Ecotourism and sustainable development of local communities

CASE STUDY OF BANDIPUR, NEPAL

Rachana Shrestha

AALBORG UNIVERSITY, COPENHAGEN DENMARK | MASTER IN TOURISM

ABSTRACT

Tourism has become an important sector in the economy of Nepal. The development of the tourism sector has contributed to an increase in employment opportunities, generates income and improves infrastructures of the country. Bandipur is emerging as the popular destination for ecotourism in Nepal. Ecotourism in Bandipur has started to sustain the local market, to preserve natural resources, environment and to conserve the culture. This thesis was designed to analyze the contribution of ecotourism to local sustainable development. The existing contribution of ecotourism towards local communities has been analyzed by employing qualitative methods consisting of semi-structured interviews through skype. The findings illustrated that ecotourism in Bandipur impacted local livelihoods and other environmental, economic and socio-cultural factors positively as well as negatively. However, the positive effects of ecotourism in Bandipur were found to be more significant than the negative effects. Importantly, this research also disclosed that the local authorities and government along with the Bandipur Eco-Cultural Project are coming up with a variety of strategies to mitigate the negative impacts of ecotourism in this area.

Results from this study identified main points that need to be addressed to maintain sustainably and develop the local communities via ecotourism, namely the promotion of political empowerment of residents, economic empowerment so that Dalit communities of Bandipur also can get economic benefits equally, proper management as well as planning of ecotourism and the adoption of a community-based ecotourism. Further recommendations are offered for the governments and local authorities followed by additional suggestions for further study.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my great gratitude towards my thesis supervisor, Dr. Giang Phi of the Tourism department of Aalborg University, Copenhagen for her valuable feedback and guidance throughout this study. Her professional guidance and comments were the main keys for intensifying my ideas, refining my writing and completion of my thesis.

I would really like to express my deepest gratitude and sincere thanks to all interviewees for providing their valuable time to me and helped me in my further data collection. I am incredibly thankful to my research assistant, Miss Sikka Suwal, who provided significant assistance in contacting locals of Bandipur and collecting data from them. This accomplishment would not have been possible without her.

Lastly, I would like to express frank appreciation and deepest love to my mom and my family for their continuous support and encouragement during the research and writing process of my thesis.

Rachana Shrestha

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1: Introduction

Tourism is the fastest growing industry in the world and "also be viewed as a global activity providing service sector, employment, revenue and general economic" (Dowling & Fennell, 2003, p. 2). According to UNWTO, tourism became the major source of foreign exchange in most of the world's least developed countries (2007). Apart from this, tourism has a significant role to lead the cultural and social development of particular destinations in the world.

Tourism is generating 10.4% of world GDP which worth value 8.8 trillion US dollars and generates 319 million jobs (World Travel and Tourism Council , n.d.). In 2018, the Travel and Tourism Industry has been increased by 3.9% which contributes 3.2 % of the global economy (World Travel and Tourism Council , n.d.).

The rapid growth of this industry can cause mass tourism or over-tourism in certain destinations in many countries which might affect negatively on the environment and local communities on such destinations. "Unplanned and uncontrolled tourism development could ultimately lead to environmental degradation and socio-economic imbalance" (Marzuki, 2011).

To overcome such negative impacts, people are raising their voices against mass tourism or over-tourism and speaking about sustainable tourism. Thus, the alternative forms of tourism such as ecotourism, nature tourism and so on are in practice in different parts of the world to enhance tourism by supporting ecologically sustainable activities. Ecotourism is also known as responsible travel to a destination and popular as the "sustainable development segment of tourism industry" (Cobinnah et.al, 2017). Ecotourism has been characterized into different forms based on nature, context and its practices. Some of them are rural ecotourism, community-based ecotourism, sustainable ecotourism, cultural ecotourism and so on.

1.1.General Background

Nepal, the landlocked country situated in South Asia between two economically strong countries India and China. It covers 147,181 sq.km of land which is endowed with nature and has diverse geography. Nepal is also recognized as the land of mountains because it has 8 highest mountains out of the World's 10 highest peaks including Mount Everest, the highest peak of the world. Kathmandu is the capital city and one of the most popular cities with around 1.5 million population. The main economic sources of Nepalese people are services, agriculture and Industry whereas tourism is also one of the emerging industries of Nepal. (Central Intelligence Agency , 2020)
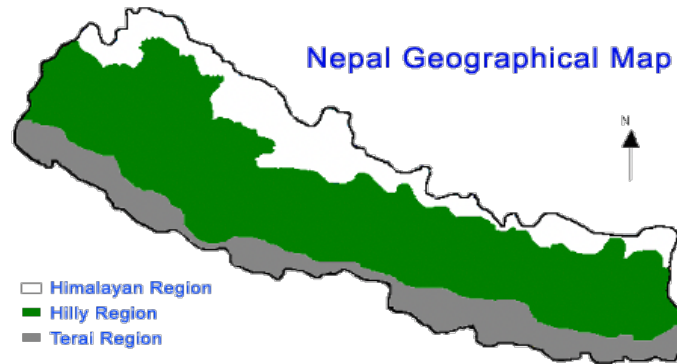
Figure 1 Geographical regions of Nepal. Reprinted from Info Nepal,2011.

Nepal started to welcome tourists in 1955 and became the new destination after the successful climb of Mount Everest by Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay. There are many heritage sites which are listed in UNESCO as the world heritage sites. But there was not any proper planning for tourism until 1965. To promote tourism in Nepal, many travel agencies, hotels were established, and infrastructural development was emphasized in 1966. (Thapa, 2012).

Nepal is lavished with natural resources such as forests, water and biodiversity. It covers 40% of the total area. Tropically, Nepal is classified into three regions i.e. Hill, Himalayan and Terai region. All these regions consist of diverse villages and towns. According to the national census of 2011, there are 125 ethnic groups and 123 languages in Nepal (Central Intelligence Agency , 2020).
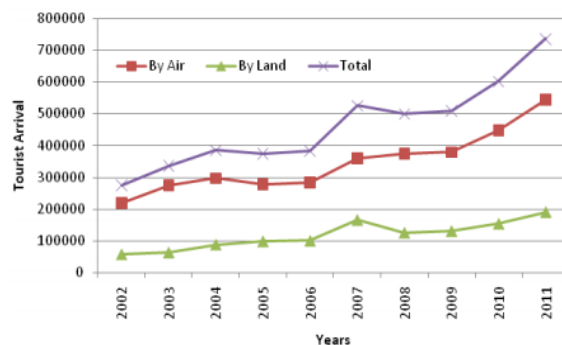
Figure 2. No of tourist arrivals in Nepal from 2002 to 2011. Reprinted from Nepal Tourism Statistics, 2011.

According to the Government of Nepal (2019), there were 1173072 tourists who arrived in Nepal in 2018, 55.54% of them visited Nepal for trekking and mountaineering whereas 6.49% of them

for pleasure and 24.86% were for pilgrimage. Mountain climbing, Bird watching, Kayaking, Bungee Jumping, Paragliding, Jungle safari, Trekking are the main activities performed by tourists in Nepal. Nepal has been popular for adventure among the tourists however there are many natural attractions like Pokhara, Mustang, Jomsom. Apart from adventures, tourists can enjoy different cultures, festivals in Nepal. According to Paudel et al (2011), there are 185 different species of mammals, 874 species of birds, 78 different kinds of reptiles, 651 species of butterflies in Nepal. Similarly, 246 different species of flora are only found in Nepal (Flora of Nepal, 2014). Even though Nepal is gradually gaining the popularity as the country of Mount Everest and the birthplace of Lord Buddha, many scholars and traveler has described Nepal as 'Nature Amphitheatre', 'Land of heritage' and Eco-tourism' (Dahal, 2017).

According to Nepal Tourism Statistics 2003, "the gross foreign exchange earnings from tourism stood at US$ 192.8 million, which represented an increase of 80.5% over the earnings of 2002 contribution of tourism to the GDP of the nation was 2.6% and it also provides 8.2 percent of total foreign exchange earning fiscal year 2002/03" (Dahal, 2017). Thus, tourism can be considered as one of the major sources of revenue in Nepal. Tourism is not only important economic source of foreign currency, but it also generates a large number of employments for the Nepalese people in Nepal. Despite that, Nepalese people also get opportunities to exchange knowledge and creates understanding among the people of the world.

