD3	Bibek	27	Son	M	Birth
	Anmol	28	Son	M	Birth
	Vishal	27	Son	M	Birth
	Trinetra	27	Son	M	Birth
	Kishan	29	Son	M	Birth
	Nur	28	Son	M	Birth

The thoughts voiced by the individual responses are echoed in the group discussion among the young male participants. Their observations contribute to a consistent understanding of Bhairahawa's identity by offering yet another proof of the city's attachment points and worries. The young generation's affinities for public places, social gatherings, street markets, and regional foods and cuisines are underscored by the affirmation of their attachment to these things. These components emphasize the city's lively and dynamic character, encouraging a sense of attachment and belonging among its young citizens.

A significant finding from the participants relates to the anger that many young people feel about the dynamics of urban growth. This dissatisfaction is representative of a larger mood that could have long-term effects on the city. The comments made by the participants about young people's hesitation to remain in the nation as a result of these grievances reveal a concern for future brain drain and the necessity of addressing problems that could obstruct the city's progress and success.

I also conducted Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) to gain knowledge from experts with in-depth familiarity with the dynamics of the city. Even though the details of the KIIs were not made available, it is likely that they offered an insightful perspective to supplement the conclusions from the group talks. Overall, the data triangulation achieved through KIIs and group discussions provides a comprehensive picture of Bhairahawa's identity, covering a range of viewpoints, anxieties, and attachments. The knowledge gained from these various sources helps to create a more comprehensive understanding of the city's reputation and the elements that influence its identity. It is clear that this was a well-structured research strategy that included both Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and group discussions to get a comprehensive understanding of Bhairahawa's identity. In particular, the KIIs offer a chance to learn from people who have in-depth knowledge of the dynamics of the city as well as specialist expertise.

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) Summary:

- Conducted a total of 5 KIIs.
- Interviewees included the Mayor, Ward representatives, and an Inspector.
- Discussions centered on the identification of residents' valued objects in the city.
- Some discrepancies emerged between the choices and reasoning of local representatives compared to the preferences of the residents, particularly in the Negative Image section of the chapter.
- The insights provided by the Inspector validated facts related to safety and crime, providing credibility to your research findings.

The depth and reliability of the research are further increased by the data triangulation achieved using KIIs. This has strengthened the validity of the conclusions by getting opinions from local authorities and a crime investigation specialist. The found differences in preferences and reasoning highlight how crucial it is to take into account various viewpoints and comprehend the thinking behind local representatives' decisions. Overall, the research's planning and execution show that the methodology taken is thorough and balanced approach to comprehending Bhairahawa's complicated image and identity. In addition to enhancing the conclusions, triangulating data from several sources guarantees a more realistic depiction of the city's complex personality.

9.7 THIRD-PARTY IMAGE

It is common to spot a pattern in the videos and images posted to social networking sites like Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok. These platforms' visual content does offer insightful information on how people view and appreciate the city. They focus on understanding what individuals appreciate about the city, which is consistent with the research's objective.



Figure 31: People's image of the city
Source: TikTok: Ke_Maal, Sudip_Maurya, izumii039

Buddha Chowk, Bhatbhateni, Devkota chowk, Highway, Airport, Lumbini, etc. are mentioned in those videos.

Some aspects of the physical environment, which is evident in the photographs and videos as a crucial influence, appear to continually draw people's interest. The themes and attachments that residents have to their city are reinforced by these visual depictions, which add a complementing element to the research findings. Visual imagery typically captures subtleties that may be difficult to describe merely through text or spoken words, which can have a significant impact on how emotions and impressions are communicated. We are able to provide readers a more thorough knowledge of the city's identity as experienced by its citizens by incorporating these images and videos into the research.

10. TESTING AGAINST KEVIN LYNCH'S MODEL

Kevin Lynch's framework, which includes pathways, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks, is a useful tool that provides urban planners and designers with an all-encompassing perspective for examining urban built environment. This framework, which Lynch developed in his work "The Image of the City," offers a methodical way to interpret the complexities of urban landscapes while highlighting the crucial part that each component plays in forming the overall perception of a city. Paths, which are people's routes of movement, serve as the veins that link cities. The physical and visible borders that separate one location from another are defined by edges, which also influence how continuity and uniqueness are perceived. Districts serve as a symbol for communities that share traits, promoting a feeling of place and identity. While landmarks are conspicuous, identifiable elements that support memory and direction, nodes are centers of intensive activity or focus.

Effective integration between these components is essential to the development of well-designed, legible, and memorable urban spaces. Urban planners and designers may create a harmonious urban environment that not only makes navigation easier but also fosters a strong sense of place and identity by considering the interactions between pathways, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks. This deliberate approach to urban planning not only improves a city's functional efficiency but also has a major emotional and cognitive impact on its residents' lives. Essentially, Lynch's framework acts as a compass, pointing urban practitioners in the direction of a comprehensive integration of the elements that go into creating the city's image. Adopting this conceptual toolkit enables urban planners and designers to create spaces that are functional and have a unique personality, creating cities that are not just livable but also memorable and deeply ingrained in the minds of their citizen.

For testing against the Lynch's model, this research takes two other cases as well. One is an international modern city, i.e. New York and another is National Traditional town, i.e. Kathmandu. We will apply the Kevin Lynch's concept of "the image of the city" effectively to analyze the tangible components that shape the identity of Bhairahawa. Lynch's five suggested elements; Landmarks, Paths, Nodes, Districts, and Edges, offer a logical framework for comprehending how urban dwellers experience and navigate their surroundings. The use of these elements in Bhairahawa demonstrates an in-depth knowledge of the appearance of the city.

Case 1: New York City

New York City's unique appearance and character are shaped by the dynamic interaction of its pathways, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks. New York City's busy streets, avenues, and famous thoroughfares are lively routes that are teeming with action. These pathways, which connect the several boroughs and communities to form an integrated urban fabric, not only make mobility easier but also weave together the famous Fifth Avenue and the winding lanes of Greenwich Village.

The physical and visual limits of distinct districts are established by the city's margins, which are characterized by famous buildings like the Brooklyn Bridge, waterfronts, and the verdant stretches of Central Park. By defining the skyline and waterfronts with a feeling of containment and openness, these boundaries add to the visual drama of the city. Every neighborhood in New York City has its own distinct personality and allure. The city's districts represent a variety of identities, from Chelsea's artsy flair to the financial district's tall skyscrapers. From Tribeca to Harlem, the neighborhoods themselves add to the complexity and depth of the metropolitan experience.

Among the city's well-known nodes are Times Square, Grand Central Terminal, and Union Square. In addition to serving as hubs for transportation, these busy places also serve as hubs for social, economic, and cultural activities. They function as hubs of culture, gathering spots, and nodes of symbolism that ground the urban experience. New York City's famous monuments are showcased in the skyline, which includes the Statue of Liberty, the Empire State Building, and One World Trade Center, among others. These buildings act as landmarks that direct traffic and provide a feeling of location. Historical and cultural landmarks such as the Statue of Liberty are also extremely significant.

These components come together to create a dynamic urban environment that shapes the perception of New York City. The complex linkages between pathways, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks give the city its character and provide visitors and locals alike a varied and always changing perspective on this historic metropolis.

Case 2: Kathmandu

Over the course of several decades, Kathmandu's urban planning and design have undergone a transformation, flowing from a traditional foundation to a combination of modern and traditional components. This has fundamentally changed the fabric of the city, changing both its physical layout and the perception that shapes its identity.

Following the natural contours of the Kathmandu Valley, a network of slender streets meanders across the cityscape, defining Kathmandu's complex street pattern in accordance with tradition. Nestled in the city's historic center lies the charming maze of courtyards and lanes known as Kathmandu Durbar Square. With its roots in the unique Newar

architectural style, Kathmandu's architectural heritage is best known for its courtyard houses, which are constructed using mud, clay bricks, jhingati tiles, and timber frameworks. These architectural wonders, which are multistory structures, are carefully placed around a central courtyard. . The design provides privacy, security, and a sense of community. This architectural group not only demonstrates the city's artistic ability, but it also reflects a social structure that celebrates community life and shared experiences. The abundance of temples, shrines, and stupas adds to Kathmandu's unique spiritual and cultural background. These holy networks, elaborated with intricate carvings and rich symbolism, function as demonstrations to the religious and historical importance of the city. These architectural treasures lure both tourists and residents to experience the city's rich cultural legacy and spiritual resonance. That is why Kathmandu, with its well-balanced urban complexity and architectural magnificence, is a living example of the traditional but dynamic fusion of culture.

Kathmandu has made several efforts via conservation and restoration programs to preserve its rich cultural past. A number of locations in the Kathmandu Valley have been designated as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO, which recognizes the cultural and historical importance of the city. This prestigious designation highlights the significance of these locations on a worldwide scale and motivates integrated efforts to preserve their architectural and cultural integrity for next generations. In several parts of Kathmandu, there are public courtyards called "chowks." These areas are used for festivals, community gatherings, and social interaction. These public areas are important because they go beyond their actual borders and become essential parts of Kathmandu's culture. These chowks reflect the communal spirit that characterizes Kathmandu, promoting a feeling of cohesion, identity, and cultural continuity for both locals and visitors. Therefore, as Kathmandu moves forward, it does so with a strong awareness that conserving its cultural heritage is not just a responsibility but also a dynamic, living example of the continuity of a city that is firmly immersed in its history.

10.1 PATHS:

Paths refer to the channels or routes that people use to move through a city. These can include streets, sidewalks, alleys, trails, and any other means of transportation or pedestrian circulation.

Role: Paths serve as the framework for movement within the city. They connect various locations and provide the means for people to reach their destinations.

Characteristics: Paths can vary in terms of their width, length, alignment, and the types of activities they accommodate. Some paths may be wide and bustling with activity, while others might be narrow and quiet.

Example:

New York

In New York City, iconic Broadway serves as a prominent path. It stretches diagonally across Manhattan, connecting various neighborhoods, theaters, and cultural institutions.



Figure 32: Map Showing road network in New York



Figure 33: Image showing Street in New York

Kathmandu

The narrow and winding streets of Kathmandu can be considered as paths in Lynch's model. These paths, often following the natural topography of the valley, serve as channels for pedestrian and vehicular movement. They form the intricate network that weaves through the city.



Figure 34: Street Networks in Kathmandu



Figure 35: Crowd in Narrow street of Kathmandu

Bhairahawa

The primary thoroughfares and neighborhood streets; Highway, Narayan path, Bank Road, etc are significant paths that define the routes that people move and interact within the city. These routes help to create a sense of space in the city and are crucial for connectedness.



Figure 36: Street Networks in Bhairahawa



Figure 37: Narayan Path road of Bhairahawa

10.2 EDGES:

Edges represent the boundaries or barriers that define and separate different areas of the city. These can include natural features like rivers or hills, as well as man-made elements like walls, fences, or transitional zones.

Role: Edges create a sense of separation and enclosure within the city. They demarcate distinct zones or neighborhoods.

Characteristics: Edges can be physical, such as a waterfront promenade, or they can be symbolic, like the transition from a commercial district to a residential neighborhood

Example:

The Hudson River acts as a natural edge on the west side of Manhattan, offering scenic waterfront views. Central Park provides a green edge amidst the urban landscape, creating a clear boundary between the dense city and the open parkland



Figure 38: Aerial view of New York city showing Central Park and Hudson River

The surrounding hills of the valley act as natural edge for Kathmandu Valley. The traditional locations of Kathmandu generally have rivers as edges. For example, the Bishnumati River serves as an edge for the Kathmandu traditional town area, while Bagmati River serves as an edge for the Patan traditional town area.

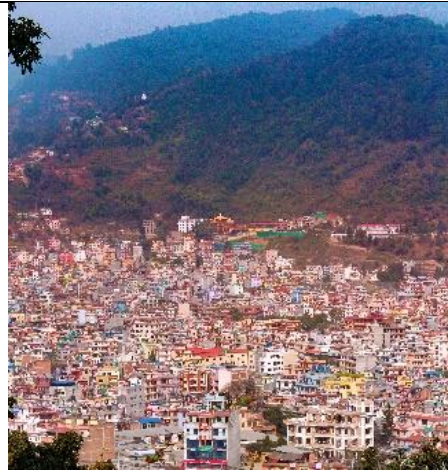


Figure 39: Kathmandu surrounded by hills and Bishnumati river

The border in the south, the airport area in the west, the Rohini River in the east, and the area around Buddha Chowk in the north are the areas of Bhairahawa that have been designated as its edges. These edges serve as the city's physical borders and help define its geographic identity.

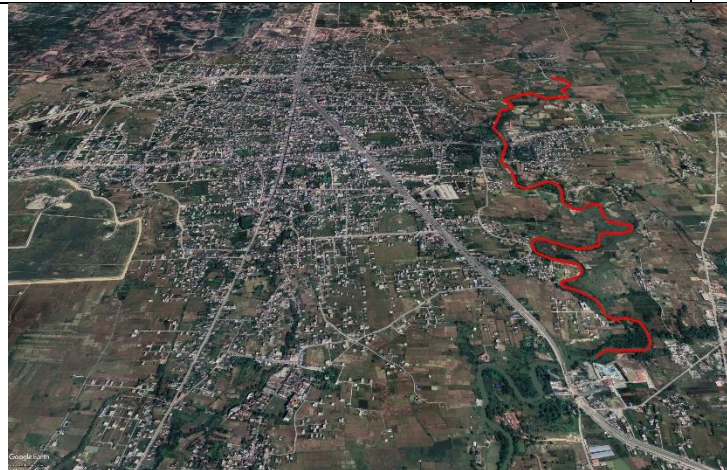


Figure 40: Rohini river acting as the natural edge of the city




10.3 DISTRICTS:

Districts are larger city areas characterized by a distinct identity or purpose. They often have a common theme or function, such as a financial district, cultural district, or residential neighborhood.

Role: Districts help organize the city and provide a sense of place and identity. They often have their unique character and amenities.

Characteristics: Districts can vary in size and scale, and they typically contain a concentration of related activities, businesses, or institutions.

Example:

<p>The Financial District in Lower Manhattan is a well-defined district known for its concentration of financial institutions and skyscrapers, including the New York Stock Exchange. The historic Greenwich Village in Manhattan is a distinct district celebrated for its unique character, historic architecture, and vibrant arts scene.</p>	<p>The Durbar Squares of Kathmandu, such as Kathmandu Durbar Square and Patan Durbar Square, can be considered districts in Lynch's model. These areas have a distinct identity, characterized by the presence of historic palace, temples, and courtyards, all contributing to their unique cultural and architectural heritage.</p>	<p>The several districts highlighted; Annapurna Tole, Barmeli Tole, Bank Colony, etc., represent diverse neighborhoods in the city. These places frequently have distinctive qualities, histories, and communities that add to the diversity of the city.</p>
		

10.4 NODES:

Nodes are focal points or hubs within the city where various paths intersect, and activities converge. They often serve as central gathering places.