Recently Nepal is launching Visit Nepal 2020 with the main motto of sustainability. Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) has emphasized community-based tourism to develop the remote corners of the country and to boost the economy as well as to preserve the culture and heritage. Furthermore, during this visit year 2020 and from this year, NTB is targeting to go green and implemented the 'green provincial development strategy' linked to Sustainable Development goals. (Visit Nepal 2020, 2019).

1.2. Aims and Objectives

The main aim of this research is to study the socio-cultural and environmental impacts of ecotourism on the sustainable development of local communities of Bandipur, Nepal. Thus, the research question of this study is

'How does ecotourism contribute to the sustainable development of local communities of Bandipur, Nepal?'

To achieve the main aim for this research, the following points are specific objectives of this study;

a. To identify the economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts of ecotourism within the context of sustainable development.

b. To analyze the contribution of ecotourism to communities within Bandipur

c. To make recommendations to ensure the sustainable development of local communities through ecotourism activities in Bandipur.

1.3.Significance of the study

As Nepal is mountainous and rich in biodiversity as well as its culture and traditions, ecotourism is a much suitable form of tourism in the context of Nepal. Its natural beauty and cultural diversity are the main reasons that draw the attraction of many tourists. Such rapid development in tourism in Nepal might create overuse or misuse of natural resources in host destinations. The rapid increase inflow of people has a huge influence on the consumption of natural resources and can cause damages to the environment (Dahal, 2017). Therefore, this research is trying to address how ecotourism contributes to the sustainable development of local communities in study areas. This research has been examined the socio-cultural and environmental impacts of ecotourism towards the local communities and will recommend positive aspects as well as highlight all those aspects which need to be improved in this area. Previous studies were done on the potentials of tourism and had drawn the economic aspects but not so much concerned about the environmental and socio-cultural impacts of ecotourism in this area (Ruska, 2012). As this study has researched the impacts of ecotourism in Bandipur, the local authorities and NTB will be able to get to know the positive as well as negative impacts of tourism activities in Bandipur. This research will provide some recommendations to the plan and policymakers to formulate appropriate plans for further promotion of Bandipur as well as other destinations of the nation. Besides, this study will help researchers, local authorities and communities to point out the negative impacts of tourism activities on the study area. Furthermore, it can be a milestone for the researchers and students to research this topic shortly as Bandipur is an emerging destination in Nepal.

1.4.Limitation of the Study

This study is based on the emerging destination of Nepal, Bandipur and limited to this study area. Since this study is based on the case study, the conclusions drawn from this research are merely

indicative rather than conclusive. The conclusions could not be generalized for the whole, but the inferences might be reliable to some extent to those areas with a similar geographical condition. This study does not include the whole scenario of Tourism year 2020 as it has taken only the first 4 months of the year.

1.5.Structure of the thesis

The study is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter includes the general introduction, statement of the problem, aims and objectives, the significance of study, limitation and organization of the study. Chapter two discusses the concepts of sustainable development and ecotourism especially focus on the definition of sustainable development and SDGs. Similarly, the ecological, economic and socio-cultural approaches of sustainable development are also highlighted. The chapter then reviews the definition of ecotourism, forms of tourism and impacts of ecotourism.

Chapter three will explains the closer look at ecotourism and sustainable development in Nepal. It also presents a brief introduction about the study area: Bandipur. Research Methodology which includes research design, data collection techniques and tools is described in chapter four. The chapter emphasized on a selection of research processes and methods including selecting a research assistant, ethical issues for this research.

Chapter five deals with the findings from the study site. Likewise, it reflects to the theory presented in chapter 2 to analyze whether ecotourism contributes to local sustainable development or not. Additionally, it includes the analysis is carried out in the light of the evaluation criteria developed in chapter two's literature review, as well as in comparison with the existing ecotourism literature. and conclusion.

Chapter six is the concluding chapter, where I offer a summary by putting together the research aims, the relevant theories and the findings of the case study. Then I conclude the thesis by providing some key recommendations in chapter 7 to improve contemporary practices and policies for ecotourism in Bandipur and maintain its sustainable development.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter will present the nature of ecotourism and sustainable development starting with a discussion of the concept of sustainable development. This includes its definition, approaches of sustainable development by mainly focus on ecological, economic and socio-cultural factors. Similarly, the concept of ecotourism will be underlined with a special focus on the definition of ecotourism, impacts of ecotourism: economic, environmental and socio-cultural aspects and empowerment framework of ecotourism.

2.1.Sustainable Development

Here, in this section, the concept of sustainable development, SDGs followed by different approaches to sustainable development has been discussed.

National Strategies for Sustainable Development described:

"Sustainable development is economic and social development that meets the needs of the current generation without undermining the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (2000 as cited in Mawhinney, 2002).

World Wildlife Fund (WWF) defined sustainable development as improvement of quality of life "while living within the carrying capacity of supporting systems" (Mawhinney, 2002). Similarly, in 1993, the local Government Management Board of UK interpreted sustainable development as reducing the consumption level of energy, resources and control in waste production to protect natural systems for future generations as well (ibid).

Sustainable development "does not necessarily involve growth"(Liu, 2003; as cited in Khatri &Shrestha, 2019) as it is procedures to understanding the economic and social objectives that impacts on changes of quality as well as to maintain the authenticity of culture and locality (Khatri & Shrestha, 2019). Global environmental awareness has started since the 1960s' to draw attention to the issues of pollution and devastation of extinct habitats (Keyser, 2002).

All these definitions of sustainable development reflect that environmental issues are the main focused areas on sustainable development. However, the policies of sustainable development comprehend three general areas: economic, environmental and social. These three components are recognized as foundational pillars of sustainable development by United nations in the World Summit Outcome Document (Schirnding, 2005).

Cultural diversity is necessary to humankind as biodiversity becomes one of the roots in the understanding development. It is also taken as a medium to achieve intellectual, emotional, moral

and spiritual existence. Culture becomes the fourth pillar of sustainable development. (UNESCO, 2008)

To maintain sustainability in the world, the United Nation has launched 2030 agenda for sustainable development in 2015 and accepted by all United Nation members. There are 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) which are also recognized as the universal goals to plan an action to mitigate poverty, protect the planet and maintain peace and prosperity. These goals address the great challenges that humanity faces and ensure all people have equal opportunities to live a better life without compromising our planet. (United Nation , n.d.)

Figure 3. Sustainable Development Goals. Reprinted from United Nations. n.d.

All these goals are interrelated and plays a vital role in sustainable economic growth, "social inclusiveness like employment and poverty reduction, sustain environmental aspects including climate change, protection of cultural values, diversity and heritage as well as maintain mutual understanding, peace and security". (WTO, 2018; as cited in Khatri & Shrestha, 2019).

The SDGs are designed to maintain equality, leave no one behind and to bring the world to life-changing including zero poverty, hunger, discrimination against women and girls. Moreover, SDGs deal with the threats of climate change, ensure the availability of water and access to affordable energy. These goals are also concerned with marine lives as well as from land. More importantly, they reaffirm to build a more sustainable, safer, more prosperous planet for all humanity as well as other lives. (UNDP, 2020)

17 SDGs are specially focused to achieve the following summarized objectives. (UN, 2017; as cited in Mensah & Casadevall, 2019)

- Eliminate poverty and hunger, guarantee a healthy life
- Access to basic services such as water, sanitation and sustainable energy
- Support development opportunities via inclusive education and decent work
- Promote innovation and infrastructure, encourage communities and cities to produce and consume sustainably
- Diminish inequality in the world including gender inequality
- Environmental conservation through fighting against the climate change and protection of marine and land ecosystems
- Promoting collaboration between different social agents to create an environment of peace and assure responsible consumption and production.

Among all definitions given by many scholars and organizations, this present study most relate with Mawhinney's notion, since it indicates sustainable development as a better quality of life and minimizes the usage of resources along with managing the waste. As this research is trying to find out the impacts of ecotourism on sustainable development of the local community where community refers to the locals, stakeholders, and environments, this definition is given by Mawhinney (2002) is used to check whether lives of locals has been affected or not and environmental impacts in the study area.

Taking consideration into the definition given by Liu (2003) and WTO (2018), this study can get deeper into economic, social and environmental as well as cultural impacts on communities. There is a gap between the development in actual and how it can be seen outside in society. As disclosed by Sharpley, a country like Bhutan wants to take happiness as an indicator of development (2015), the indicator of development varies on the communities and countries.

Sustainable development can be applied through three different approaches which are explained in below subtopics.