Role: Nodes are key destinations and points of interaction within the city. They facilitate social interaction and offer opportunities for rest or recreation.

Characteristics: Nodes can vary in size and function. They may include plazas, squares, major intersections, transportation hubs, or prominent landmarks.

Example:

Times Square is a bustling node in the heart of Manhattan, known for its bright billboards, theaters, and constant activity. Grand Central Terminal serves as a transportation node, connecting various train lines and acting as a major hub for commuters.



Traditional markets like Asan can also be viewed as nodes in the city. They are central gathering places where people converge for commerce, social interaction, and cultural exchange. The communal courtyards or "chowks" within neighborhoods function as nodes on a smaller scale. They are local gathering places where residents come together for various activities, fostering a sense of community.



Among the important nodes are Devkota Chowk, Buddha Chowk, Milan Chowk, and Milan Chowk. These locations frequently have value and act as hubs of activity and social interaction. They contribute to the development of the city's personality and feeling of place.






10.5 LANDMARKS:

Landmarks are prominent, easily identifiable features within the city that serve as reference points for navigation. They can be natural, like mountains or rivers, or man-made, like tall buildings or monuments.

Role: Landmarks play a crucial role in helping people orient themselves in the city. They are often used as navigation aids.

Characteristics: Landmarks are typically visually distinctive and memorable. They stand out in the urban landscape.

Example:

<p>The Empire State Building is a renowned landmark in New York City. Its distinctive art deco design and height make it instantly recognizable. The Statue of Liberty, located on Liberty Island is an iconic national landmark and symbol of freedom.</p>	<p>Prominent landmarks like Swayambhu Nath Stupa and Dhara-hara serve as reference points in the city. They are easily recognizable structures that help people orient themselves within Kathmandu.</p>	<p>The significant sites named, including the Airport, Rangasala, Haatbazaar, and Mahendra Park, are extremely important for guiding locals and visitors throughout the city. They act as touchstones that support Bhairahawa's entire identity and image.</p>
 <p>Figure 41: The statue of Liberty & Empire State Building</p>	 <p>Figure 42: Swayambhu Nath Temple</p>	 <p>Figure 43: Parapet in Siddhartha Rangasala</p>

Argument:

The flexibility and universality of conceptual framework by Lynch may need to be taken into consideration by urban practitioners as urbanization continues to grow internationally, encompassing a wider diversity of urban forms and planning techniques. This guarantees that the integration and improvement of the city's image stay applicable and efficient in a variety of urban environments and cultural situations. The Kevin Lynch's concept of the "Image of the City" and its associated elements, as outlined in his work, originated from research conducted in Western cities, particularly in the three cities of United States. During Lynch's study period, many Western metropolitan areas had well-defined urban planning and grid-based layouts, which served as the basis for the development of the framework.

However, it's important to note that urban shapes and planning techniques vary around the globe. Many cities have more organic and asymmetrical layouts, particularly those whose histories predate contemporary concepts of urban planning. In fact, contrary to the Western cities, many Asian cities and traditional towns have histories and urban structures that are very different from planned, grid-based design. These Asian cities often feature organic, changing designs that have grown over ages, blending elements of history, culture, and spirituality. When we explore the modern urban environment, we find that the dynamics of city planning and development have changed significantly. Many cities all around the world, especially in non-Western settings, have a more intricate and dynamic interaction between the tangible and intangible elements that make up their overall image. Given how rapidly urban areas are changing due to variables like globalization, cultural diversity, and technology improvements.

Lynch's five elements offer insightful perspectives on comprehending the urban environment of every city, yet they might not fully capture the essence of the place. It is often accepted that the arrangement of these parts facilitates the creation of the user's mental map of a city, but it is important to understand that the mental image goes beyond these components. The chapter Data Discussion and analysis effectively captures the complex understanding of Bhairahawa's urban environment, highlighting both tangible and intangible aspects that contribute to the city's image. Lynch's five components adequately cover a significant number of those identified objects, as seen in Bhairahawa, but they have limits when it comes to accommodating more things. Think about how important security and safety are to Bhairahawa's image. This crucial aspect is difficult to classify within Lynch's framework, suggesting that there may be a gap in the model's capacity to include the wider range of factors affecting a city's image. In a similar manner, aspects that greatly contribute to Bhairahawa's identity but are difficult to categorize under Lynch's components are local cuisines, social cohesiveness, and other intangibles. This emphasizes how important cultural components and ordinary experiences are in forming a city's identity.

This discovery gives rise to the hypothesis that a city's overall image may not be sufficiently represented if we rely just on Lynch's five components. Like many other urban settings globally, the aspects like inclusiveness and technological advancements that function as integral pieces of the mosaic but remain unidentified within the constraints of Lynch's model. We see that deeply ingrained in cultural and spiritual traditions, these urban landscapes are complicated and can contain complex spatial interactions that are difficult to classify into a predetermined set of characteristics. For example, Lynch's framework's idea of districts could not adequately capture the many layers of meaning and purpose ingrained in our city's different areas. In a similar manner, landmarks and nodes may have deeper cultural importance than just serving as navigational cues. The traditional cities are frequently distinguished by elements like marketplaces, courtyards, temples, and meandering, small streets that have all naturally developed in response to local demands, cultural norms, and historical events.

Extension or modification of Lynch's features to incorporate social, cultural, and quality of life issues becomes more insightful based on the study. This adaptation recognizes that a city's identity is shaped by its people's lived experiences and perceptions in addition to its physical characteristics. We may create a more thorough and nuanced picture of the city's image by recognizing and incorporating these extra pieces, which acknowledge both tangible and intangible qualities.

11. CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Many factors help to make the complicated character of the city image easier to understand. Essentially, modern cities are dynamic where every resident participates through urban life, rather than static objects to be watched from a distance. The cohesiveness of our environment, the attachments we feel with places, and the physical landmarks that help us find our way around all play a part in creating the mosaic of our individual perceptions. These mental models are dynamic, always changing as a result of the interaction between present-day events and the memories of the past. The research gains depth when it acknowledges that a city's social fabric and cultural variety are essential elements of its character. It recognizes that the people who live there and how they interact with one another greatly influence the nature of the urban setting. From this research, two major aspects of understanding has come into light:

1. **Organization of the Urban Landscape:** The analysis has shed light on the way the urban fabric of Bhairahawa is put together. This probably involves the way that pathways are laid out, how boundaries are drawn, how districts are identified, and how/where important nodes are, and whether or not landmarks are there. Gaining an understanding of these components is essential to understanding the city's physical layout.
2. **Perception and Navigation:** The research illuminates how residents perceive and navigate their environment by examining these specific features. This involves being aware of the

ways in which the city functions, including its transit systems, orientation markers, and district layouts for both locals and tourists. The entire quality of life in the city is reflected in the examination of elements like cost, diversity, food, safety, and ease of access to opportunities. This focus on the inhabitants' actual experiences offers a more thorough understanding of urban identity.

The study has successfully demonstrated the importance of the identified artifacts and its connotations in the daily lives of the people of Bhairahawa. Beyond the obvious qualities, this also includes the intangible elements that influence people's attachment to and views of the city. The framework gets better at capturing the dynamic and realistic features of Bhairahawa's personality by adding intangible elements. Cities are dynamic, ever-evolving structures influenced by a wide range of variables; their complexity is better reflected by an analytical framework that encompasses both tangible and intangible characteristics. The research achieved its goals by highlighting the significance of these intangible characteristics, providing a more thorough knowledge of Bhairahawa's identity. This strategy of integrating both tangible and intangible aspects has produced a comprehensive picture of the city. This adjustment to Kevin Lynch's classic model is a crucial step in capturing the intricate interplay between physical and intangible elements that contribute to a city's identity. This method recognizes that a city's identity is influenced by both tangible and intangible factors that affect how its citizens interact with and perceive their urban environment. The identified objects and their meaning have proven its significance in the life of the residents. Going beyond the physical dimension, the intangible dimensions are found to be equally important and attached to the place value of the residents. This helps in fulfilling the objectives of this research. Moreover, the combination of both tangible and intangible dimensions has created a holistic image of the city, different than the traditional model of Kevin Lynch, in this case particular.

The group bonds of people provide a clear portrait of the city's character. Bhairahawa is known as a site where the urban landscape has been carefully designed to give locals a foundation for long-lasting and happy lifestyles. People can find prospects for economic progress in this city, as well as the advantages of easily available amenities and a high level of living. These factors blend together to give the city an identity that resonates with its citizens and strengthens their sense of loyalty to its socioeconomic and practical aspects. There are few negatively impacting image to the residents as well. It's critical to understand that these difficulties are not specific to Bhairahawa but rather are a part of a bigger story of urbanization and growth. To ensure the city's sustainable growth and enhanced quality of life for its residents, addressing these concerns requires strategic planning, community participation, and coordinated efforts from diverse stakeholders. It is impossible to exaggerate how crucial it is to settle these issues because they are essential to the development and transformation of the city. In order to create a coherent and harmonious urban environment, it is crucial to find common ground between various stakeholders. These initiatives reflect the city's resolve to overcome obstacles and

improve its standing. Bhairahawa is making significant strides toward realizing its full potential and fostering a brighter future for its people and visitors by tackling these problems head-on and encouraging cooperation. This look into the viewpoints of the elder and younger generation offers a priceless insight into Bhairahawa's identity as seen through the eyes of its potential stakeholders as well. Their connection to engaging social activities and their concerns about developmental obstacles show the city's multidimensional character, which includes both its advantages and potential disadvantages.

These collected data in the form of texts, photographs, place meaning and experiences will be a good source of record. It will act as a resource building for local authorities for further discussion. These documents produced by the research acts as a great resource for understanding social reality and can be used for city branding as well. This research adds to our understanding of Bhairahawa's identity by capturing and examining both dimensions. It also provides a template for future research on other cities with a similar focus on both the material and immaterial factors that influence their perceptions. The results support a more nuanced and comprehensive approach to urban research that can aid people, legislators, and urban planners in better understanding and defining the character and livability of their cities.

This research primarily focused on what the city is when it becomes image through residents' perception rather than examining or comparing the issues and consequences in presence or absence of the image. The study was not directed to making the image of the particular city better or solve the weaknesses of the city rather on examining what are the objects in the city that have place attachment, why are people attached to such places and how are the attachment formed. The methodology was exclusive to qualitative interpretation of the findings. For the data collection, research was limited to residents' response as understanding their viewpoint is crucial to determining development trajectories that could reconcile competing demands and perceptions among the various stakeholders (Bandyopadyay, & Morrais, 2005). The findings are supposed to be subjectively correct for the case specific, however, the methodology can be utilized in similar other cases (Cross, 2015).

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

This research has provided a thorough understanding of the perception of the city of Bhairahawa, including both tangible and intangible components. The discovery of the factors that are important to the city's inhabitants is one of the research's most important findings. With this information, it becomes crucial for way forward to protect and preserve these important characteristics as planners and policymakers. This focused effort represents the first step toward raising public contentment and urban quality of life in general. Regrettably, recent development projects have unintentionally caused several beloved city elements to deteriorate. The stories of Mahendra Park and Haat Bazaar serve as a prime example of this. As a result, it

is up to us to take a thoughtful approach to developing future policy that is firmly based in safeguarding the city's current identity; a story that resonates with its citizens and captures their shared values and heritage.

In order to effectively recognize the distinctive features of our cities, urban planners and designers might need to apply a more adaptable and culturally aware methodology. This entails interacting with local populations, comprehending how the urban fabric has changed historically, and appreciating how the physical environment and cultural activities are interdependent. It also emphasizes how crucial it is to use participatory techniques and indigenous knowledge to make sure that urban interventions are in line with the community's goals and sense of identity. Addressing how both tangible and intangible aspects will lead to more holistic and resident-centered urban development strategies. By combining the residents' perceptions to these real world implications, the research will contribute to evidence-based urban planning practices that prioritize resident experiences, improve quality of life, promote sustainability and foster inclusive and equitable cities. One of the major problem for modern cities i.e. placelessness, will be addressed if these identified objects get attention and improvement.

It is our duty as urban planners to influence how people see cities in their minds. But with that power comes a responsibility to the welfare of the cities and their citizens. As a result, the first phase of this transformative process has to be sensitively based and involve a thoughtful mapping out of the current perception of our cities. Next, instead of imposing our own unique views, our proposals should navigate this role as facilitators, enabling and supporting the communal images that already exist. Understanding that image-building is a complex process that develops over time. Careful thought should be given to this complex process, which is weaved from the fabric of shared experiences, in order to create resilient, community-driven cities with a unique identity. Essentially, the role of an urban planner is to respect the complex web of shared beliefs that shape a city in addition to transforming physical spaces. We contribute to create cities that are not only aesthetically beautiful but also representative of the various stories and histories woven into their urban fabric by coordinating our interventions with the image that already exist.

The necessary steps requirements include both local and regional integration in both short and long term strategies and actions, which are discussed below:

- ❖ The valued pathways/landmarks/nodes and public spaces should be re-designed to improve experience, usability, aesthetic appeal and public engagement in addition to improving their functionality. Additionally, it is crucial to make a deliberate effort to improve the caliber and grade of infrastructure. By doing this, we can greatly improve how efficiently city residents may go about their daily lives.