2.1.1. Ecological Sustainable Approaches

Generally, Ecological sustainability is also known as Environmentally sustainable and an essential part of sustainable development. According to Overton, it is the process of assuring the current course of interaction with the environment is followed by the idea of keeping the environment as

natural as possible (1999). Similar to Overton's statement, Elliott's studies mentioned that environmentally sustainable needs to sustain ecological diversity and productivity (2006).

 The main aim of this approach is to improve human welfare along with the protection of natural capital such as land, air, water, minerals, etc. Purvis, Mao and Robinson (2019) point out ecological sustainability as a development related to the ecological processes, biological diversity and resources. In other words, development should aid environmental preservation by limiting population and economic growth by using appropriate technology.

However, environmental problems can still exist even after applying technology and have been criticized technology as the reliever of the problem temporarily rather than treat the main cause of the problem. Almost everyone in today's world depends on technology, different technology has been developed to combat with different problems. New technologies are developed to deal with the problems created by technology itself. Therefore, one should set boundaries for technology to determine the actual problems of environmental degradation. (Doaa & Merna, 2019)

2.1.2. Economical sustainable Approaches

According to Elliott (2006), ecological approaches to sustainable is mainly concerned with the reduction of poverty, improvement in technology, a better quality of life as well as efficient use of resources. Lobo, Pietriga and Appert (2015) point out this approach consists of a production system which gratifies the present consumption level without compromising future needs (as cited in Mensah &Casadevall, 2019; Purvis, et al, 2019). Moreover, it applies to reduce the liquid and solid waste to avoid the contamination that can cause disease and epidemics (Ali & Halis, 2017). It is also claimed that for economic growth, advancement in technology plays an important role to replace the misuse of natural resources in the production process (Cooper & Vargas, 2004; as cited in Mensah & Casadevall, 2019). However, they have argued that not all of the natural resources are renewable and nor can be replenished (ibid).

2.1.3. Social and Cultural Sustainable Approaches

Likewise, ecological and economical sustainable approaches, socio-cultural is another important pillar for sustainable development. Socio-cultural sustainability refers to the development that involves the growth in people's quality of life along with the conservation of authentic culture, values and identity of communities (Purvis, et al, 2019). Socio-cultural sustainable approaches account the social issues like poverty, inequality and injustice, this is also supported by Elliott

(2006) and added socio-cultural sustainability is required to maintain social components such as cultural diversity, social justice and community participation.

In many developing countries, many people usually depend on the natural environment for their basic needs: food, water, health, shelter, income and employment. Since they have limited options for their livelihoods, they are often forced to remain in practice to keep on degrading their surroundings even further just to survive (Adams, 2009). Thus, it is argued that social sustainability is very difficult to achieve because the social system seems highly intangible and complicated (Mensah & Casadevall, 2019). It has also been criticized that, social sustainability is not about meeting everyone's need instead it provides opportunities to everyone to realize their needs (Kolk, 2016).

These approaches are also referred to as pillars of sustainable development and Schroeder's research on Cultural Values and Sustainable Tourism in Bhutan (2015) demonstrates environmental, socio-cultural and economic are the three principles of sustainability and there must be a suitable balance between three pillars. Further, he criticized that the socio-cultural component does not get the attention as other components do (2015). Furthermore, it has been argued that the rapid growth of population increases demands on the resources thus, people must recognize environmental limitations and sustainability must be integrated into their practices (Redclift, 1991).

There should be a proper understanding of three approaches of sustainable development to study the sustainable development of the certain areas (Purvis, et al, 2019). Since, the major source of income in the study area is tourism (Sigdel, 2014), one can argue and raise questions on ecological and sustainable approaches. Thus, these three approaches enable this study to understand the different approaches to sustainable development followed by the study area.

2.2.Ecotourism

Ecotourism is the fastest growing sector of the tourism industry. The growing rate of ecotourism is 10-12 % per year which is 3 times faster than the tourism industry as a whole (Coria & Calfucura, 2012). Scheyvens (1999), has defined Ecotourism as

"environmentally responsible, enlightening travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas to enjoy and appreciate nature (and any accompanying cultural features both past and present) that promotes conservation has low visitor impact and provides beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations".

In other words, ecotourism plays a vital role in socio-cultural, environmental sector and advantageous to the local people as the most essential part of the activity.

Furthermore, TIES (2019), has clarified ecotourism consists of three main keywords 'conservation', 'communities', and 'sustainable travel'. It is also known as "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people and involves interpretation and education" (TIES, 2019) by including local participation with the minimal consumption of the non-renewable resources (Wood, 2002). Ecotourism has different forms which have named according to the nature, context and practices of ecotourism. They are named in many ways according to the types, place and features of ecotourism followed in a particular destination. Sustainable tourism and community-based ecotourism are the most popular forms of tourism. Sustainable tourism refers to respect both locals of host destinations and travelers, cultural heritage and the environment (UNESCO, 2010 as cited in Regmi,2016). Additionally, UNEP has added, sustainable ecotourism reduces negative externalities and contributes in effective resource management as well as income generation (2013). Through Community Based Ecotourism (CBET), host communities can achieve community empowerment, political, social and economic benefits. Furthermore, it also enhances social status, harmony social cohesion and ecological sustainability. (KC, 2017)

According to the definition given by WWF, CBET is a type of tourism on which local people are the one who has huge control, involves in community's tourism development and management (2014) and maintains a balance between environmental, economic and human development (Oliveira & Silva, 2010). Besides, it can generate a sense of pride among locals and encourage them to upgrade and preserve historical and cultural assets. (UNEP, 2001)

However, Wilkinson and Pratiwi (1995), declared the social and cultural system can be damaged when ecotourism results in economic benefits for a local community (as cited in Scheyvens, 1999). Mostly, developing countries have an advantage from ecotourism with their unique cultures, natural escape (UNEP, 2013).

Ecotourism is implicated to meet the need of both tourists and host destination meanwhile it protects as well as enhance opportunities for the future. Local government, communities, NGOs and the private sector plays a vital role in sustainable ecotourism to conserve, develop and maintain healthy cooperation and coordination (KC, 2017). To attain sustainable in ecotourism, all aspects

including environmental, social, economic, local resources, traditions, local manpower should be taken care of (KC, 2017).

The notion of ecotourism was established in 1985 to control the environmental degradation caused by the rapid growth of tourists after the country opened up in the 1950s (Zein, 2019). Besides the protection of mountain ecosystems, the country also tries to reinstate "ownership of the environment to local communities that live close to the country's rich natural resources" (Zein, 2019)

The term ecotourism has been started after the explosion of mass tourism. As stated by Dahal, in the late '60s environmental concern among the industrialized countries was started and many conservation organizations became active to conserve "the natural integrity of the whole ecosystems" (2017). However, this form of tourism emerged in the late 1980s (Diamantis,1999; Coria &Calfucura, 2012).

 All the definitions above have talked about conserving nature, cultural and local people. Thus, the mentioned elements can be considered as the basic components of ecotourism.

In many countries, ecotourism is promoted by government and local authorities like alternative means to protect the natural environment and local cultures (Hill & Hill, 2011). It is also argued that ecotourism might not be profitable in some countries because of the other factors such as natural features, lack of infrastructures and political instability (Coria & Calfucura, 2012). Similar to the statement given by Coria and Calfucura, Diamantis has mentioned, the benefit of ecotourism to the destination based on "the scale of tourism, size of the country and interconnected part of their economies" (1999). Even though ecotourism is taken as the major source of generating economic and boost up the living standard of people, ecotourism should not consider as the only source of development of local communities instead, "it must be complemented with other actions" (Coria & Calfucura, 2012). The international development community has been encouraged developing countries to follow ecotourism to enhance the economic welfare of indigenous people by maintaining the relationship between tourism, indigenous communities and natural areas (Coria & Calfucura, 2012).

Additionally, Diamantis has argued that ecotourism can be considered as a new form of mass tourism if it generates the massive number of demands from the tourists and the stakeholders (1999). There must be proper planning and management of ecotourism to balance economic, social and environmental objectives (Wood, 2002: Diamantis, 1999).

Erdogan's declaration on ecotourism (2017) recognizes the critical viewpoint towards ecotourism. To foster ecotourism, local resources are massively used to the provision of infrastructural development such as in airports, roads, local transports and accommodation services. Similarly, forest and natural areas are converted to expand ecotourism activities. Moreover, peoples from other places have moved in such places to invest and the eye-catching environment has been staged in the name of ecotourism. (Erdogan, 2017)

Oram has claimed ecotourism as the 'big business' and mentioned that ecotourism can threaten to "destroys the resources on which it depends. For instance, tour boats dump garbage in the water of Antarctica, shutterbugs harass wildlife in national parks and hordes of us trample fragile areas" (1995). According to Scheyvens (1999), when ecotourism drives with the business motive "it may serve to alienate rather than benefit local communities". Rudkin and Hall (1996) have given an example of south pacific where "the ecotourism has been promoted within a particularly narrow band of conservation and business thought which has often failed to appreciate the role of social and political values within the sustainable tourism development" (as cited in Scheyvens, 1999).

In the case of Bandipur, lots of tourism-related businesses are opening up to target the visitors and businessmen from other parts of Nepal are also keen to open their business over there. Thus, it will be interesting to find out whether ecotourism contributes to local communities or not in this study area. According to the International Ecotourism Society, the one who wants to implement ecotourism and be part of ecotourism should follow the principles of ecotourism (2015). Principles of ecotourism are listed below: (The International Ecotourism Society, 2015)

- Reduce Physical, social, behavioral and psychological impacts
- Enhance environmental and cultural awareness
- Provide positive experiences for hosts as well as for visitors
- Generate financial benefits for both local and private industry
- Identify the rights and spiritual benefits of the local people of the community
- Collaboration with the community to create empowerment.

Apart from these principles, Wallace and Pierce (1996) explained three key pillars to develop ecotourism: 'Environment', 'Development', 'Experience' (as cited in Sharpley, 2006).

2.3. Impacts of Ecotourism

Ecotourism has both positive and negative impacts on the environment, economy, society as well as culture. It serves to promote increased environmental awareness, sustainable communities, cultural experiences and environmental conservation. "There must be clear understanding about the relationship that must be established between local communities and conservation and how it can be improved through ecotourism" (Oliveira & Silva, 2010).

2.3.1. Environmental impacts

According to Diamantis (as cited in Richardson, 1993)," Ecologically sustainable tourism in natural areas that interpret local environment and culture furthers the tourists understanding of them, fosters conservation and adds to the wellbeing of local community" (2004).

Ecotourism involves traveling to "relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific object of studying, admiring and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals" (Coria & Calfucura, 2012) as well as accepting the existing culture in those areas (Dahal, 2017).

Ecotourism mainly focused on the protection of resources, biological diversity and sustainability. It encourages local people for the conservation of the environment and generates community benefits (Duffy, 2008). Ecotourism discourages deforestation, decreases hunting rate and reduces in the conversion of forest to agricultural and business (Stem et al, 2003). The conception given by Stem et al (2003) is supported by Bin, Suocheng and Mei (2008) and added, Sustainability of natural resources can increase the forest area, natural resources and biodiversity and tourism resources can be enhanced during tourism development. Natural resources are protected by increasing recreational as a center of attraction (Kelkit, Ozel, & Demirel, 2005) and supplements the area with new plantations, infrastructural development and new destinations for visitors (Nath & Alauddin, 2006). For instance, Lindberg, Enriquez and Sproule (1996) explained, Tubbataha, the national marine park in the Philippines, would not have been declared as a National Park and national foundation would not have been formed for its protection if tourism does not exist in that area. Significantly, they have added that Tubbataha is a clear example of tourism promoting marine conservation and resource management(ibid).

Whereas Folk has argued, the rapid growth of ecotourists in destination causes intense pressure to develop areas (2019). As an outcome, the construction of more accommodation, businesses and recreational attraction related to tourism sector is going on within destinations. These massive number of constructions destroys habitats, local environment and increases pressure on native species. (Folk, 2019)

2.3.2. Economic impacts

According to an article by Folk (2019), many tourists are expanding their searches and destinations instead of choosing popular places, which creates more opportunities for employment within locals as well as the indigenous population of communities and countries. Locals of destinations act as guides, owner of handicrafts, hotel owners, merchants, and hosts to visiting tourists. As a result, locals are having better living standards (ibid). However, she has also added that unhealthy competition among locals might be created to intend to make more economic benefit than others. In many host destinations, home-sharing sites like air BnB are growing more popular, these types of home-sharing have negative impacts on the economy of local communities(ibid). Increases on regional revenue as well as national income, improves infrastructural development such as transportation, accommodation, minimizes poverty are some positive economic impacts of ecotourism (KC, 2017).

Additionally, research done by Lindberg, Enliquez and Sproule (1996) found out over 50% of inhabitants were benefitted directly from local ecotourism whereas 70% of non-tourism jobs were considered to be dependent on tourism.

2.3.3. Socio-cultural Impacts

Ecotourism organizes cultural tours among different community groups and presents rich culture to ensure the experience of tourism stakeholders (Stem, et al, 2003). To promote ecotourism, local cultural lodge which is also known as ecolodge are established in many destinations. Similarly, ecotourism provides cultural literacy through local cultural lodge, food, history and activities. Communities can boost up their welfare as well as educate a large number of populations regarding their authentic culture, traditions and values. (Folk, 2019)

Ecotourism enlarges social stability, harmony, strengthens traditional culture and decreases political conflicts as well (Bin, et al, 2008). Along with these factors, negative socio-cultural factors are observed as well. Improper and poor management of ecotourism can cause social conflicts between locals and government authorities (ibid). Ecotourism can create challenges for authentic cultures and values due to western influence (ibid). Local culture and tradition of host destination can get affected negatively if indigenous culture improvised according to tourists' culture (Folk, 2019). According to Zambrano, Broadbent and Durham (2010), there are possibilities on the increase in alcoholism, drug addiction and prostitution due to tourism (as cited

in KC, 2017). Similarly, it may arise unhealthy competition among locals due to the lure of tourist dollars (Scheyvens, 1999).

2.4. Ecotourism as a form of Sustainable Development

Employment opportunities for local communities are the most quoted contribution of ecotourism towards sustainable development (Das & Chatterjee, 2015). Direct employments such as tour guides, eco-lodges employees are the main sectors that are impacted by ecotourism. In terms of ecotourism, women are mostly getting benefits from job creation in comparison with men (ibid) but one can argue that it might not applies to third world countries like Nepal where gender inequalities are still in existence. Besides, employment, infrastructural development is another notable contribution of ecotourism for sustainable development. According to Das and Chatterjee, a lack of well-developed infrastructure in ecotourism might lead to environmental degradation and fails to meet sustainable goals (2015). On top of that, they have clarified, without any sustainable energy sources in host destinations lead to high demand for unsustainable sources, for instance, firewood (2015).

Ecotourism assists in empowering local communities by providing social, economic, social, political and psychological benefits. Empowerment framework (figure 3) has been developed by Scheyvens (1999) in her study to demonstrate the impacts of ecotourism on local communities. He stressed that empowerment has become a fundamental part of developing tourism (1999) and achieving sustainability (Sofield, 2003).

Economic benefits should be shared among many households within the community and there should be an improvement in water systems, permanent house, equal job opportunities among community members. Whereas the local communities considered disempowered economically if most of the benefit goes to outsiders, government agencies, etc. and only a few individuals are part of the benefit earned through ecotourism. Similarly, local communities can be empowered psychologically by enhancing the self-esteem of community members and lead them to obtain further education and training opportunities. Further, she has affirmed that communities can be empowered socially when infrastructural development like building schools, improvement of roads, etc. are done. Significantly, she has claimed that ecotourism can disempower local communities if individuals or groups of society compete with each other instead of cooperating to perceive the profits of ecotourism. Likewise, ecotourism politically empowers local communities as well, it involves groups of women, youth, other socially disadvantaged groups and distributes

equal opportunities for them to be part of the decision-making process. However, in some destinations, government agencies treat ecotourism as a "passive beneficiaries" (Scheyvens R. , 1999) and do not get succeed to involve every member in decision making and policies and decisions are made for them, not by them (Sofield, 2003). As a consequence, the local communities can get disempowered through ecotourism. (Placeholder2)