- ❖ There's no denying that the sporadic activity of people on the streets has made these places and the unique events they host livelier which include Bank Road, Narayan Path, Highway, Gallamandi Road and so on. It is essential that the city's management organization recognizes the value of these well-known locations and work to enhance the environment there. Instead of relocating these activities to completely new and distant locations, focus should be on maintaining and strengthening the attachment that locals have developed to the existing areas. This plan ensures the city's social life will always be vibrant and distinctive.
- ❖ A primary emphasis continues to be improving safety and security. The relevant authorities have already started taking steps like installing CCTV cameras, enhancing street lighting, conducting frequent police patrols, reducing dead zones and abandoned places, and launching awareness programs.
- ❖ According to this research, there is a discrepancy in the distribution of public places inside Bhairahawa, with the southern half of the city being crowded and the northern part lacking such spaces. Identifying pockets of spaces and designing them for leisure use for the public should be implemented as soon as possible.
- ❖ The promotion of local cuisine like Fulki and Pawan Peda is required such that they sustain for a long time and quality and taste also does not vary. Most of the fulki sellers are informal sectors, policies to promote these activity and people should be the priority. The identification of informal workers, supporting them with financial and spatial allocation should be the priority. Examine potential opportunities for forming public-private partnerships (PPP) to improve the growth and administration. Partnerships between public and private sector organizations can attract more capital and experience.
- ❖ Improving the spaces/streets around the Pawan sweets through urban design should take place to highlight its significance to tourists/visitors as well.
- ❖ Incorporate cultural installations and public art into the design process. This acts as a visual depiction of the town's distinct personality in addition to improving its aesthetic appeal.
- ❖ The negative image identified in the research needs immediate addressing as well. The problem of traffic congestion, parking management and waste management seems to be the next big problems for the city.
- ❖ The installation of small Buddha statue in the highway has become a two sided sword. From one perspective, the statue reflects the association of city with Lumbini due to its proximity. However on the other side, the continuous installation through the highway has created a monotonous aesthetic which requires a new approach.
- ❖ Moreover, the new cities are being constructed in a haphazard way, only focusing in physical dimensions require a new approach. Using methods and formulas of designing traditional towns as well as placemaking theories and use of powerful tool like Power of 10+ should be way forward for planners and policy makers. Those 10+ places may include and not limited to are, Buddha chowk, Bhatbhateni, Devkota chowk, Milan chowk, Bank

Road, Gallamandi, Pawan Sweets area, Airport, Rohini Park, Haatbazaar, and so on. Designing pedestrian-friendly paths and green spaces for recreational and social activities in these identified spaces should be done.

- ❖ The underutilization of SEZ should be changed as soon as possible to take advantage of the economic positioning of the city as well as resources and manpower availability. Create a thorough strategic plan for the SEZ that complements the city's positioning and economic advantages. A comprehensive marketing plan to draw in companies and investors from both domestic and foreign markets should be part of this. Analyze the laws and rules that now control the SEZ. Determine whether there are any obstacles that are preventing its use.
- ❖ The promotion of Bhairahawa for accommodation is another way to integrate and take benefit from its regional position. It lies between religious and historic places like Lumbini, Tilaurakot, Ramgram, and Chitwan and Palpa a little farther. Start specialized marketing initiatives that promote Bhairahawa as the perfect destination for lodging and expand the variety of housing alternatives available, such as hotels, resorts, guesthouses, and other lodging establishments. Improve food and hospitality options to highlight regional specialties and customs.
- ❖ Siddharthanagar's larger-scale integration with Tilottama Municipality and Butwal Sub-Metropolitan, which would promote a corridor-like growth, has the potential to greatly improve these cities' cooperative and efficient development.
- ❖ Create a comprehensive urban plan for cities integration that takes transportation networks, infrastructure development, and land use into account. Along the corridor, identify and set aside certain zones for economic growth. Promote enterprises, sectors, and trade endeavors. Work together on significant infrastructure projects that will benefit all three organizations. This might entail working together to improve utilities, including energy and water supplies, in order to maximize productivity and resource usage. Establish common area for neighborhood gatherings, festivals, and leisure activities.
- ❖ Encouraging community engagement and participation in the planning process to ensure that the town's unique identity is preserved and celebrated.
- ❖ Adopt sustainable techniques to make sure the city can continue to operate in the long run. This covers socially conscious behavior, community involvement, and ecologically sustainable projects. Execute ongoing marketing campaigns, modifying tactics in response to visitor input and evolving patterns. Evaluate advertising efforts on a regular basis and make the required changes.
- ❖ To reach a larger audience, make use of digital channels like social media and community forums. Create diverse, inclusive planning groups that reflect the community's diversity.
- ❖ Plan frequent forums and seminars where community members may share their thoughts, worries, and suggestions about planning projects. Organize educational initiatives to increase public understanding of the value of maintaining the town's distinctive identity.

These activities may consist of seminars on the identity of the city, workshops on local specialties, and excursions.

- ❖ Keep everyone informed about planning activities on a regular basis, and be open and honest at all times. As a result, the community gains trust and is encouraged to continue participating.

This all-encompassing strategy for urban development promises to provide a setting where citizens can prosper and thrive while keeping the city's unique personality and allure. While residents' perceptions are crucial, it's important to recognize that other stakeholders also play significant roles in shaping the city. These stakeholders may include policymakers, urban planners, architects, developers, businesses, community organizations, and other residents. Each stakeholder group contributes to the complexity of the urban environment and has their own perspectives and interests. It is indeed beneficial to consider a multi-stakeholder approach that integrates the perspectives of various groups when studying the image of the city. However, the time and budgetary constraints has limited this research to only residents' perception. In summary, while residents' perceptions are essential, taking a multi-stakeholder approach that considers a range of perspectives can provide a more nuanced understanding of the image of the city and lead to more inclusive and effective urban planning strategies. Although the results are context-specific, the approach may be used to scenarios with a comparable context. This paper also serves as a template for future study in related fields, encouraging a more thorough approach to urban research that aids citizens, decision-makers, and urban planners in defining and enhancing the character and livability of their cities.

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ANNEX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INTERVIEW

Personal Information									
Household Number									
Household Type	Rent				Owned				
Name of Informant									
Age, Sex and Position in House									
Ethnicity/Religion	Brahman	Muslim	Kshetri	Magar	Yadav	Gurung	Chamar	Teli	Newar
Origin/Ancestors	Same Palika			Same District		Other District			
Duration of Stay									
Duration of House construction									

Categories	Indicators	Questions
Features Open-Ended	Places Identification	<p>Why did you come and settle into this city?</p> <p>If you had to move out, what will you miss the most? Why?</p> <p>Where do you spend your most time outside of your house?</p> <p>What are the places you meet your friends, colleagues or visitors?</p> <p>If you have to take someone on a tour, what places will you take them to? Why?</p> <p>If officers wanted to make an image, what do you want to add to it?</p> <p>What would you recommend visitors to take experience in the city? 10+</p> <p>What are the specialty of this city? Name 10+</p> <p>What are the things or places that government changed/destroyed in recent years?</p> <p>Why do you think this city is great and will prosper more in the future?</p>
Physical Environment	Landmarks Paths and Connectivity Public Spaces	<p>What are the most recognizable landmarks or features in the city to you?</p> <p>How would you rate the quality of public spaces (parks, plazas, etc.) in the city?</p> <p>Which transportation routes or paths do you frequently use and why?</p>
Social and Cultural	Neighborhood & district Community Identity Diversity and Inclusivity	<p>Are there any specific neighborhoods or districts that you feel strongly connected to? Why?</p> <p>How would you describe the sense of community and social interactions in the city?</p> <p>How important is cultural diversity and inclusivity for you in the city?</p> <p>How do you perceive the city's efforts in preserving and showcasing its cultural heritage?</p> <p>Are there any community events or initiatives that promote social interaction and community engagement in the city? Please provide examples.</p> <p>How would you rate the accessibility and inclusivity of public spaces for different age groups and abilities in the city?</p> <p>Do you feel that different cultural communities in the city have equal opportunities for participation and representation? Why or why not?</p> <p>How does the presence of diverse food options and culinary traditions contribute to your overall experience and perception of the city?</p>

<p>Emotional and Experiential</p>	<p>Affective Attachments Events and Festivals Sense of Safety/Security</p>	<p>Are there any specific places or experiences in the city that evoke strong emotional responses or memories for you? Please describe.</p> <p>How do events and festivals held in the city contribute to your overall image and experience of the city?</p> <p>Can you recall a specific moment or experience in the city that made you feel a strong sense of pride or joy? Please describe.</p> <p>Are there any hidden gems or lesser-known places in the city that hold personal significance to you? Why?</p> <p>How would you rate the availability and quality of cultural and artistic experiences (e.g., theaters, museums, galleries) in the city?</p> <p>Have you encountered any public art installations or street performances that have left a lasting impression? Please share your thoughts.</p> <p>How do natural spaces, such as parks or waterfront areas, contribute to your overall well-being and connection with the city?</p> <p>Have you ever experienced or witnessed any incidents of crime or violence in your neighborhood? If yes, please describe the situation and its impact on your sense of safety.</p> <p>Are there specific areas or locations in the city where you feel less safe or more vulnerable? If yes, please specify and explain your concerns.</p> <p>How would you rate the effectiveness of local law enforcement and security measures in your neighborhood or the city as a whole?</p> <p>Do you feel comfortable reporting safety concerns or incidents to the authorities? Why or why not?</p> <p>Are there any community initiatives or programs focused on enhancing safety and security in your neighborhood that you are aware of or actively involved in? If yes, please provide details.</p> <p>In your opinion, what specific measures or improvements could be implemented to enhance safety and security in the city?</p>
<p>Socio-economic and Practical Factors</p>	<p>Amenities and services Housing & affordability Employment and economic opportunities</p>	<p>What are the most important amenities and services in the city for you? (e.g., healthcare, education, transportation, etc.)</p> <p>How satisfied are you with the affordability and quality of housing options in the city?</p> <p>What are your perceptions of employment opportunities and economic development in the city?</p>

Categories	Indicators	Questions (Nepali Translation)
Features Open-Ended	Places Identification	<p>तपाईं यो सहरमा आएर बस्न कुन चिजले प्रेरित गर्यो?</p> <p>यदि तपाईं बाहिर जानु पर्यो भने, तपाईंले सबैभन्दा बढी के मिस गर्नुहुन्छ? किन?</p> <p>तपाईं आफ्नो घर बाहेक धेरै समय कहाँ बिताउनुहुन्छ?</p> <p>तपाईंले आफ्ना साथीहरू, सहकर्मीहरू वा आगन्तुकहरूलाई भेट्ने ठाउँहरू के हुन्?</p> <p>यदि तपाईंले कसैलाई भ्रमणमा लैजानु पर्यो भने, तपाईं कुन ठाउँमा लैजानुहुन्छ? किन?</p> <p>यदि सरकारी अधिकारीहरू Image बनाउन चाहन्थे भने, तपाईं यसमा के थप्न चाहनुहुन्छ?</p> <p>शहरमा अनुभव लिन आगन्तुकहरूलाई के सुझाव दिनुहुन्छ? १०+</p> <p>यो सहरको विशेषता के हो ? नाम 10+ (Locate in Map)</p> <p>हालैका वर्षहरूमा सरकारले परिवर्तन/नष्ट गरेको चीजहरू वा स्थानहरू के हुन्?</p> <p>तपाईंलाई किन यो सहर महान छ र भविष्यमा अझ समृद्ध हुनेछ जस्तो लाग्छ?</p>
Physical Environment	Landmarks Paths and Connectivity Public Spaces	<p>तपाईंलाई सहरमा सबैभन्दा चिन्न सकिने स्थलचिन्ह वा विशेषताहरू के हुन्?</p> <p>तपाईं सहरका सार्वजनिक स्थानहरू (पार्क, प्लाजा, आदि) को गुणस्तर कसरी मूल्याङ्कन गर्नुहुन्छ?</p> <p>तपाईंले बारम्बार कुन यातायात मार्ग वा मार्गहरू प्रयोग गर्नुहुन्छ र किन?</p>
Social and Cultural	Neighborhood & district Community Identity Diversity and Inclusivity	<p>के यहाँ कुनै विशेष बस्ति वा टोल छन् जुन तपाईंसँग जोडिएको महसुस गर्नुहुन्छ? किन?</p> <p>तपाईं सहरमा समुदाय र सामाजिक अन्तरक्रियाको भावनालाई कसरी वर्णन गर्नुहुन्छ?</p> <p>शहरमा सांस्कृतिक विविधता र समावेशीता तपाईंको लागि कतिको महत्वपूर्ण छ?</p> <p>सांस्कृतिक सम्पदाको संरक्षण र प्रदर्शनीमा नगरले गरेको प्रयासलाई कसरी लिनुभएको छ ?</p> <p>के त्यहाँ शहरमा सामाजिक अन्तरक्रिया र सामुदायिक संलग्नतालाई बढावा दिने कुनै सामुदायिक कार्यक्रमहरू वा पहलहरू छन्? कृपया उदाहरणहरू प्रदान गर्नुहोस्।</p>

		<p>तपाईं शहरमा विभिन्न उमेर समूह र क्षमताहरूका लागि सार्वजनिक स्थानहरूको पहुँच र समावेशीतालाई कसरी मूल्याङ्कन गर्नुहुन्छ?</p> <p>के तपाईं सहरका विभिन्न सांस्कृतिक समुदायको सहभागिता र प्रतिनिधित्वको लागि समान अवसर छ जस्तो लाग्छ? किन वा किन छैन?</p> <p>विभिन्न खाना विकल्पहरू र पाक परम्पराहरूको उपस्थितिले तपाईंको समग्र अनुभव र शहरको धारणामा कसरी योगदान गर्छ?</p>
<p>Emotional and Experiential</p>	<p>Affective Attachments Events and Festivals Sense of Safety/Security</p>	<p>के यो शहरमा कुनै खास ठाउँहरू वा अनुभवहरू छन् जसले तपाईंको लागि बलियो भावनात्मक प्रतिक्रियाहरू वा सम्झनाहरू जगाउँछन्? कृपया वर्णन गर्नुहोस्।</p> <p>सहरमा आयोजित कार्यक्रम र चाडपर्वहरूले तपाईंको समग्र छवि र शहरको अनुभवलाई कसरी योगदान दिन्छ?</p> <p>के तपाईं सहरको कुनै खास क्षण वा अनुभव सम्झन सक्नुहुन्छ जसले तपाईंलाई गर्व वा आनन्दको बलियो भावना महसुस गराएको थियो? कृपया वर्णन गर्नुहोस्।</p> <p>के त्यहाँ शहरमा कुनै लुकेका रत्नहरू वा कम ज्ञात ठाउँहरू छन् जुन तपाईंको लागि व्यक्तिगत महत्त्व राख्छ? किन?</p> <p>तपाईं सहरमा सांस्कृतिक र कलात्मक अनुभवहरू (जस्तै, थिएटरहरू, संग्रहालयहरू, ग्यालरीहरू) को उपलब्धता र गुणस्तरलाई कसरी मूल्याङ्कन गर्नुहुन्छ?</p> <p>के तपाईंले दिगो छाप छोडेको कुनै सार्वजनिक कला प्रतिष्ठान वा सडक प्रदर्शनहरूको सामना गर्नुभयो? कृपया आफ्नो विचार साझा गर्नुहोस्।</p> <p>पार्क वा वाटरफ्रन्ट क्षेत्रहरू जस्ता प्राकृतिक ठाउँहरूले तपाईंको समग्र कल्याण र शहरसँगको सम्बन्धमा कसरी योगदान गर्छ?</p> <p>के तपाईंले कहिल्यै आफ्नो छिमेकमा अपराध वा हिंसाको घटना अनुभव गर्नुभएको छ वा देख्नुभएको छ? यदि हो भने, कृपया स्थिति र तपाईंको सुरक्षाको भावनामा यसको प्रभाव वर्णन गर्नुहोस्।</p>