	Signs of empowerment	Signs of disempowerment
Economic empowerment	Ecotourism brings lasting economic gains to a local community. Cash earned is shared between many households in the community. There are visible signs of improvements from the cash that is earned (e.g. improved water systems, houses made of more permanent materials).	Ecotourism merely results in small, spasmodic cash gains for a local community. Most profits go to local elites, outside operators, government agencies, etc. Only a few individuals or families gain direct financial benefits from ecotourism, while others cannot find a way to share in these economic benefits because they lack capital and/or appropriate skills.
Psychological empowerment	Self-esteem of many community members is enhanced because of outside recognition of the uniqueness and value of their culture, their natural resources and their traditional knowledge. Increasing confidence of community members leads them to seek out further education and training opportunities. Access to employment and cash leads to an increase in status for traditionally low-status sectors of society e.g. women, youths.	Many people have not shared in the benefits of ecotourism, yet they may face hardships because of reduced access to the resources of a protected area. They are thus confused, frustrated, disinterested or disillusioned with the initiative.
Social empowerment	Ecotourism maintains or enhances the local community's equilibrium. Community cohesion is improved as individuals and families work together to build a successful ecotourism venture. Some funds raised are used for community development purposes, e.g. to build schools or improve roads.	Disharmony and social decay. Many in the community take on outside values and lose respect for traditional culture and for elders. Disadvantaged groups (e.g. women) bear the brunt of problems associated with the ecotourism initiative and fail to share equitably in its benefits. Rather than cooperating, individuals, families, ethnic or socio-economic groups compete with each other for the perceived benefits of ecotourism. Resentment and jealousy are commonplace.
Political empowerment	The community's political structure, which fairly represents the needs and interests of all community groups, provides a forum through which people can raise questions relating to the ecotourism venture and have their concerns dealt with. Agencies initiating or implementing the ecotourism venture seek out the opinions of community groups (including special interest groups of women, youths and other socially disadvantaged groups) and provide opportunities for them to be represented on decision-making bodies e.g. the Wildlife Park Board.	The community has an autocratic and/or self-interested leadership. Agencies initiating or implementing the ecotourism venture treat communities as passive beneficiaries, failing to involve them in decision-making. Thus the majority of community members feel they have little or no say over *whether* the ecotourism initiative operates or *the way* in which it operates.

Figure 4. Empowerment Framework of Ecotourism Reprinted from Scheyvens (1999).

According to Miller (2017), local communities and community members usually lumbered within low skill and low wages because of insufficient skills and bargaining power. Moreover, he has notified an inequitable distribution of benefits within a community can be another main challenge for ecotourism (ibid). Additionally, he has mentioned the term ecotourism is also often used as a marketing buzzword that involves "labeling a project as ecotourism without any real sustainability" (Miller, 2017).

In the context of Nepal, according to the statistics of Nepal, lots of tourism-related business has opened in 2018 in comparison with the past years (Ministry of Culture, Tourism &Civil Aviation, 2019). After looking towards the collected data by the Nepal Government, it is seen that lots of employment opportunities are created from past years. However, the negative impacts of tourism do exist in Nepal but have not been studied in past research. Thus, it is very significant to examine the impacts on socio-cultural and environmental factors by ecotourism in the study area. Only a few numbers of researches about Bandipur are found and often positive impacts were researched so this study is trying to fill the gap by studying the negative impacts of ecotourism.

The introduction the of study area has been presented in the next section.

Chapter 3: Eco tourism and Sustainable Development in Nepal

This chapter introduces and discusses ecotourism and sustainable development in Nepal as well as a brief discussion about the study area, Bandipur.

3.1.Ecotourism in Nepal

As Nepal is rich in natural and cultural heritage with a great diversity of topographic and eco climatic features, the tourism industry has been growing day by day. Most of the tourists are visiting Nepal to explore the natural beauties, the livelihood of local communities, Himalayan ranges, cultural heritages and ethnic diversity. Nepal, like many developing countries, is trying to use ecotourism as a tool to achieve sustainable development. The idea of ecotourism in Nepal has been started since 1981 and a number of ecotourism programs have been launched in Nepal only after 1992 (Bhatta, 2015). Circuit Trekking route and Ecotourism Development Project are one of the first ecotourism projects in Nepal established in 1992 (Bhatta, 2015).

In 2016, 427,000 job opportunities have been created through the tourism industry in Nepal (Prasain, 2017). In consideration with a case study on 'The effects of Tourism on Culture and the Environment' by Pandey, Chettri and Kunwar (1995), the establishment of Chitwan National Park in 1973 has brought lots of transformation in the socio-economic and cultural life of the villagers. Similarly, greenery, forest resources and other natural resources have been conserved in the name of ecotourism, as consequences, the biodiversity of flora and fauna has been flourishing in the whole country but in same time trekking tourism in rural areas has been affected badly due to the construction of infrastructure (KC, 2017).

To attract more tourists, many hotels were established in many cities in Nepal. In 2018, over 200 hotels were constructed in Pokhara to extend the hotel capacity for the rapid growth of tourist arrivals and as a result, more than 300 hotels dumped their waste in Phewa lake (The longest way home, 2019). Similarly, as consequences of tourism development activities, environmental degradation such as deforestation, pollution as well as cultural degradation are happening in Sagarmatha area (KC, 2017). The number of arrivals has increased by a million in 2018 after the earthquake occurred in 2015 which became the boon for the country and brought economic opportunities. Tourism in Nepal is creating job opportunities in one hand and at the same time negatively affected on the environment as Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) has argued, Nepal risks being "a victim of its own success" (Zein, 2019).

3.2.Sustainable Development in Nepal

Nepal is among the least developed countries and 25% of its populations are living below the poverty line (CIA, n.d.). Accordance with statistics of Asian Development Bank in 2019, 25.2 % of the total population of Nepal lived below the national poverty line in 2010, 23.9% of them are unemployed whereas 15% of the employed population had below $1.90 purchasing power parity a day in 2010. There are lots of people who are surviving with minimal resources in their surroundings as well as fewer infrastructures in their villages. In 2015, around 8.4% of the population had no facilities for clean drinking water and 32% of them does not have opportunities for education. (CIA, n.d.)

Nepalese Government has been following the goal of SDGs mainly focused on goal no 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9 and 17 to combat all these issues, and not to leave anyone behind. Poverty in Nepal has been reduced by half in the past 15 years and planning to bring it down to under 5 % by 2030. Further, it has been targeted to provide quality education and maintain gender equality among all Nepalese population by 2030. Moreover, through SDG 5, Nepal is aiming to eliminate wage discrimination, physical/ sexual violence and bad practices such as child marriages. The infrastructural development like to increase road density to connect each corner of the country to the national road network is aimed to achieve by 2030. (SDG Nepal, n.d.)

3.3.Study Area: Bandipur

This study concentrates on the case of Bandipur in Nepal. Bandipur, one of the old and small towns of Nepal situated in the eastern part in Tanahu district which is 148 km away from Kathmandu. It is well known for rich hill culture, mountain views, hiking, old cultural attributes and sacred

temples and caves. Being an ancient town with well-preserved culture, Bandipur is emerging as a new destination among other cities of Nepal. It offers a variety of attractions to visitors from all over the world. Tourists can experience its cultural heritage, natural views of Himalayan peaks, unique architecture conserved in town, eco trekking in hills of Bandipur, etc. Besides these, visitors can enjoy bird watching, jungle safari to watch different species of wild animals and can study on medical herbs. Since, more than 200 species of forest plants, more than 70 species of birds, 35 species of wild animals and different types of medicinal herbs are found in Bandipur. Apart from biodiversity, Bandipur is also rich in socio-cultural diversity. Bandipur is the home for different ethnic and caste groups and has their own culture, festivals celebrated in different occasions. Thus, tourists in Bandipur can enjoy a view of ancient houses, historical architecture, different local cultural dances such as Rodhi, Chutka, Balun, Sorathi and local foods, adventures like rafting in Seti and Trisuli river, paragliding, rock climbing, agricultural farm and bee hunting. (Sigdel, 2014). In the 1800s, Bandipur was once popular for commercial center, traders from Tibet and India used to come here with their products. But, a neighboring city, Pokhara which is 78 km away from this town gained importance when Nepal opened its doors to outsiders from the world in 1950. However, it came into limelight again right after the highway that connects Kathmandu and Pokhara in 1972 which is 8 km far away from Bandipur. (Nepal Tourism Board, 2020).

Tourism is an important sector to generate revenue in Nepal. Similarly, in Bandipur, tourism is emerging as the major source which has been providing skilled and unskilled jobs to many unemployed and has helped to uplift their living standard.
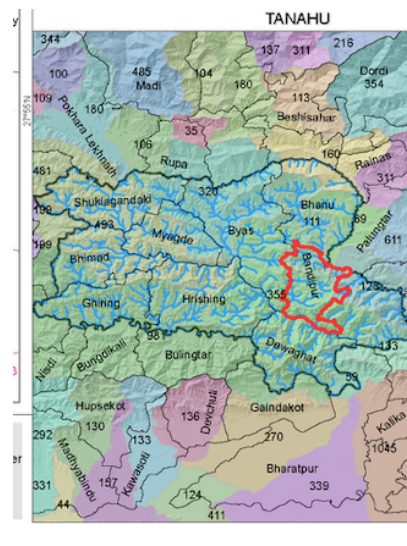
Figure 5 Map of Tanahu District. Reprinted from Nepal in Data (2018).

Tourism has also some negative impacts on the local communities. As stated by Gossling (2003), due to massive tourism, the local natural resources turn into commodities and convert town or village into the center of resource allocation. (Gossling, 2003). The rapid growth of tourists' arrivals in Bandipur might impacts local communities negatively. According to the local newspaper, around 150,000 domestic and international tourists have visited in 2019 and locals have been planning to open eight more hotels for the visit year 2020 (Himalayan News Service, 2020). The local people are benefited economically through tourism on one hand. Other hand, locals can forget their own culture and can be influenced by modern and western culture to please foreign tourists in this area. According to the Himalayan times (2020), peoples who have migrated to other cities such as Kathmandu and Chitwan to operate hotels and restaurants, have started to return to Bandipur due to an increase in the inflow of domestic as well as international tourists. All these rapid flows of people in this old town might create negative impacts on the local communities.

In the case of Nepal, tourism is more centered in major cities like Kathmandu, Pokhara and Everest Camp by which other villages are getting remain in backlight. The past researches have been based on such major cities of Nepal, only a few numbers of researches for rural villages can be found. The rapid growth of tourism and over inflow of people in Bandipur is causing the development in the economy and infrastructural sector in the one hand but there might be some negative factors as well especially in the study area which has not discussed so often. Thus, this study is filling a gap by enclosing negative socio-cultural as well as environmental impacts caused by ecotourism in the study area. Through this study, I am aiming to learn the actual development of local communities of Bandipur through ecotourism and identify its' negative effects on communities. Furthermore, this study is trying to highlight the actual impacts on Bandipur communities caused by ecotourism.

Chapter 4: Methodology

The research methodology is the main aspect of research work and to solve the research problem systematically. This chapter of this research will focus on methods and methodological considerations that were applied for this study. Semi-structured interviews, in-depth interviews

and secondary sources have been utilized in the process of gathering data, with the main aim of studying the impacts of ecotourism on local communities in Bandipur.

This chapter will begin with the philosophy of science in this study. Similarly, the research approach, selection of research assistant along the discussion of ethical consideration are comprised. Further, the process of data collection will also be covered as well as the practical challenges of the research are also included. Lastly, Limitations of this research have also been included at the end of the topic.

4.1.Philosophy of Science

This part covers the ontological and epistemological considerations in the context of this research. This methodological chapter is provided to state the philosophical position within the research field and lead the reader to understand how the course of research has been approached by the author.

a. Ontological Considerations

According to Al-Saadi (2014), "ontology is the assumptions we make about the kind and nature of reality and what exists". Moreover, he explains ontology is related to the question of 'what is' such as the nature of existence and structure of reality (2014).

Further, it comprehends the existence as well as the relation between different aspects such as social actors, cultural norms, values and social structures (Al-Saadi, 2014).

Similarly, Bryman argued ontology is "[..] whether social entities can and should be considered objective entities that have a reality external to social actors, or whether they can and should be considered social constructions built up from the perceptions and actions of social actors" (2012, p.32). There are two different approaches to Ontology: Objectivism and Social Constructivism (Al-Saadi, 2014; Bryman, 2012).

This study has followed the social constructivism approach since social constructivist consider reality as socially constructed and deal with the social, human, languages and actions of locals of communities (Al-Saadi, 2014). Through this theory, this research has tried to connect the view of locals related to both tourism and non-tourism by interviewing to investigate the impacts of ecotourism in the study area.

b. Epistemological Considerations

Generally, epistemology copes with the question of what can be considered as justifiable knowledge. In other words, it is concerned with knowledge that are possible to get with in

discipline (Bryman, Social Research Methods, 2012). Similarly, Al-Saadi describes epistemology as an assumption made through nature and types of knowledge and way of receiving and communicate to other social beings (2014). To further explain, he added, it is a way of viewing the world and address with the nature of knowledge as well as its possibilities (2014). The hermeneutic approach has been used in this paper since it is concerned with the theory and technique to interpret human actions but does not involve in detecting truths and explanations (Bryman, Social Research Methods, 2012).

In this paper, being a researcher has tried to obtain relevant data about the object of analysis which is the case of ecotourism and how does it impact local people in Bandipur. To achieve the objectives of this research, the qualitative interpretation has been implicated in this study. Apart from that, critical interrogation has been done to identify patterns and gaps to address possible clichés.

4.2. Case Study Research

This research-based on a particular town of Nepal, Bandipur. Since the main aim of this research is to examine the contribution of ecotourism towards local communities in Bandipur, case study approach has been appointed.

According to Crowe, Cresswell, Robertson, Huby, Avery and Sheikh (2011), case study is a research approach usually used for in-depth analysis and to understand complex the issue in its real circumstances. Further, they added, the case study helps to explain and understand the everyday contexts in which they occur (Crowe, et al., 2011). The case study method becomes more applicable when the research is trying to describe the present circumstances such as 'how' and 'why' social phenomena works (Yin, 2009).

The selection of the case in this paper was rather logical than random. Bandipur is known as one of the 'eco-city' of Nepal (KC, 2017). Since many locals left Bandipur in the past 20 years for a better future and lots of outsiders living there (Ruska, 2012), the impacts of ecotourism on local communities in Bandipur are interesting to examine.

Case studies can be limited either quantitative or qualitative data relying on the subject of the study and desired responses (Yin, 2009). However, he further added, the case study also supports the mixed method technique (2009). In this paper, the case will be studied by applying exploratory research and adopting qualitative methods as the desired conclusion is categorical rather than numerical (discussed thoroughly in chapter 4.5).

4.3. Selecting a Research Assistant

A local individual was hired as a research assistant (RA) for this research since RA played a vital role in facilitating the research process by arranging the skype interview with the locals of the study area. As stated by Leslie and Storey (2003), RA acts as a 'nuts and bolts' in the collection of data and in the interviewing process and helps the researcher to understand the cultural aspects in the entire process of research. Similarly, RA supports the researcher to gain access to reach out and research study sites as well as study participants. The assistance of someone who belongs from the local community is a necessary formality and such people can also serve as a guide, translator, or facilitator (Berg, 2007). I have followed the approach of Leslie and Storey (2003) whereby I sought to select the candidate as per the set criteria. Generally, RA must have good communication skills, patience, a good sense of humor and the ability to create comfortable environment and get along with participants.

In this study, RA acts as a bridge to connect me with the other locals who do not have access to the internet and to whom I could not reach out for data collection.

Miss. Sikka Suwal was the only one seemed to be the most suitable person as per the criteria. At first, she was acquainted with the social and cultural aspects of my study site as she was born and grew up in Bandipur. She is a well-known tennis player and sports teacher in Bandipur youth club. She is accepted and respected by locals because of her profession. Similarly, she had worked with many projects that emerged in the community. Besides, she has good communication skills, easy-going, cheerful, active and likes to explore any challenges.

4.4. Qualitative Research Approach

Mainly there are two types of research approach: Qualitative and quantitative, however, the mix of both approaches is also in practice. Quantitative methods are concerned with the forms of numbers whereas qualitative focus on words than in numbers (Bryman, Social Research Methods, 2012). As stated by DeFranzo (2011), qualitative methods lean more toward the exploratory research and more subjective rather than objectives gathering statistical data (Smith, 1994). Qualitative techniques are used specially to investigate people's perspectives and to attain a better comprehension of their behavior (Henn, Weinstein, & Foard, 2006). All these aspects of the qualitative approach proved it to be a suitable match for my research. Thus, I decided to choose a

qualitative approach for this study because the main objectives of this research try to obtain an answer in context rather than in numbers.

According to Bryman (2012), qualitative has different types of research methods: ethnography, in-depth interview, focus groups and analysis of text and documents. Among all these types, I have considered conducting an in-depth interview with locals which is also briefly discussed in the following subsection.

a. In-depth Interview

In-depth interview has been chosen out of other qualitative methods because it helps me to receive detailed descriptions from the participant and assist participants to communicate freely as well as encourage them to talk in-depth about the topic (Showkat & Parveen, 2017). The interview is conducted with stakeholders of communities such as hotel owners, Bandipur Municipality, members of Bandipur of ecotourism project, member of Local Mother's group, a local farmer and homestay owner. All these interviewees are selected as participants for this research because they have a significant cameo on achieving the main aim and objectives of this research as stated by Bryant (2005), these stakeholders get affected by ecotourism and also has an effect on the development as well as the evolution of ecotourism activity. Through these interviews, this research will achieve the qualitative information i.e. general development of tourism, socio-cultural aspects, changes and present tourism situation of the study area.