		<p>के त्यहाँ सहरमा कुनै खास क्षेत्र वा स्थानहरू छन् जहाँ तपाईं कम सुरक्षित वा बढी असुरक्षित महसुस गर्नुहुन्छ? यदि हो भने, कृपया निर्दिष्ट गर्नुहोस् र आफ्नो चिन्ताहरू व्याख्या गर्नुहोस्।</p> <p>तपाईं तपाईंको छिमेक वा सम्पूर्ण शहरमा स्थानीय कानून प्रवर्तन र सुरक्षा उपायहरूको प्रभावकारितालाई कसरी मूल्याङ्कन गर्नुहुन्छ?</p> <p>के तपाईं अधिकारीहरूलाई सुरक्षा चिन्ता वा घटनाहरू रिपोर्ट गर्न सहज महसुस गर्नुहुन्छ? किन वा किन नगर्ने ?</p> <p>के तपाईंको छिमेकमा सुरक्षा र सुरक्षा बढाउनमा केन्द्रित कुनै सामुदायिक पहल वा कार्यक्रमहरू छन् जुन तपाईं सचेत हुनुहुन्छ वा सक्रिय रूपमा संलग्न हुनुहुन्छ? यदि हो भने, कृपया विवरण प्रदान गर्नुहोस्।</p> <p>तपाईंको विचारमा, सहरमा सुरक्षा र सुरक्षा बढाउन के विशेष उपाय वा सुधारहरू लागू गर्न सकिन्छ?</p>
Socio-economic and Practical Factors	Amenities and services Housing & affordability Employment and economic opportunities	<p>तपाईंको लागि सहरमा सबैभन्दा महत्वपूर्ण सुविधाहरू र सेवाहरू के हुन्? (जस्तै, स्वास्थ्य सेवा, शिक्षा, यातायात, आदि)</p> <p>सहरमा उपलब्ध आवास विकल्पहरूको किफायती र गुणस्तरसँग तपाईं कतिको सन्तुष्ट हुनुहुन्छ?</p> <p>सहरमा रोजगारीका अवसर र आर्थिक विकासबारे तपाईंको धारणा के छ ?</p>

ANNEX 2:

MODIFIED QUESTIONNAIRE AFTER PILOTING

Personal Information

Household Number:

Name of Informant:

Age, Sex and Position in House:

Ethnicity/Religion:

Origin/Ancestors:

Duration of Stay in Bhairahawa:

Duration of House construction:

Questionnaire:

- i. Why did you come and settle into this city?
- ii. What are the places you meet your friends, colleagues or visitors? Why
- iii. What would you recommend visitors to take experience in the city? 10+
- iv. What are the most important amenities and services in the city for you? (e.g., healthcare, education, transportation, etc.)
- v. Are there any specific places or experiences in the city that evoke strong emotional responses or memories for you? Please describe.
- vi. Can you recall a specific moment or experience in the city that made you feel a strong sense of pride or joy? Please describe.
- vii. Are there any specific neighborhoods or districts that you feel strongly connected to? Why?
- viii. Are there any community events or initiatives that promote social interaction and community engagement in the city? Please provide examples.
- ix. Are there specific areas or locations in the city where you feel less safe or more vulnerable? If yes, please specify and explain your concerns.
- x. What are the things or places that government changed/destroyed in recent years?

ANNEX 3

FORMAT FOR DATA COLLECTION

Informant:		
Categories	Indicators	Response
Physical Environment	Landmarks Paths and Connectivity Public Spaces	
Social and Cultural	Neighborhood & district Community Identity Diversity and Inclusivity	
Emotional and Experiential	Affective Attachments Events and Festivals Sense of Safety/Security	
Socio-economic and Practical Factors	Amenities and services Housing & affordability Employment and economic opportunities	

ANNEX 4

LIST OF IDENTIFIED OBJECTS

CATEGORIES	INDICATORS	RESPONSE
Physical Environment	Landmarks	Airport, Bhatbhateni, Durga Mandir, Hotel Pauwa, Bus park, Rangasala, Lumbini, Shiva
	Nodes	Mandir, Jama Masjid, Krishna Mandir
	Paths and Connectivity	Devkota Chowk, Buddha Chowk, Milan Chowk
	Public Spaces	Narayanpath, Bank Road, Gallamandi Road, Highway
Social and Cultural	Neighborhood & district	Mahendra Park, Haat bazar, Darkachuwa Park
	Community Identity	Barmeli Tole, Paklihawa, Annapurna Tole, Bank colony
	Diversity and Inclusivity	No specific community association in the city.
		Diversity in Caste, Religion and origin.
Emotional and Experiential	Affective Attachments	Social Cohesion
	Events and Festivals	Affection towards the public spaces.
	Sense of Belongingness	Association with local groups clubs for variety events like cleanliness, plantation, women empowerment, anti-drugs campaign, road safety, domestic violence, sports and others.
	Safety	Street market, festivals and programs during occasions,
	Comfort	Unity during Economic Blockade
		Integrated neighborhood, active in sharing and work for each other's welfare. Active communication and interaction for any social cause.
	Local Cuisines, high attachment towards hot served <i>Fulki</i> . Highly association with Pawan Sweets.	

Socio-economic and Practical Factors	Amenities and services	UCMS, Bhim Hospital, Water Supply, Availability of all basic infrastructure.
	Housing and affordability	Affordability due to availability of multiple markets
	Employment and economic opportunities	Accommodation Sector Job opportunity, Border Market, Small Business opportunity
Negative Image		Road Accident in Lumbini road and Bypass Road, Destruction of Mahendra Park for road expansion, Handing over the children park to Hotel Pauwa, Extreme Temperature, Increasing Waste management issues, Drug exchange near border area

ANNEX 5

LIST OF RESPONDENTS, GROUP DISCUSSIONS AND KII PARTICIPANTS

Respondents Name	Age	Position in House	Gender	Stay	Religion
Aakash	27	Son	M	Birth	Hindu
Akash	17	Son	M	Birth	Hindu
Alauddin	35	Son	M	Birth	Muslim
Arun	18	Son	M	Birth	Hindu
Asfak	33	Son	M	Birth	Muslim
Ashish	28	Son	M	Birth	Hindu
Asmita	20	Daughter	F	Birth	Hindu
Babulal	46	Owner	M	Birth	Hindu
Bakruddin	32	Son	M	Birth	Muslim
Balkumari	18	Daughter	F	Birth	Hindu
Bhagawati	52	Wife	F	Birth	Hindu
Bharat	63	Owner	M	30+	Hindu
Bhawana	17	Daughter	F	5+	Hindu
Bibek	30	Son	M	Birth	Hindu
Bibek	28	Son	M	Birth	Hindu
Bidur	27	Son	M	Birth	Hindu
Bijay	38	Son	M	Birth	Hindu
Chandrika	68	Owner	M	Birth	Hindu
Dharmendra	28	Son	M	Birth	Hindu
Ganga	55	Wife	F	30+	Hindu
Gyan	29	Son	M	Birth	Hindu
Habib	36	Son	M	10+	Muslim
Hari	65	Son	M	Birth	Hindu
Irsad	39	Son	M	Birth	Muslim
Jostina	16	Daughter	F	Birth	Hindu

Kamal	54	Owner	M	Birth	Hindu
Kamruddin	36	Son	M	Birth	Muslim
Kismat	62	Owner	F	Birth	Hindu
Koshish	29	Son	M	Birth	Hindu
Krishna	57	Owner	M	Birth	Hindu
Krishna	49	Owner	M	Birth	Hindu
Kritika	22	Daughter	F	Birth	Hindu
Llaxhan	60	Owner	M	Birth	Hindu
Manju	51	Owner	F	Birth	Hindu
Mina	50	Wife	F	30+	Hindu
Mohammad	23	Son	M	Birth	Muslim
Mohammad	25	Son	M	Birth	Muslim
Moona	18	Daughter	F	Birth	Hindu
Mukesh	16	Son	M	15+	Hindu
Prabina	26	Daughter	F	15+	Hindu
Prashamsa	18	Daughter	F	Birth	Hindu
Pratik	42	Son	M	10+	Hindu
Prativa	28	Daughter	F	10+	Hindu
Priyanka	27	Daughter	F	20+	Hindu
Rachita	28	Daughter	F	Birth	Hindu
Radha	46	Daughter I.L	F	30+	Hindu
Raghubir	69	Owner	M	15+	Hindu
Rajkumar	50	Owner	M	15+	Hindu
Ram	64	Owner	M	20+	Hindu
Ramkumar	53	Owner	M	20+	Hindu
Radhika	62	Owner	F	30+	Hindu

Rishav	27	Son	M	15+	Hindu
Rupesh	51	Son	M	Birth	Hindu
Sabina	26	Daughter	F	30+	Hindu
Sabnam	38	Daughter I.L	F	30+	Hindu
Salikram	58	Owner	M	20+	Hindu
Salim	54	Son	M	15+	Muslim
Sameer	29	Son	M	15+	Hindu
Samoj	30	Son	M	30+	Hindu
Santosh	49	Son	M	25+	Hindu
Saraswati	57	Wife	F	30+	Hindu
Satish	65	Owner	M	20+	Hindu
Shreya	29	Daughter	F	30+	Hindu
Shrijana	30	Daughter	F	30+	Hindu
Shyam	67	Owner	M	20+	Hindu
Sigma	41	Owner	F	30+	Hindu
Sudha	19	Daughter	F	40+	Hindu
Sumnima	28	Daughter	F	30+	Hindu
Swostika	16	Daughter	F	30+	Hindu
Umesh	30	Son	M	50+	Hindu

S.No.	Name	Age	Relation	Gender	Stay	Religion
GD 1	Ganesh	68	Owner	M	25+	Hindu
	Thakur	45	Owner	M	20+	Hindu
	Ram Prasad	60	Owner	M	30+	Hindu
	Hari	65	Owner	M	20+	Hindu
	Birendra	50	Owner	M	30+	Hindu
GD 2	Hari Maya	65	Wife	F	30+	Hindu
	Sangeeta	60	Owner	F	15+	Hindu
	Srijana	55	Wife	F	30+	Hindu
	Sumita	55	Daughter I.L	F	Birth	Hindu
GD3	Bibek	27	Son	M	Birth	Hindu
	Anmol	28	Son	M	Birth	Hindu
	Vishal	27	Son	M	Birth	Hindu
	Trinetra	27	Son	M	Birth	Hindu
	Kishan	29	Son	M	Birth	Hindu
	Nur	28	Son	M	Birth	Hindu

S. No.	Identity	Gender	Stay	Religion
KII 1	Mayor	M	30+	Muslim
KII 2	Ward Member-5	F	30+	Hindu
KII 3	Ward Chairperson-13	M	30+	Hindu
KII 4	Ward Member-3	M	30+	Hindu
KII 5	Inspector, Crime Investigation Department, Rupandehi	M	20+	Hindu

ANNEX 6

IOE GRADUATE CONFERENCE ACCEPTANCE LETTER AND PAPER



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Date: November 26, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to certify that the paper titled "*Residents' Perceived Image of The City: (A Case of Bhairahawa City)*" (Submission# 450) submitted by **Anup Ghimire** as the first author has been accepted after the peer-review process for presentation in the 14th IOE Graduate Conference being held during Nov 29 to Dec 1, 2023. Kindly note that the publication of the conference proceedings is still underway and hence inclusion of the accepted manuscript in the conference proceedings is contingent upon the author's presence for presentation during the conference and timely response to further edits during the publication process.

Bhim Kumar Dahal, PhD
Convener,
14th IOE Graduate Conference



Residents' Perceived Image of The City: A case of Bhairahawa City

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Abstract

Urbanization in Asian cities, influenced by Western planning, has led to large, homogeneous structures, creating vulnerability to people. Building inclusive and city with a unique image to solve the problem, is possible by using "People First" participatory planning. A city's image and residents' behavior are influenced by individual perceptions. This thesis takes a different approach by stressing how locals' perspectives influence how cities look and feel, it places a higher priority on unique city identities to improve urban quality of life. The primary objective of the research is to identify both the tangible and intangible dimension associated with the residents' perception on image of the city. Lynch's theory aids in understanding tangible aspects, but placemaking and attachment to a place gives the intangible dimensions of the image. With the help of qualitative research techniques; literature reviews and case studies, the paper explores the common identity and priorities of urban residents on sense of place and place attachment. Two methods were used, i) Verbal Method: direct interviews and ii) Visual Method: self-observation and photographs of the identified objects/places to further understand the formation of place attachments. The case area Bhairahawa, in Lumbini Province is a well-known industrial and commercial powerhouse. Its cosmopolitan nature is influenced by the population's diversity, which includes five major castes and others. The study was conducted among respondents and triangulated using Group discussions and KIIs. The findings are presented in major 4 categories, Physical Environment, Social & cultural factors, Emotional & experiential factors and Socio-economic and Practical factors, each of them having multiple further indicators to identify the objects to reflect the image of the city. This study deepens our understanding of the identity of the city by highlighting the importance of both tangible and intangible elements in daily life in Bhairahawa.

Keywords

Image of the city, Perception, Place attachment, Tangible and Intangible aspects.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Asian cities have experienced rapid urbanization, influenced by Western planning principles [1], which has resulted in the dominance of large buildings and infrastructure, resulting in vulnerability [2] and homogeneity, underscoring the need to switch from Top-Down to Bottom-Up methods and adopt "People First" participatory approaches in urban planning. This urban planning initiatives put into practice have produced inclusive, eco-friendly, and smart cities that have empowered communities while simultaneously creating a sense of separation and lowering citizens' sense of belonging. Future cities should put citizens' welfare first in order to solve this, with the creation of unique cities being viewed as a road to sustainability [2]. Unique cities are characterized by their distinctive image, which is produced by elements such as public areas, architecture, and social interactions. These elements provide identification,

well-being, and a sense of belonging [3], and they have an impact on a city's appeal to inhabitants, investors, and tourists [4] [5].