There are three different forms of interviewing process with structured, semi-structured and unstructured questionnaires. Mostly, an in-depth interview consists of either unstructured or semi-structured or a mix of both forms (Showkat & Parveen, 2017). As semi-structured questions help the interviewer to ask further as well as follow up questions in terms of new insights regarding the responses given by participants (ibid), this form of the interview has been adopted in this study.

Open-ended questions were appointed in my research after examining both pros and cons of open-ended questions. Open-ended questions provide the freedom for the interviewee to present and formulate their answers to the questions (Ruane, 2005). The respondents can get opportunities to say what they are thinking and describe what they do. Similarly, it helps researchers to discover the unique and unexpected encounter (ibid). Also, it is suitable to obtain respondents' perspectives on topic, their hopes for the future and past experienced (ibid). Thus, I decided to implement open-ended questions as my research mainly emphasized on attaining the unique viewpoints of locals.

As stated by Brouneus (2011) in-depth interview covers each detail and goes deep, it takes more amount of time, so, it is efficient to have only 10 to 12 interviewees. Thus, I ended up taking interviews with 7 participants for this research. At first, I scrutinized the relevant theories by going back and forth on Chapter 2 to construct the questionnaires. The only one set of semi-structured questions were made but questions were modified and adopted new questions according to the responses received from the interviewee throughout the interview to make it much comprehensible and in-depth accordingly (see appendix). To create a comfortable environment, I started with normal talk, asked about their profession, normal daily lives, families then after I would gradually ask to know about their views towards tourism in general and started to ask the questionnaires I have listed for.

4.5. Data Collection Technique

The entire process of collecting information is known as the data collection technique. Data and information can be gathered employing primary and secondary resources. In the context of this research, both primary, as well as secondary data has been used for further study.

a. Primary Data Collection

Primary data indicates the information and data collected from sources by practicing different techniques for instance interviews, observation and experiments (Salkind, 2010). As described in 4.4.1, an in-depth interview has been conducted via skype to gather the primary data. The phone interview performed by using skype is comparatively less expensive than other means of an interview (Wilson, 2014). Likewise, Skype interviews are applicable especially when the participants are widely spread in different geographical zones, apart from this, it mitigates the power relations between interviewer and interviewee (ibid). Meanwhile, he criticized that the interviews via phone might get disturbed because of the poor network (2014).

As the selected study area for this study is in Nepal, I could not visit there to collect data and due to the reason for roaming charges, a phone interview can be out of the budget, thus skype interview has been performed. Since Nepal is a developing country, locals of Bandipur might not have internet, thus, Skype interview has been conducted with the help of RA as explained above in 4.3. However, I used email and social media to contact interviewees like a representative from the Bandipur ecotourism project and Bandipur Municipality. Since two interviewees: Member of Bandipur ecocultural tourism project and Bandipur Municipality has direct access for the internet,

I fixed the Skype interview without any help of RA. The overview of my interviewees is illustrated below table 1.

Table 1 Overview of interviewees

s.no	Name of interviewees	Types of stakeholders	Length of interview
1.	Fulmati Thapa (F, 38 years old)	Owner of Sourya Hotel/ local	20 minutes
2.	Bikram Joshi (M, 32 years old)	Local Farmer	30 minutes
3.	Mr. Saran Singh Gurung	Information officer, Tourism department of Bandipur Municipality	40 minutes
4.	Sushma Pariyar (45 years old)	Member of Local's Mother group/ from Dalit Community	25 minutes
5.	Mr. Amber Pun Magar	Relation officer of Bandipur Ecotourism project	30 minutes
6.	Maya Sharma (F, 28 years old)	Homestay owner/ Local	28 minutes
7.	Nikesh Vishwakarma (M, 35)	Guide/ Local/ employee of Bandipur Hotel/ Dalit Community	20 minutes

b. Secondary Data Collection

White (2003) defines secondary data as information that has already been collected but made available later for other researchers to implement for different purposes. Due to the fact that secondary data are existed information by other authors, it enables the researcher to consume less money, time and energy (Crossman, 2019)Mostly, secondary data refers to statistics published by the government, local and regional reports, the local newspaper, articles and so on (Overton & Diermen, 2003).

In this research, secondary sources were used to amplify the literature review and to support the data collected by using the primary qualitative techniques. The official documents such as reports from Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), CIA were used to gather basic ideas. Furthermore, online research through official databases comprising past studies for instance dissertation, articles, books, newspapers, research, blogs and so on done by other researchers and journalists are used as secondary data in this research.

4.6. Data Analysis

In order to analyze the data, thematic analysis has been applied in this research because the thematic analysis is the foundation method for qualitative analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2008). This method is used to identify, analyze, report as well as manage outcomes from the interview in detail and interprets the different aspects of the research topic(ibid). Braun and Clarke (2008) have also

explained thematic analysis as the qualitative method which enables researchers to analyze the findings of the research.

The six phases of thematic analysis have been applied to analyze the outcome of the interview as stated by Braun and Clarke (2008).

- Familiarizing with data
- Generate initial codes
- Searching theme
- Reviewing theme
- Defining and naming theme
- Producing the report

Since this paper is working with interviews, the outcome from interviews has transcribed into written form in order to conduct thematic analysis. Although the process of transcription might consume more time, it is the perfect way to familiarize yourself with the data (Braun & Clarke, 2008). The transcribed interviews were read several times and have determined the initial ideas. Subsequently, the main theme regarding impacts, challenges, opportunities has been reviewed and defined those topics. Finally, findings from all interviews have been analyzed.

4.7. Ethical Considerations

Every society has their norms, values and history and it is the responsibility of the researcher to respect the culture, ethical codes and physical environment of the study area (Nash, 2000). Ethical issues are one of the most crucial aspects of conducting research and such issues need to be considered carefully at every step from the beginning phase of the research project to its results (Scheyvens, Nowak, & Scheyvens , 2003). Participants of the study should be prioritized, and their privacy should be ensured (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

Local hotel owners, homestay owners, local authorizations, members of Bandipur ecotourism project were contacted through social media and mail whereas other respondents to whom I could not reach out from here directly were contacted with the help of RA to select participants for this research. To approach them, I started by briefly introducing myself, provided information about my background, my status as a student and my research work. Similarly, interviewees were requested to contribute voluntarily and were not forced. Subsequently, time and date for interview were allocated as they preferred. At the beginning of the interview, I began with normal talk asking about their lives to create a comfortable atmosphere which is very essential to comfort the

interviewee to speak and confer their knowledge (Bryman & Bell, 2007). All participants of this research were informed that they were allowed to decline to answer any particular question, withdraw from the process at any time and ask questions about the study at any time during participation. Also, I asked and took approval to record the skype interview.

Besides that, I also informed all the participants that all the information I had collected was to be used only for academic purposes. Information of Participants like personal details have not been used unless permission was given.

4.8. Trustworthiness of the research

According to Shenton (2004) and Stumpfegger (2017), validity and reliability are not suitable for qualitative research as it obtains multiple and subjective realities and endeavors to achieve deep insight. Thus, the term 'trustworthiness of the research' has been applied instead of reliability and validity. It is relevant to use trustworthiness to convince that the outcomes of the research are credible, transferable, confirmable and dependable (Shenton, 2004).

The triangulation approach has been implemented to maintain the credibility and quality of gathered data and information. The triangulation method indicates the process of verifying the individual viewpoints and experiences against others to obtain accurate results for a particular construct (Shenton, 2004). Furthermore, he explained this approach as a process of cross-validation (2004). In the context of this study, various methods such as in-depth interview and online researches have been used to compare and verify the collected data and information of this research.

4.9. Limitations

Since there was a pandemic outbreak in the whole world, it was a big challenge to travel Nepal at that time because of the strict restrictions made by the Nepalese government to block all boarders and close flights. Thus, desk research has been conducted instead of fieldwork observation. The budget is also other constraints in this research. Due to budget limitation, I could not contact all participants through the phone as it costs lots of roaming and international phone charges, so I had no other choices than taking the help of the research assistant to contact locals through her skype id and conducting skype interviews with participants. In the same way, it was very difficult to arrange skype interviews with interviewees because of the lockdown in Nepal, no one is allowed to go outside of their home. However, I tried to collect around 10 interviews, I have ended on taking interviews with only 7 participants due to constraints caused by the pandemic situations.