Building on Kevin Lynch's idea in "The Image of the City," this research investigates the city's image through people's subjective experiences, providing an innovative way to examine both intangible and physical aspects of urban life. According to Ahmed [6], taking into account people's perceptions shows both a city's strengths (such as well-kept public areas and effective transit) and shortcomings (such as safety issues and shoddy infrastructure). This provides guidance for policy and decision-making and aids in the creation of inclusive, livable, and sustainable cities that are in line with community needs and ambitions. Individual values and perceptions [7] have an impact on city image, which in turn affects resident behavior [8]. This has an impact on endorsements and satisfaction. Modern planning that prioritizes efficiency weakens

placemaking, lowering connection and clarity regarding the city's distinctive, people-centered character.

1.2 Need and Importance

Rapid urbanization affects cities' unique identities and has an adverse effect on their ecosystems, competitiveness, and citizens' well-being [2]. It is crucial to use residents' experiences to develop a unique municipal image. Although international research highlights the significance of place image for inhabitants [7], there are very few studies in Nepal regarding such idea, which might hinder the development planning and implications.

The emphasis on the significance of residents' perceptions in forming a city's image and identity in this thesis is a novel approach to urban planning. Residents' views and preferences play a significant role in creating the general perception of the city because of their frequent encounters with the urban environment. For the purpose of maintaining a city's unique identity and informing policymakers, perception research on people is essential. By transforming residents' ideals into workable policy, encouraging community involvement [1], and fostering a sense of place connection and responsible citizenship, it improves quality of life and citizen happiness [9].

1.3 Problem Statement

Previous studies on city planning in Nepal have tended to emphasize rational beliefs rather than inhabitants' views, which has left people with little emotional incentive to participate in the development process [1]. There is now no emotional connection to urban growth in Nepal because of the prevailing homogeneity of identity and placelessness. By focusing on the importance of unique city identities to enhance urban quality of life and address city brand formation, which is crucial for tourism and citizen satisfaction in livability and development progress, this study aims to close this gap [2].

2. Research Objective

The primary objective of the research is to identify the tangible and intangible dimension associated with the residents' perception on image of the city. This objective can be achieved through following sub-objectives:

- To identify the places/objects of attachment to the residents in the city.

- To study the underlying meaning attached to the places and its process of formation.

3. Literature review

3.1 Image, Identity and Aesthetics of the city

Across academic disciplines, the word "image" has many different connotations, frequently referring to a mental image created by cognitive processes [10]. Through communication mechanisms, these dynamic, cognitive psychology-based images are ingrained in sociocultural situations [11]. A city's perspective is shaped by its distinctive character, which is influenced by geography, history, landmarks, size, aesthetics, socioeconomic attitudes, and more [12] [11]. Cities' image, consisting of tangible and intangible features, is becoming more important in urban and regional development as they play a larger role in innovation and economic success [11]. Cities change with time [13], producing a variety of impressions through modernization and neighborhood activities that are motivated by individual and social memories. Quantitative and existential aspects are both taken into account by urban planners [13]. While Schulz investigates the existential significance of places, Lynch's perceptual image facilitates navigation [13]. The character of a city is reflected in its aesthetics, which connects people to cosmic experiences by creating strong, lasting, and emotional impressions in their surroundings [13].

3.2 Kevin Lynch: The Image of the city

In his 1960 book "The Image of the City," Kevin Lynch examines how "mental maps" help individuals find their way around cities [14]. Lynch's theory concentrates on two aspects of the built environment: *imageability* and *legibility*. Imageability is the ability of an item to evoke a vivid mental image in the spectator. Legibility is the simplicity with which pieces can be identified and arranged into a coherent pattern. According to Lynch's research, there are three crucial aspects of a location that affect how people see it: *Identity, Structure and Meaning*. In order to explore people's perspectives, Lynch's technique involves having them construct city maps and conducting interviews. He discovered that individuals regularly create mental maps of five components: pathways, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks. Lynch's components help people visualize a metropolis that is mostly governed by governmental entities. In order to help city planners with new developments, this paper focuses on urban living experiences and discovers

attachments. Objects and locations will be examined for a unique city image.

3.3 Place Attachment and Association of Meaning

Recent urban design ideas put a compassionate city viewpoint first, stressing the convenience and leisure options for city dwellers. A place picture is defined as a mental construction created by a person's perceptions of a particular place [7]. The Tripartite Model, which takes into account the Person, Process, and Place components, provides an explanation for place attachment, which has multiple dimensions and complicated interconnections [15]. Place attachment is a broad notion that encompasses affect, cognition, and behavior across a range of sizes, places, and social settings [15]. In 1992, Altman and Low investigated into the subject of place meaning and proposed six (6) typologies of socio-cultural place attachment. However, this perspective deviates from the individual experiences focusing instead on socially constructed meanings as the foundation of attachment. Later, building on Low's meaning typologies, sociologist Cross offers a set of typologies for attachment processes. 'Process' and 'meaning' play a comparable causal function in this situation, where cognition results in affect (attachment) [16]. According to Cross (2015), the place meaning and attachment are manifested on individual and group based on following:

- i. **Sensory:** The embodied and physical attachment.
- ii. **Narrative:** imaginary and place identity attachment
- iii. **Historical:** personal or family historical attachment
- iv. **Spiritual:** deep sense of belonging attachment
- v. **Ideological:** moral or ethical commitment
- vi. **Commodifying:** place is assessed as best able to meet individual's preferences
- vii. **Material Dependence:** The reliance on material features.

3.4 Placemaking, Sense of belonging & Power of 10+

Place attachment and belonging foster community relationships and identity, necessitating flexible urban planning and social policies catered to various populations [17]. Placemaking, which was promoted in the 1960s by Jane Jacobs and William H. Whyte, improves public spaces by taking into account their physical, cultural, and social characteristics, attracting a variety of users and raising their value. According to the "Power of 10+" principle, places prosper when they provide at least 10 compelling

reasons to visit [17]. This transforms cities and promotes resilience and creativity. Imagining the same concept on a city level; a neighborhood or city that has ten exciting places, is capable in making itself extraordinary. Public spaces need to be safe, have amenities, and provide opportunity for social interaction. These uses are influenced by function, environmental quality, socioeconomic factors, and cultural variables [18] [19]. Community relationships and wellbeing are fostered through amenities like outdoor sitting and green spaces [20] [21]. Moreover, the ideas of Yi-Fu Tuan emphasize the influence of culture and individual experiences on our relationship with places, highlighting the significance of protecting cultural legacy to fight placelessness in cities and foster a sense of community and belonging through distinctive, locally rooted locations.

3.5 Residents' Perception

Urban planning decisions are influenced by investigating how locals view the city since it reveals their emotional, social, and cultural ties to the city. For cities to be sustainable and livable, it is essential to include local expertise and viewpoints [22] [23] [24]. Designing user-centered urban settings that improve pleasure and well-being requires an understanding of how inhabitants interact with various components of the city [22]. Urban development shapes and is shaped by residents' subjective perceptions of their urban surroundings in a complex interaction, offering unique insights that statistical and economic models frequently overlook [24]. Through participatory methods, urban planning may use individuals' perspectives to suggest areas for improvement, build community cohesiveness, and advance social fairness. In order to achieve socially equitable urbanization and depart from traditional state-market dynamics, civic engagement is essential [23]. For the built environment to be sustainable and meet people's needs, public engagement in urban planning must be mainstreamed. Monitoring changes and the success of programs, as well as regularly gauging resident happiness and perceptions, enables data-driven modifications to urban planning for ongoing accountability and progress.

3.6 Indicators and Variables

A comprehensive understanding of the city's image requires the research to take into account intangible factors as well. Although Kevin Lynch's five dimensions of the city have served as a basis, Yi-Fu Tuan and other academics have emphasized the significance of taking into account intangible

elements of location. These non-physical qualities may include factors such as human experiences, feelings, and meanings that influence our relationship to certain places. These intangible qualities go beyond physical characteristics. Based on those, the researcher has created a thorough framework with four main areas.

- A. Physical Environment
 - Landmarks
 - Pathways and Connectivity
 - Public Spaces
- B. Social and Cultural Factors
 - Neighborhoods and Districts
 - Community Identity
 - Diversity and Inclusivity
- C. Emotional and Experiential Factors
 - Affective Attachments
 - Events and Festival
 - Sense of Safety
- D. Socio-economic and Practical Factors
 - Amenities and Services
 - Housing and Affordability
 - Employment and Economic Opportunities

4. Research Methodology

The shared identity and priorities of urban inhabitants are explored via multidisciplinary research on sense of place and place attachment. It is categorized as social science study and seeks to reveal the realities that are most probably true underlying these events. The ontological position of the research is that the people form a unique mental image of the city and people's perspectives also triggers the image in return. The epistemological position of the research is that in order to reveal the image, the study requires understanding people's place value through qualitative interpretation of their experience in living in the city. The understanding of the realities produced through qualitative interpretation is subjective in nature. Therefore, this research tends to fit best under the interpretivist /constructivist paradigm. This research tends to understand the people-place relationship in the city that gives the city its identity from the perspective of the local people themselves. It requires a qualitative research method, completely subjective in nature. Mainly two methodologies were used: **Literature review** and **Case Study**. For case study, mainly two methods of data collection were used. One was Verbal method; produces data in the form of texts. The traditional written responses from the respondents was substituted for direct interviews, in which researcher elicit the places of attachment to

the respondents using a set of questions. This verbal method assisted in achieving the first objective of the paper, i.e., identifying the places/objects of attachment to the residents in the city. Another was visual method; *Go-Along* and *Resident Employed Photography (REP)*. These are practiced since couple of decades in international researches [25] [26], however, it has not been tested yet in Nepal. After a pre-testing, the Go-Along, was substituted by self-reconnaissance, walkthrough through the object/places identified by the respondents and observe how the place attachments are formed. In a variation of Resident-Employed Photography, researcher took photography of the objects/places identified by the respondents and observed how the place attachments were formed.

5. Site Context

In the Lumbini Province, the municipality of Siddharthanagar serves as the hub of the Rupandehi District's administration. It is located 265 kilometers to the west of Kathmandu and is only 22 kilometers to the west of Lumbini, the birthplace of the Buddha. Siddharthanagar, one of Nepal's main entrance ports from India, is a prominent commercial and industrial center. It is crucial to the economy of the nation and, after Birgunj, has the second-highest amount of border commerce with India. The municipality, which spans a 36.03 square kilometer area and has 13 wards, is surrounded by a number of other areas.



Figure 1: Lumbini Gate from Buddha chowk of Bhairahawa
Image source: Adobe Stock

Siddharthanagar Municipality now has 74,436 people living there, up from 63,483 in the 2011 census. There are 37,187 females and 37,249 men, residing in 15,871 houses. There are five main castes represented in Siddharthanagar's population: Brahmin, Muslim, Chhetri, Magar, and Yadav. A variety of religious communities including Hindus, Muslims, Kirat adherents, Buddhists, and others coexist peacefully. The distribution of these groups is seen in Table below

[27] with the Brahman (Hill) caste having the biggest share and the Muslim community close behind. The city's diverse population is also influenced by the Kshetri, Magar, and other castes.

Categories	% of population
Brahman - Hill	13.7
Musalman	13.2
Kshetri	8.3
Magar	7
Yadav	5.7
Gurung	4
Brahman - Tarai	3.8
Chamar/Harijan/Ram	3.2
Teli	3.2
Newa: (Newar)	3.2

5.1 History and Infrastructural Development

After being established in Nepal in 2024 B.S. and bearing Siddhartha Gautam Buddha's name, Siddharthanagar briefly changed its name to Bhairahawa Municipality in 2047 B.S., but returned to its original name in the 21st century to preserve its historical significance. The 181-kilometer Siddhartha Highway (NH 047), built starting in 1964 and opened by King Birendra in 1972, connects cities including Butwal, Tansen, Waling, Putalibazar, Syangja, and Pokhara while advancing development and bringing together regional populations and landscapes. The highway now runs through the center of the city, changing the city's history that was once marked by important Gurung and Magar settlements along the Narayanpath route. As a result, landmarks like Buddha Chowk and Devkota Chowk have emerged, signifying the transformation of Siddharthanagar from a border town to a thriving hub of growth, culture, and connectivity.

In addition to maintaining hospitals like Bhim Hospital and the Universal College of Medical Science Hospital as well as five primary healthcare clinics providing easily accessible medical services, the municipality places a high priority on education, claiming an overall literacy rate of 86.1%. The Gautam Buddha International Airport in Siddharthanagar aids trade, turning it into a thriving commercial and industrial hub in Nepal's Western Terai. The city also promotes competition and physical fitness through the Siddhartha Rangasala sports facility. The only source of water for Siddharthanagar, which is bounded by the Danda River to the south and the Ghahgar River to the east and west, is groundwater that has been administered

by the Nepal Water Supply Corporation (NWSC) since 1981.

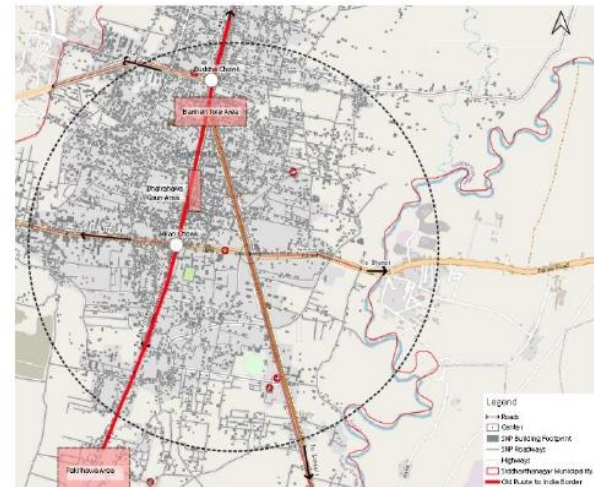


Figure 2: Map of Bhairahawa with old settlement

5.2 Identity and Narrative

Residents of Siddharthanagar take pride in their strong feeling of neighborhood and grassroots initiatives, which include sponsoring events, anti-drug campaigns, and tree-planting initiatives. Organizational diversity is encouraged through groups like women's clubs, Lions Clubs, Rotary Clubs, and Bhairahawa Toastmasters Clubs. The community came together to keep the peace amid the economic blockade, demonstrating their strong sense of community. Hindus, Muslims, and Buddhists dwell peacefully in Siddharthanagar, which adds to the city's extensive religious and cultural variety. The city is adorned with temples, monasteries, and mosques like Narayansthan, Radha Krishna Temple, Shanti Buddha Bihar, Sunni Masjid, and Jama Masjid, serving as spiritual centers that foster connection and solace. Visitors from all over Nepal bring diverse traditions that blend seamlessly with local culture.

The economic powerhouse of Nepal, Siddharthanagar, is home to an increasing number of companies, including small businesses with clientele stretching from Kathmandu to India. These sectors, which include the production of furniture, food processing, rice mills, and bricks, support the growth of small enterprises, border trade, services, and infrastructure. Siddharthanagar's economy is thriving despite the Special Economic Zone's (SEZ) sluggish expansion. Moreover, city provides access to historical places including Devedaha, Ramagrama, Kapilvastu, Tribeni Ghat, and Valmiki Ashram, as well as Lumbini, a pilgrimage site associated with Lord Buddha. Visitors may access Chitwan National

Park, Palpa, famed for its natural beauty and cultural diversity, and Lumbini Garden, which has temples, monasteries, and ponds. A superior guest experience is guaranteed by Siddharthanagar's hospitality sector, which includes establishments like the Nirvana Hotel, Yeti Hotel, Nansc Hotel, Mourya Hotel, and Pauwa Hotel.

The architecture of Siddharthanagar combines ancient Terai characteristics with contemporary buildings to symbolize the city's transition from an agrarian culture to a cosmopolitan metropolis. The city's architectural development reflects societal transformation and the survival of its unique identity in the face of modernization. In the Terai area, cycling culture, represented by the "बुडा साईकल" or "elderly man's cycle," has served as a unifying force for decades. The adoption of reasonably priced electric tempos represents both development and environmental responsibility, affording an insight into the region's growing transportation culture. The city has seen a shift from manual rickshaws to electric tempos. Roadways in Siddharthanagar connect the past and present, offering a singular trip between history and modernity.



Figure 3: Traditional Terai Building
Image source: alamy



Figure 4: Cycling culture in Bhairahawa
Image Source: [28]

6. Study Area and Sampling

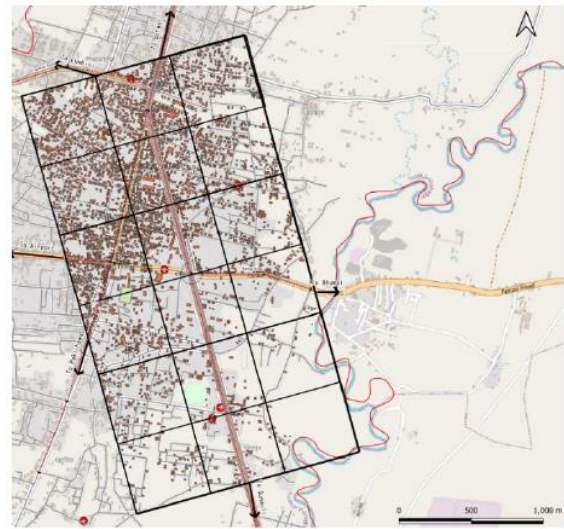


Figure 5: Site Map with grids for survey

The focal point of the site area is Devkota Chowk, adopting rectangular area with 800m by 800m grids. These are arbitrary lines formed to create small pockets of area to ensure uniform selection of samples. The dividing line is the highway, and the starting point is Buddha Chowk. Each direction, the square area stretches 800 meters. In order to collect data in this region, random stratified sampling strategy was used to assure representation. The efficacy of the research is increased by this organized technique, which permits systematic exploration and guarantees that observations are rooted in a distinct geographic context. The sample selection technique includes participants from age 16 to 75, with the biggest participation in the 26 to 35 age group i.e. 23. In total 70 respondents, there were 30 women and 40 men represented in the gender split. 14% of respondents said they were Muslims, which is close to the municipality's 13.2% Muslim population. The duration of residency displays a variety, from natives to those who have been residents for more than 50 years, giving a full picture of the city's population, comprising opinions and experiences that span age, gender, religion, and duration of residency.

7. Data Discussion and Analysis

In addition to providing visual evidence for artifact links, this section highlights significant inquiry findings.

7.1 Category A: Physical Environment

Below is a summary of the most commonly mentioned objects within this category.

Objects/Places of Value

Indicators	Objects
Landmarks, Nodes, Paths & connectivity, Public Spaces	Airport, Rangasala, Lumbini, Buddha Chowk, Bank road, Buddha Park, Haat bazaar, Narayansthan, Jama Masjid

The phrase "Gateway to Lumbini" is frequently heard across the city and is represented by things like Buddha statues and walls painted in the Gerua hue. Despite being 20 kilometers away, Lumbini's importance is strongly engrained in the Bhairahawa character. Recognizable landmarks and navigational aids in the city are provided by prominent chowks including Buddha Chowk, Milan Chowk, and Rangasala. The airport's conversion to a regional international airport in Bhairahawa has improved the city's opinion of itself. The sporting venue Siddhartha Rangasala promotes societal harmony. Public meeting places in cities include parks like Buddha Park, Darkachuwa Park, and others. Twice a week, the busy Haat Bazar brings the neighborhood together and improves daily life

Meaning Association

The locals use terms like "proud" and "lucky" to communicate their sense of privilege and thanks for Lumbini's close proximity to their metropolis. Convenience is a crucial component of meaning, with a focus on easy access to supermarkets and motorways with good connections. The three main dimensions of residents' affiliations to physical environments are sensory attachment, narrative attachment, and commodifying attachment. Together, these factors influence how residents engage with their surroundings and extract meaning from it, reflecting the complexity of their interactions. This knowledge highlights the complex nature of attachment and sheds light on the various ways in which people interact with their physical surroundings.



Figure 6: Top to bottom: Buddha Chowk, Siddhartha Rangasala and children enjoying in Darkachuwa Park

7.2 Category B: Social and Cultural Factors

Aspects of the social and cultural nature include numerous components that support inhabitants' relationships with their neighbors, neighborhood dynamics, and the diversity of the population.

Objects/Places of Value

Indicators	Objects
Neighborhood & district, community identity, Diversity & Inclusivity	Annapurna tole, Barmeli tole, Diversity of caste, religion and origin, Social Cohesion

This category focuses on the essential elements of neighborhood characteristics, such as how locals view their streets, how they feel about their communities, and the architectural trends that influence the urban environment. Additionally, it looks at how locals view various city neighborhoods. Notably, responders frequently mention Annapurna Tole as a possible location for relocation within the city. A city's identity is shaped by its distinctive neighborhoods, such as Barmeli Tole, Bank Colony, Paklihawa, and Bhairahawa Gaun. Due to its historical significance and the tale of its citizens who returned from Burma and helped to shape the neighborhood's character, Barmeli Tole stands out in particular. Through community-driven reforms, Bhairahawa Gaun, which was historically infamous for its bad hygiene, has experienced improvements in its reputation. The city's demographic diversity is reflected in its

neighborhoods, with a mix of ethnic groups and nationalities coexisting in various areas, such as Barmeli Tole, illustrating the city's inclusive and diverse nature.

Meaning Association

Modern designs have replaced the city's traditional Terai architectural elements, showing that locals are receptive to adopting new architectural forms to improve their communities. The city's diverse identity is influenced by the distinct histories, personalities, and evolutionary patterns of each of its neighborhoods. The city's multicultural nature fosters social unity and cohesion, transcending personal backgrounds and reinforcing Bhairahawa's reputation as a place of openness and peaceful coexistence. The opinions of the locals reflect a recurrent pattern of ideological, spiritual, and narrative attachments in social and cultural contexts. These elements support place identification and a sense of belonging in the community by building residents' strong affections for their local areas.

7.3 Category C: Emotional and Experiential Factors

A person's inner affection for the locations, items, and experiences found in the city can be sparked by the emotional and sensory components. The most common elements in the respondents' reported emotional and experience category are,

Objects/Places of Value

Indicators	Objects
Affective Attachments, Events & Festivals, Sense of Belongingness, Safety and Comfort	Affection towards public spaces, association with local groups and clubs, Street market, festivals and programs, unity in difficult times, Local Cuisines, Pawan sweets, hot served <i>Fulki</i> . Reduced/controlled crimes.

The love of public places emphasizes the importance of human-environment connections. Place attachment is developed through relationships and social activities, and the duration of residency affects attachment. Both specific sites created for social functions and memories of encounters that give places meaning are factors that influence place attachment. Street markets and festivals play a significant role in the identity of the city by demonstrating a strong sense of community. Neighborhood clubs and associations play a crucial role in maintaining the city's vitality by spearheading numerous initiatives, such as those addressing social problems and environmental

challenges. The emotions of safety and security are strongly associated with the city, and Bhairahawa is renowned for being a sanctuary of safety. The residents' psyche is strongly instilled with this sense of community security. Famous foods like *Fulki* and *Pawan Peda* have contributed significantly to the identity of Bhairahawa. *Fulki*, a distinctive variation on the traditional "panipuri," stands out for its sizzling appearance and is popular among locals and visitors alike. It is served with hot "aaloo-matar" gravy and sour soup. The name *Pawan Peda*, on the other hand, is synonymous with Bhairahawa and is notably connected to *Pawan Misthan Bhandar*, a well-known vegetarian restaurant that specializes in traditional desserts. The restaurant is known for its delicious sweets, and *The Peda* in particular is hailed as its signature dish. Further demonstrating their appeal is the fact that locals frequently take these candies home as gifts.

Meaning Association

Residents' involvement with their surroundings, social interactions, and shared experiences that fortify their emotional bond with the city define the dynamic character of place attachment in Bhairahawa. Social occasions and get-togethers are especially important because they enrich residents' lives and help them form distinctive memories, strengthening the link between particular places and treasured experiences. *Fulki* and *Pawan Peda*, two delectable foods, have become fundamental to Bhairahawa's cultural character. These foods not only provide a special culinary experience but also stand for affection, esteem, and the closeness of family and community ties. The emotional and experiential elements in Bhairahawa reveal a common thread of attachment among residents, characterized by four main types of attachment: narrative attachment, spiritual attachment with a strong sense of belonging, commodifying attachment, and material dependency. These four attributes serve as the building blocks of inhabitants' affection for the intangible features of the city, producing a strong sense of place identification and a close connection to these experiential qualities. This attachment dynamics is special since it transcends certain areas to include the entire city, making it inclusive and city-wide.

7.4 Category D: Socio-economic and practical Factors

The data shown below was created based on responses from respondents to give a visual depiction

of the most common elements within the socio-economic and practical aspects category.

Objects/Places of Value

Indicators	Objects
Amenities and services Housing and affordability Employment and economic opportunities	UCMS, Bhim Hospital, Water Supply, Availability of basic infrastructure, Affordability, Accommodation, Job Opportunity

The accessibility of necessary infrastructure is one of Bhairahawa's main draws for immigrants. Locals place a great significance on organizations like the Universal College of Medical Sciences (UCMS), Lumbini Eye Hospital, and Bhairahawa Multiple Campus. The city's appeal is also greatly influenced by the availability of plentiful drinking water, government services, and transportation choices both inside Nepal and to India. The level terrain improves accessibility and mobility, making the area more user-friendly. Due to its border location and economic potential, Bhairahawa is a magnet for enterprises and job seekers. The vicinity of Lumbini and the airport benefits the city's lodging sector, which offers a variety of possibilities.



Figure 7: Government Hospital, Bhim Hospital

Meaning Association

People often choose to relocate or stay in Bhairahawa because of its close proximity to important infrastructure and district-level offices. In comparison

to car-centric urban environments, walkability and accessibility are significant draws, providing practicality and a greater connection to the environment. The city's advantageous location encourages economic growth, especially in the booming lodging sector, enhancing its reputation as a friendly resort for both locals and visitors. Material dependence, narrative attachment, sensory attachment, and commodifying attachment are four different types of attachment that can be seen in the socioeconomic and practical aspects. These linkages demonstrate how strongly connected residents are to the city due to their basic economic and infrastructure requirements, accessibility to services, possibilities for professional and personal growth, and inexpensive housing options.

7.5 Group Discussions and KIIs

Group discussions (GD) and key informant interviews (KII) validate and extend the understanding garnered through individual surveys, and as a result, offer insightful perspectives into Bhairahawa's identity. The GD's male senior residents reaffirmed the value of open spaces, accessible infrastructure, and economic development to the character of the city. They also voiced worries about decision-making and governance, emphasizing the need for improved citizen-government contact. The conversation among the female participants stressed the importance of the temples and other religious features in the city, highlighting the female residents' spiritual ties to Bhairahawa. The replies of the young male participants were echoed, highlighting their ties to public spaces, social gatherings, street markets, and regional cuisines. They did, however, voice discontent with several aspects of urban growth that would have an effect on the city's future. The conversations and interviews offer a comprehensive picture of Bhairahawa's identity, taking into account a variety of personal relationships, experiences, and issues that influence the city's identity and reputation. Moreover, there were five KIIs in all, including ones with the mayor, ward representatives, and an inspector. The local representative interview revealed some differences between their choices and justifications and those of the residents. This comparison draws attention to contrasting viewpoints on specific facets of the city's identity. The Inspector's observations during the KIIs corroborated information about crime and safety, giving the research's conclusions in these areas more weight.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

The study has successfully illustrated the significance of both tangible and intangible artifacts in the day-to-day activities of the people of Bhairahawa, providing deeper insights into the city's identity. This research has improved our understanding of Bhairahawa by taking both tangible and intangible factors into account. Beyond their physical presence, the objects have meaning in inhabitants' lives that emphasizes their intangible contribution to the formation of the city's identity. The tight-knit community of Bhairahawa influences the way people behave there, for instance, the active participation of individuals in events organized by local groups/clubs, the blending of diverse cultures for peaceful co-existence which are reflected in dropped crime rates, verified by the KII: Inspector of Crime Investigation Department. The city's identity is defined by its economic potential, readily available facilities, and high standard of living, which encourages loyalty among its residents. Collaboration between stakeholders and strategic planning are necessary for resolving current issues. The gathered information, which includes texts, images, place meanings, and experiences, can be used by local authorities as a record and resource to advance conversations and city branding initiatives. Examining elements of Bhairahawa's identity helps us understand her better.

This study emphasizes the need of comprehending how people sees their city, emphasizing the necessity to safeguard their valued features and enhance urban quality of life. Mahendra Park and Haat Bazaar have recently suffered unintended damage as a result of recent development projects, underscoring the need for smart policy development anchored on maintaining the city's identity. Urban remodeling is essential for improving public areas and infrastructure. Instead of moving social gatherings, it is preferable to encourage them at already popular places. In addition to promoting social cohesion through the equitable distribution of public spaces and maintaining regional cuisine like Fulki and Pawan Peda while supporting informal sector policies and urban design centered around Pawan sweets to draw tourists, improving safety measures, such as installing CCTV cameras and better lighting, is a top priority. Residents' opinions are very essential, but it's also necessary to recognize the contributions of other parties, such as legislators, planners, architects, developers, businesses, and community organizations. An inclusive approach to urban planning and a more thorough grasp of the city's

image can be achieved through multi-stakeholder processes. But because of time and financial limitations, this research mainly focuses on residents' perceptions.

Although the results are context-specific, the approach may be used to scenarios with a comparable context. This paper also serves as a template for future study in related fields, encouraging a more thorough approach to urban research that aids citizens, decision-makers, and urban planners in defining and enhancing the character and livability of their cities.

8. Acknowledgement

The Siddharthanagar Municipality's valuable informants and key informants are sincerely appreciated for their contributions to this report, for which the author is grateful. I would especially like to thank Dr. Sudha Shrestha for her research advice and the Department of Architecture for providing the opportunity for publication. The author also thanks the institutions, organizations, and people who helped with the creation of this work, governmental, non-governmental, authors of the article referenced and image sources.

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ANNEX 7

PLAGIARISM CHECK REPORT

2023.12.09 Image of the city_Blackbook.pdf

ORIGINALITY REPORT

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SIMILARITY INDEX

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ANNEX 8

FINAL PRESENTATION SLIDES

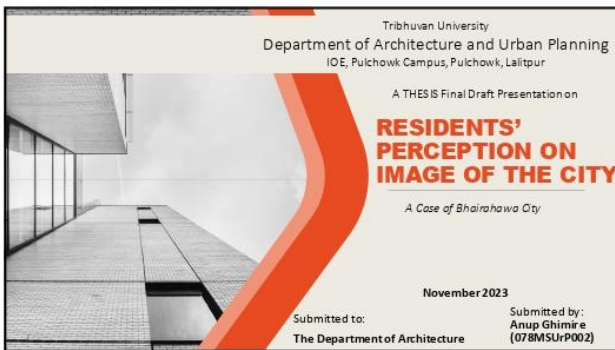


Table of Contents

- 01 Introduction and Methodology
- 02 Literature Review and Site Context
- 03 Data Discussion and Analysis
- 04 Testing against Lynch's Model
- 05 Conclusion and Recommendation

Background, Need and Problem

- building unique cities for Sustainability
- Resilience, empowerment
- Loss of identity > loss of culture; Placelessness
- Destruction of public's attached values
- citizens' satisfaction >> place attachment

3

Objectives

- The primary objective of the research is to identify residents' perception on image of the city that is unique to the city through following sub-objectives:
 - To identify the places/objects of attachment to the residents in the city.
 - To study the underlying meaning attached to the places and its process of formation.
 - To test the theoretical model of Kevin Lynch associated with image of the city.

4

Conceptual Framework

Ontological Position	Epistemological Position
people form a unique mental image of the city and peoples' perspectives also triggers the image in return.	in order to reveal the image, the research requires understanding people's place value through qualitative interpretation of their experience in living in the city

• Literature Review: deductive logic system. Case study: Abductive logical system

Verbal Method	Visual Method
Questionnaire: Identify the places/objects	Go-Along >> Walkthrough Observation: locate the place
FGDs	Photo Elicitation: Keeping respondent at foreground
Key Informant Interviews	

5

Literature Review

Image and Identity	Power of 10+
Aesthetics of The City	Public Space and Social Interaction
Kevin Lynch: <i>The Image of The City</i>	Place and Placelessness
Place Attachment and Meaning Association	Residents' Perception
Placemaking and Sense of Belonging	Indicators and Variables for Residents' Perceived Image

6

Image, Identity and Aesthetics of the city

- derived from cognitive processes, supporting "visual perception" even in the absence of actual ocular input. Dynamic; surrounds

Structural
geography, history, and landmarks

Semi-static qualities
size of city, aesthetics of landscape, and collective mindsets of citizens

Dynamic Features
symbolic representations, communal behaviors, modes of intersection, cultural fabric, and its connection to the environment

Aesthetics of

- Form & Legibility** (About Space): experience of spatial order
- Fragments** (About Experiences): kaleidoscopic scenes of urban life

perceived image >> layers of generational significance; understanding cities beyond physical dimension

Kevin Lynch: *The Image of The City*

- people orient themselves in city using "mental maps": Observer and Objects
- Imageability: that quality in an object, possibility of a vivid image
- Legibility: the ease to recognize elements and can organized in a pattern
- Memory Based Experiment for physical objects >> using five elements

PATH **NODE** **LANDMARK** **EDGE** **DISTRICT**

Place Attachment and Meaning

Beliefs, ideas & impressions → Feeling of attachment to the location

Place Image (Scannell and Gifford (2010)) → Place Attachment

7 Types of Attachments

- Sensory**: embodied and physical
- Narrative**: imaginary and place identity
- Spiritual**: deep sense of belonging
- Historical**: personal or family historical
- Ideological**: moral or ethical commitment
- Commodifying**: place able to meet individual's preferences
- Material Dependence**: reliance on material features

Circle diagram: "Who is attached?" (Person, Place, Process) → "What is attached?" → "How does the attachment exist?"

Placemaking and Sense of Belonging

Where is your home? → Sense of belonging → Where do you belong?

about owning the space around you; feel belonged to space, place or city

People: Race/Age, Gender, S/E

Place: Activity, Landscapes (Greenscape, Bluescape), Connections

Process: Assign meaning through experience/emotion

Power of 10+

- places thrive when users have reasons (10+) to be there; place to sit, playgrounds to enjoy, food to eat, history to experience, people to meet: **great places**
- Taking the idea from place level lto city level: **making great cities**

CITY/REGION: 10+ major destinations

DESTINATION: 10+ places to visit

PLACE: 10+ things to do (inspired by an urban energy)

(Power for Public Spaces, 2002)

PUBLIC SPACES, PLACE AND PLACELESSNESS

- social interactions: depend on quality, spatial capacity, security, inclusive, amenities
- strengthen community, facilitate activities, shaping social ties.
- Yi-Fu Tuan's book, *Place to Placelessness*: significance of place in human experiences and perceptions: interpret their surroundings, experiences influence affinity, and how place influences self-perception
- Placelessness**: uniformity on sense of place and attachment
- reduces identity and character, strong identity promote communal cohesiveness

RESIDENTS' PERCEPTION

- residents' perceptions >> insights, emotional, social, and cultural connection; beyond statistical measure
- Restructuring government > Participatory Approach: socially just neoliberal urbanism: major stakeholder
- informed decisions about layout, aesthetics, and functionality, social equality and inclusive planning techniques.
- differences in resource accessibility

INDICATORS AND VARIABLES FOR RESIDENTS' PERCEIVED IMAGE

A. Physical Environment

Landmarks: Public and Connectivity Public Spaces	<p>What are the most recognizable landmarks or features in the city to you?</p> <p>How would you rate the quality of public spaces (parks, plazas, etc.) in the city?</p> <p>Which transportation routes or paths do you frequently use and why?</p>
--	--

B. Social and Cultural Factors

Neighborhood & district Community Identity Diversity and Inclusivity	<p>Are there any specific neighborhoods or districts that you feel strongly connected to? Why?</p> <p>How would you describe the sense of community and social interactions in the city?</p> <p>How important is cultural diversity and inclusivity for you in the city?</p> <p>How do you perceive the city's efforts in preserving and showcasing its cultural heritage?</p> <p>Are there any community events or initiatives that promote social interaction and community engagement in the city? Please provide examples.</p> <p>How would you rate the accessibility and inclusivity of public spaces for different age groups and abilities in the city?</p> <p>Do you feel that different cultural communities in the city have equal opportunities for participation and representation? Why or why not?</p> <p>How does the presence of diverse food options and culinary traditions contribute to your overall experience and perception of the city?</p>
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INDICATORS AND VARIABLES FOR RESIDENTS' PERCEIVED IMAGE

C. Emotional and Experiential Factors

<p>Affection, Attachment, Place and Familiarity, Sense of Belongingness, Safety, Comfort</p>	<p>Are there any specific places or experiences in the city that evoke strong emotional responses or memories for you? Please describe.</p> <p>How do events and festivals held in the city contribute to your overall image and experience of the city?</p> <p>Can you recall a specific moment or experience in the city that made you feel a strong sense of pride or joy? Please describe.</p> <p>Are there any hidden gems or lesser-known places in the city that hold personal significance to you? Why?</p> <p>How would you rate the availability and quality of cultural and artistic experiences (e.g., theaters, museums, galleries) in the city?</p> <p>Have you encountered any public art installations or street performances that have left a lasting impression? Please share your thoughts.</p> <p>How do natural spaces, such as parks or waterfront areas, contribute to your overall well-being and connection with the city?</p> <p>Have you ever experienced or witnessed any incidents of crime or violence in your neighborhood? If yes, please describe the situation and its impact on your sense of safety.</p> <p>Are there specific areas or locations in the city where you feel less safe or more vulnerable? If yes, please specify and explain your concerns.</p> <p>How would you rate the effectiveness of local law enforcement and security measures in your neighborhood or the city as a whole?</p> <p>Do you feel comfortable reporting safety concerns or incidents to the authorities? Why or why not?</p> <p>Are there any community initiatives or programs focused on enhancing safety and security in your neighborhood that you are aware of or actively involved in? If yes, please provide details.</p> <p>In your opinion, what specific measures or improvements could be implemented to enhance safety and security in the city?</p>
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INDICATORS AND VARIABLES FOR RESIDENTS' PERCEIVED IMAGE

D. Socio-economic and Practical Factors

<p>Amenities and services Housing and affordability Employment and economic opportunities</p>	<p>What are the most important amenities and services in the city for you? (e.g., healthcare, education, transportation, etc.)</p> <p>How satisfied are you with the affordability and quality of housing options in the city?</p> <p>What are your perceptions of employment opportunities and economic development in the city?</p>
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Site Context: Bhairahawa

Bhairahawa inside of Siddharthanagar Municipality, Rupandehi District, Lumbini Province

Rohini & Omsatiya in the East, Mayadevi in the West, Mayadevi & Omsatiya in the North and Sunaulai of India in South

gate way to Lumbini, (22 km) to the west.

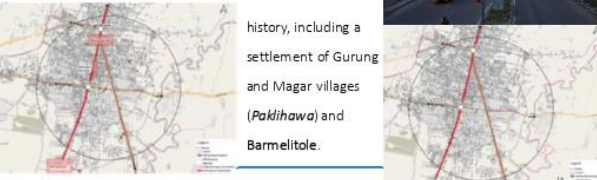


Demographic Distribution

Particulars	2011	2021	Categories	% of population
Total	63,483	74,436	Brahman - Hill	13.7
Male	31,673	37,249	Musalman	13.2
Female	31,810	37,187	Kabstetri	8.3
Sex-Ratio	99.57	100.17	Magar	7
Density	~1,761	~2,066	Yadav	5.7
Households	12,497	15,871	Gurung	4
			Brahman - Tarai	3.8
			Chamar/Harijan/Ram	3.2
			Tali	3.2
			Newa : (Newar)	3.2

History

- The Siddhartha Highway, Mahendra Highway.
- Creating and transforming hubs of development, culture, and connectivity.



history, including a settlement of Gurung and Magar villages (*Pakihawa*) and Barmelitole.

INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

- preschool facilities and adult literacy initiatives, with the UCMS

Education Facilities	Private	Government	Total
Pre-Primary	5	6	11
Primary School	2	3	5
Secondary	16	6	22
Higher Secondary	4	2	6
College	6	4	10
Deemed University	-	-	-
Library	1	-	1
Special Education (Blind/Deaf)	-	1	1
Technical School CTEVT	-	-	-
Madarsa	--	10	10
Total			66

Health Facilities	Number
Government	17
Private	27
Others	12
Total	56
Public Hospital Beds	50
Private Hospital Beds	800

INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

- home to the new Gautam Buddha International Airport
- Nepal's principal industrial and economic hub, border for imports, 2nd largest border trade
- Siddhartha Rangasala, the city's center of sports.
- Underground resource based water supply by Nepal Water Supply Corporation (NWSC) since 1981. Few still use manually drilled tube wells

IDENTITY, NARRATIVE AND CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

- a strong sense of community pride, actively participate in various causes and projects, tree planting and anti-drug campaigns.
- Local organizations like Mahila/Aama Samuha, Lions Club, Leo Club, Rotary Club, and Bhairahawa Toastmasters Club support these efforts.
- community's active social calendar promote unity.
- The Danda River, a vital waterway; soil serves as a fertile land for farming and controlling groundwater levels.
- Urbanization led to pollution issues, affecting the River, land, and atmosphere.

IDENTITY, NARRATIVE AND CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

Socio-Cultural Aspects

- history of religious and cultural diversity, Hindu, followed by Muslims and Buddhists.
- microcosm of Nepal's variety, with Awadhi and Bhojpuri cultures in harmony with the native identity.
- numerous religious buildings; temples, gumbas, and mosques, Newa Khala centers for religious rituals.

IDENTITY, NARRATIVE AND CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

Economic Development

- significant increase in small-scale industries, from 47 in 2006 to 75 by 2010; favorable location
- Roughly 60% of the overall produce goes to hilly parts, 15% each to self and Kathmandu and 10% to Indian consumers,
- Special Economic Zone (SEZ) since 20 yrs a work in progress,



IDENTITY, NARRATIVE AND CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

Accommodation
 spiritual reflection : Regional Position
 options from 2 to 5 stars, including the Nirvana Hotel, Yeti Hotel, Nansco Hotel.

Religious
Recreation
Leisure

Transit
Commerce
Accommodation

IDENTITY, NARRATIVE AND CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

Architecture and Neighborhood character

- architectural landscape: formerly dominated by Terai architecture; reflect rural lifestyles, shelters for animals and agricultural patches.

Urbanization: transition from traditional to modern forms,
 development represents evolution, character, from agricultural to urban.

IDENTITY, NARRATIVE AND CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

Architecture and Neighborhood character

Culture of cycling "elderly man's cycle," transcends age boundaries; integrated into daily life, became a symbol of mobility

manual rickshaws to electric tempos

IDENTITY, NARRATIVE AND CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

Original Lyrics	English Translation
भैरहवा भैरहवा हाम्रो प्यारो	Bhairahawa, Bhairahawa, Our
सहर भैरहवा x2	Beloved City Bhairahawa x2
भैरहवाको अर्को नाम हो	Another name of Bhairahawa is Siddharth Nagar.
सिद्धार्थनगर,	
बस्छन् यहाँ बाहुन, चेत्री,	Bahun, Chhetri, Gurung,
गुरुङ, मगर	Magar live here
साँडे अलि भैले बाट प्याक	The city is packed by Made and Vele
भयो सहर	
सडकहरु को एकदम सरो	The wave of bikes has increased quite a bit
सदुयो लहर	
यहाँको आधा मान्छेहरु	Half of the people here are the part of city,
are	

Local Song: Hamro Bhairahawa

- highlights the vibrant neighborhood,
- community come together for activities,
- Mahendra Park's transition
- issues of population growth and waste paan-eating, and violent behavior,
- locals' passion for city refusing to moving
- determination to work together face challenges head-on and positively

IDENTITY, NARRATIVE AND CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

Development Challenges

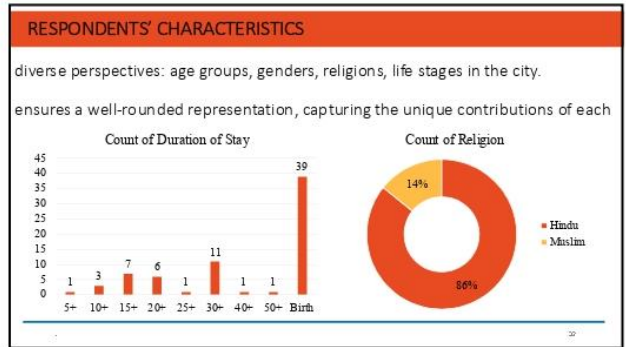
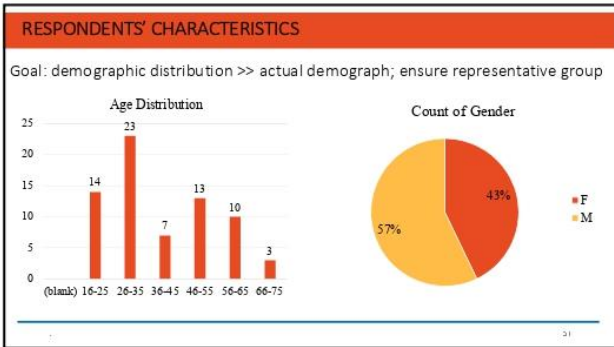
- social problems and criminality, drug addiction and the dowry system,
- community, law enforcement, and municipal government have worked together to reduce these issues.
- Contemporarily increasing suicide rates, financial crimes, social media crimes,
- challenges require continuous efforts to maintain safety and well-being in urban life.

STUDY AREA AND SAMPLING

Devkota Chowk as center,
 rectangular plan with highway

random selection,
 ensures fair data collection

Site Map with imaginary grid, for survey works



DATA DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

- key findings from the investigation,
- verbal descriptions
- photographic samples
- association of meaning of Place attachment
- Negative Images
- Testing of Kevin Lynch's Model and Modification

CATEGORY A: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

encompasses outer appearance and usability of a place, including public spaces, landmarks, nodes, paths, and connections in the urban landscape.

Airport, Bhatbhateni, Durga Mandir, Hotel Pauwa, Buspark, Rauagasala, Lumbini, Shiva mandir, Jama Masjid, Krishna Mandir

CATEGORY A: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

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CATEGORY A: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

encompasses outer appearance and usability of a place, including public spaces, landmarks, nodes, paths, and connections in the urban landscape.

Devkota Chowk, Budhika Chowk, Milan Chowk, Nanyangpark, Bank Road, Gollamandi Road, Highway, Mahesha Park, Hasi basar, Daxobhava Park

CATEGORY A: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

encompasses outer appearance and usability of a place, including public spaces, landmarks, nodes, paths, and connections in the urban landscape.




Devkota Chowk, Buddha Chowk, Milan Chowk
Suryapuri, Durk Road, Oshimahi Road, Highway
Maharaja Park, Hari bazar, Darachova Park

27

CATEGORY A: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Meaning Association

- known for its proximity to Lumbini,
- major commercial centers provide daily necessities, improving the quality of life for residents.
- **Walkability**: popular meaning, sense of community
- airport's transformation reflect **global aspirations**
- **Parks**: diverse demograph, leisure and recreation
- pattern of resemblance within physical settings.
- *sensory attachment*
- *narrative attachment*
- *commodifying attachment*



28

CATEGORY B: SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FACTORS


encompass neighborhood ties, dynamics, and population diversity, including, community identity, and diversity & inclusivity.

residents embrace emotional resonance and embrace coexistence within city, Barmeli Tole, Bank Colony, Pakliha, and Bhairahawa Gaun

Annapurna Tole is the top choice

Barmeli Tole renowned for its historical significance and the story of Burmese immigrants, while **Bhairahawa Gaun** has undergone community-driven reforms.

a diverse mix of ethnic groups, non-association to specific communities.




Barmeli Tole, Pakliha, Annapurna Tole, Bank colony
No specific community association in the city.
Diversity in Caste, Religion and origin.
Social Cohesion

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CATEGORY B: SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FACTORS

Meaning Association

- **architectural transformation**: positive adaptability and understanding of urban changes.
- multicultural: strength **social unity and cohesion**. pattern of resemblance within physical settings.
- residents' affinities for neighborhoods >> sense of place attachment and positive attitude towards these communities.
- attachment promoting harmony and respect, and loyalty to communities, identity of Bhairahawa.
- *narrative attachment*
- *spiritual attachment*
- *ideological attachment*




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CATEGORY C: EMOTIONAL AND EXPERIENTIAL FACTORS

spark inner affection for its locations, items, and experiences, including emotional ties, celebrations, belonging, safety concerns, and city living ease.

affection for public spaces: influenced by demographics and person-place interactions.

Active neighborhood groups and clubs: women's empowerment, anti-drug abuse campaigns, tree planting drives, city cleaning, and awareness campaigns.



Affection towards the public spaces.

Association with local groups clubs for variety events like cleanliness, plantation, women empowerment, anti-drugs campaign, road safety, domestic violence, sports and others.


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CATEGORY C: EMOTIONAL AND EXPERIENTIAL FACTORS

Social interactions and relationships give locations significance and attachment.

affection for public spaces: influenced by demographics and person-place interactions.

Social interactions and relationships give locations significance and attachment.



identity is emphasized by street markets and festivals >> strong relationship with community reputation as safe place: factor in citizens' emotional encounters

Street market, festivals and programs during occasions.
Unity during Economic Blockade

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CATEGORY C: EMOTIONAL AND EXPERIENTIAL FACTORS

Food and Cuisine: *fulki*, unique appearance and unique twist; features piping-hot "aaloo-matar" gravy and sour soup, attracting locals and tourists from across the country and India.



Pawan pedas from Pawan Mishan Bhandar, supported by locals bringing as souvenir

Integrated neighborhood, active in sharing and work for each others welfare. Active communication and interaction for any social cause

Local Cuisins, high attachment towards hot served *Fulki*. Highly association with Pawan Sweets.

CATEGORY C: EMOTIONAL AND EXPERIENTIAL FACTORS

Meaning Association

- connections woven into the lives, bond with the city and venues.
- **Social events** add value, enhance local lives > link between physical spaces and social activities.
- multicultural population: a **sense of security and safety**; decreasing Crime rates
- A resident from Kotihawa recalls a 15-year-old incident, always had a must-eat *fulki* at Milan Chowk station: shows synonymous with the city's character and culinary culture.
- *Pawan Peda* symbolizing love, respect, and appreciation
- attachments extend beyond neighborhoods, a peaceful cohabitation.
- *narrative attachment*
- *spiritual attachment*
- *Commodifying attachment*
- *Material dependency*

CATEGORY D: SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND PRACTICAL FACTORS

encompass government-provided amenities, services, infrastructure, work opportunities, housing affordability, and future economic prospects

availability of essential infrastructure: Bhairahawa Multiple Campus, Lumbini Eye Hospital, and Universal College of Medical Sciences. Access to drinking water

connectivity ensuring convenience for traveling to various locations, national and international



UCMS, Bhain Hospital, Water Supply, Availability of all basic infrastructure.

CATEGORY D: SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND PRACTICAL FACTORS

level topography influences residents' choices for housing and transportation; the cycling culture.

hub for economy, proximity to the border; easy access to resources and materials for businesses. influenced by the airport, Lumbini & border, accommodation employment

Affordability due to availability of multiple markets

Accommodation Sector Job opportunity, Border Market, Small Business opportunity

CATEGORY D: SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND PRACTICAL FACTORS

Meaning Association

- walkability and proximity to infrastructure/administrative services and district-level offices: identity as a hub of convenience, opportunity, and resourcefulness.
- small enterprises and factories, **job opportunities**.
- strategic location for **accommodation industry** >> economic growth.
- traits are crucial for residents' needs for economic and basic infrastructure, accessibility of services, economic growth, and personal growth.
- study emphasizes the importance of affordable living conditions as well
- *Sensory attachment*
- *narrative attachment*
- *Commodifying attachment*
- *Material dependency*

NEGATIVE IMAGE



THIRD-PARTY IMAGE



TikTok: Ke_Maal,



Sudip_Maurya,



izumi039

Data Validation: GROUP DISCUSSIONS & KIIs

S.No.	Name	Age	Relation	Gender	Stay
GD1	Ganesh	68	Owner	M	25+
	Thalur	45	Owner	M	20+
	Ramprasad	60	Owner	M	30+
	Hari	65	Owner	M	20+
	Birendra	50	Owner	M	30+





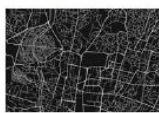

S.No.	Name	Age	Relation	Gender	Stay
GD2	Harimaya	65	Wife	F	30+
	Sangeta	60	Owner	F	15+
	Srijana	55	Wife	F	30+
	Sumita	55	Daughter I.L.	F	Birth

S.No.	Name	Age	Relation	Gender	Stay
GD3	Bibek	27	Son	M	Birth
	Anmol	28	Son	M	Birth
	Vishal	27	Son	M	Birth
	Trineta	27	Son	M	Birth
	Kishan	29	Son	M	Birth
	Nur	28	Son	M	Birth

S.No.	Identity	Gender	Stay	Religion
KII 1	Mayor	M	30+	Muslim
KII 2	Ward Member-5	F	30+	Hindu
KII 3	Ward Chairperson-13	M	30+	Hindu
KII 4	Ward Member-3	M	30+	Hindu
KII 5	Inspector, Crime Investigation Department, Rupandehi	M	20+	Hindu




TESTING AGAINST KEVIN LYNCH'S MODEL

Paths











TESTING AGAINST KEVIN LYNCH'S MODEL

Edges







Districts

TESTING AGAINST KEVIN LYNCH'S MODEL

Nodes





Landmarks





TESTING AGAINST KEVIN LYNCH'S MODEL

Tangible Aspects	Intangible Aspects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landmark: Airport, Rangasala, Haatbazaar, and Mahendra Park: touchstones that support city's identity and image. • Paths: thoroughfares and neighborhood streets; Highway, Narayan path, Bank Road, etc., routes create a sense of space and are crucial for connectedness. • Nodes: Devkota Chowk, Buddha Chowk, and Milan Chowk. Ease in navigation and symbolic representation. • District: Annapurna Tole, Barmeli Tole, Bank Colony, etc., diverse neighborhoods. distinctive qualities, histories. • Edge: The border in the south, the airport area in the west, the Rohini River in the east, and the area around Buddha Chowk in the north. psychological borders and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social cohesiveness, • security, • food, • accessibility, • affordability, <p>highlighting dynamic and developing nature of Bhairahawa's identity beyond physical understanding.</p>



CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

- Knowledge Production:
 - Organization of the Urban Landscape
 - Perception and Navigation
- significance of places in residents' lives, tangible/intangible, people's attachment to the city: **holistic image**.
- **identity resonates** with its citizens and strengthens their loyalty
- **Challenges of urbanization**: strategic planning and community participation

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RECOMMENDATIONS

- Identified objects should be **redesigned to improve experience**, usability, aesthetic appeal and public engagement
- Instead of relocating street activities, focus should be on **maintaining and strengthening the attachment** to the existing areas.
- A primary emphasis continues to be **improving safety and security**, installing CCTV, street lighting, police patrols, reducing dead zones and abandoned places, and awareness programs.
- **Identifying pockets of spaces and designing** them for leisure use for the public towards northern side.
- **Promotion of local** cuisine like *Fulki* and *Pawan Peda*; sustain for a long time and quality and taste also does not vary.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

- Most fulki sellers are informal sectors, policies to promote these activity and people should be the priority. The **identification of informal workers, supporting them with financial** and spatial allocation should be the priority.
- Examine potential opportunities for **forming public-private partnerships (PPP)** to improve the growth and administration.
- In designing New cities using methods and formulas of designing traditional towns as well as **placemaking theories and use of powerful tool like Power of 10+** should be way forward for planners and policy makers.
- Those 10+ places may include and not limited to are, Buddha chowk, Bhatbhatteni, Devkota chowk, Milan chowk, etc. **pedestrian-friendly paths** and green spaces for recreational and social activities in these identified spaces >

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RECOMMENDATIONS

- Incorporate **cultural installations and public art** into the design process. This acts as a visual depiction of the town's distinct personality in addition to improving its aesthetic appeal.
- The **underutilization of SEZ** should be changed. Create a **thorough strategic plan** for the SEZ that complements the city's positioning and economic advantages. A comprehensive **marketing plan** to draw in companies and investors from both domestic and foreign markets should be part of this.
- The promotion of Bhairahawa for **accommodation is another way to integrate and take benefit** from its regional position. It lies between religious and historic places like Lumbini, Tilaurakot, Ramgram, and Chitwan and Palpa a little farther.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

- Siddharth anagar's larger-scale **integration with Tilottama Municipality and Butwal Sub-Metropolitan**, which would promote a corridor-like growth, has the potential to greatly improve these cities' cooperative and efficient development.
- Create a **comprehensive urban plan for cities integration** that takes transportation networks, infrastructure development, and land use into account. Along the corridor, identify and set aside certain zones for economic growth. This might entail working together to improve utilities, including energy and water supplies, in order to maximize productivity and resource usage. Establish common area for neighborhood gatherings, festivals, and leisure activities.
- **Encouraging community engagement and participation** in the planning process to ensure that the town's unique identity is preserved and celebrated.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

- Adopt **sustainable techniques** to make sure the city can continue to operate in the long run. This covers socially conscious behavior, community involvement, and ecologically sustainable projects.
- To reach a larger audience, make **use of digital channels** like social media and community forums. Create diverse, inclusive planning groups that reflect the community's diversity.
- Plan **frequent forums and seminars** where community members may share their thoughts, worries, and suggestions about planning projects.
- **Keep everyone informed about planning activities** on a regular basis, and be open and honest at all times. As a result, the community gains trust and is encouraged to continue participating.

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THANK
YOU!

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