With all these limitations, I have attempted to maintain credibility in this research. After an explanation of the methodological process, the outcome of data collection and analysis will be demonstrated relating to literature in the remaining chapter of this thesis below.

Chapter 5: Analysis and Discussions

This chapter presents the research outcome with the aim of analyzing, in light of issues that are outlined previously in the literature review chapter. In an effort to address the aim, objectives and research questions, this chapter intends to discuss whether ecotourism in Bandipur viable vehicle for is contributing to local sustainable development.

This chapter consists of four sections: the first part will illustrate the impacts of ecotourism in Bandipur whereas the second section will illustrate the empowerment in Bandipur through ecotourism by adopting a theoretical framework constructed in chapter two. At the end of this chapter is the concluding section, which briefly sums up all these issues mentioned.

5.1. Impacts of Ecotourism in Bandipur

This part illustrates ecotourism in Bandipur along with the positive and negative environmental, economic and socio-cultural issues in relation to local's livelihoods of Bandipur since ecotourism started. These outcomes are based on data collected from responses to semi-structured interviews with 7 people from Bandipur including 3 women and 4 men. All participants of this research were locals including farmer, hotel owner, homestay owner, Travel and tour guide, member of local Mother's group, Representatives of eco-cultural tourism project and Bandipur Municipality.

In the beginning of interviews, everyone was asked whether they have the knowledge or heard about ecotourism or not. Almost everyone has heard and knows something about ecotourism. Two out of 7 participants were not involved in tourism-related business but got benefited by it in their lives. At least everyone knows ecotourism is related to environment, nature and surrounding culture and traditions. All respondents of this study seem happy to see tourists in Bandipur while interrogating questions about their feeling to see tourists in Bandipur. However, they have pointed out some negative factors as well which will be described in upcoming sections.

In the following section, all the responses from respondents will be analyzed in relation to environmental, socio-cultural as well as economic impacts of ecotourism.

5.1.1. Economic Impacts

The tourism department of Bandipur Rural Municipality confirmed by stating,

> *"We are focusing on enhancing, upgrade and conserve historical monuments, natural environment, at the same time to boost economic status".*

<div align="right">Mr. Saran Singh Gurung, Bandipur Rural Municipality</div>

> *"It is also emphasizing on local enterprises to revive the economic condition". "We had focused on economic on our initial stage with the aim of employment for all and to enhance local products and local market".*

<div align="right">Mr. Amber Pun Magar, Bandipur Eco-Cultural Tourism Project.</div>

Looking towards the principles of ecotourism categorized by the International Ecotourism Society (2015), these above comments given by Magar and Gurung can be analyzed. It can be said that Bandipur has been supporting ecotourism to intensify economic welfare of local inhabitants by maintaining the relationship between tourism, communities and natural areas as stated by Coria and Calfucra (2012) where they mentioned the developed countries are encouraged by the international development community to follow ecotourism especially to enhance the economic condition of communities and taking care of nature while performing tourism. The following sections will present the positive and negative impacts of ecotourism in Bandipur.

a. Positive economic impacts

Most participants seem to focus the most on the positive economic impacts of tourism. These include widespread improvement in economic status and job opportunities for most local interviewed. For examples,

> *"I personally having economic benefits from eco-tourism but because of hotels and tourism, I am able to provide job opportunities to other people here. There is one student who is working here in my hotel so that she can study further".*

<div align="right">Fulmati Thapa, the owner of Sourya Hotel</div>

Similarly, Other respondents of this study, Maya Sharma revealed her progress from a guide to her own homestay and notified that

> *"there are many locals has been starting their own enterprises and generating employment opportunities". "I am providing jobs for more than 20 local people. Since my homestays are based on ecotourism, I am using local and organic food and meat products in homestay".*

<div align="right">Maya Sharma, the homestay owner</div>

"Demand of local products, handicrafts are increasing. Also, demand of organic and local food is growing because of large number of tourism sector".

<div align="right">Mr. Saran Singh Gurung, Bandipur Rural Municipality</div>

Moreover, he has added:

"locals of Bandipur are working with different service industries as well own their own shop, some of them are working as porters, guides. I have seen many locals who used to sell their land to others for better future of their children, now they are able to do something without selling their properties. They can invest on their own land by opening farm, shop, giving lease to others".

<div align="right">Mr. Saran Singh Gurung, Bandipur Rural Municipality</div>

"There is economic growth in Bandipur due to the development of tourism".

<div align="right">Mr. Amber Pun Magar, Bandipur Eco-Cultural Tourism Project.</div>

"Before, women used to stay home for household work and depend on husband's income. Now they are independent and earning by themselves".

<div align="right">Sushma Pariyar, Member of Local's Mother group</div>

Considering Folk's (2019) notion, locals are able to get a better life standard through tourism, the above answers given by respondents of this study can be analyzed. With the above statement, a conclusion can be drawn that the employment opportunities have been generated and even locals are developing their skills and capabilities so that now they become job providers to others. Similarly, increases in demand of local products, organic and local food in Bandipur reflects the economic benefit of other locals who are indirectly involved in tourism. One can claim that the income of Bandipur is growing as a result of ecotourism by looking towards the development in infrastructures.

b. Negative Economic Impacts

In Contrast, some participants also pointed out the negative economic impacts of ecotourism. Thapa and Gurung pointed out the returning of Bandipurians as well as outsiders migrate in Bandipur because of development in tourism. As stated by Erdogan (2017), peoples from other places have moved in such places to invest. From the response of Thapa, economic factor seems like the main motive for peoples in Bandipur who are attracted here only to make money and for

business. As consequences, this overflow of people can cause the overpopulation in Bandipur and can create a threat to "destroys the resources on which it depends [...]" (Oram, 1995). The question of mass tourism can be raised because of the overflow of people here in Bandipur.

Here, Sharma also indicates the existence of outsiders by saying: "

> "*There are many people from outside Bandipur, who has their homestay, souvenir shop, hotels and restaurants*" and [..] "*lots of enterprises and businesses prefer to hire from others since locals does not have sufficient knowledge and experience*".

<div align="right">Maya Sharma, the homestay owner</div>

As Folk (2019) mentioned, due to ecotourism, locals of host destinations worked as guides, hotel and homestay owners and merchants. But in the context of Bandipur, the presence of outsiders in the tourism business does exist and offering employment opportunities to outsiders because of their high skills and experiences. It seems like, locals of Bandipur having difficulties to conduct their ecotourism businesses because of outsiders. It can be said that there might be unhealthy competition among locals and outsiders in Bandipur as mentioned by Folk (2019). From the above response, it is clearly seen that most of the homestays, souvenir shops, hotels and restaurants are operated by outsiders, the question of the authenticity of Bandipur and sustainable ecotourism can be raised up. Similarly, taking into account KC's (2017) affirmation, local resources, local culture and traditions and local manpower should be taken care of. Sharma's statement regarding outsiders' ecotourism businesses and appointing outsiders can be scrutinized. In opposed to the KC's (2017) idea, one can clearly understand that outsiders are getting economic benefit than locals of Bandipur has.

Table 2. below presents a summary of both positive and negative effects on economic from ecotourism in Bandipur.

Table 2. Summary of economic impacts of Ecotourism in Bandipur

Positive economic impact	Negative economic impact
• Created tourist service jobs for locals such as trekking guides, waiters, cooks in hotels, receptionists, porters, etc.	• Inequalities in salaries and wages due to low skills, lower caste. • Unequal distribution of economic benefits.

• Increased job opportunities for locals, working at ecolodges, homestays, hotels.	• Lots of tourism businesses are operated by outsiders.
• Generated extra income for locals	• Insufficient income from some tourist service jobs, for example. Working more than 2 different works to survive.
• Provided indirect jobs such as running private shops, handicrafts stores	
• Establishment of home stays, ecolodges and hotels by locals	• High involvement in tourism by abandoning other professions.
• Increases qualities of local's lives such as being able to provide education, good health care and eat good food through positive economic impacts.	

Overall, economic improvement has occurred in Bandipur due to the creation of tourist service jobs, employment opportunities and indirect jobs for local residents. These help to provide extra income to small families and now able to get a good education, better health facilities, good food as a result, the quality of life has improved significantly. However, apart from these positive impacts, there have been some negative economic impacts as well. The local resources have been misused by outsiders as well as locals by opening up lots of businesses in this area. Similarly, the claims of unfair distribution of economic benefits have been seen. Local manpower is getting exploited by giving low wages and salaries to locals involving people from Dalit because of fewer skills and knowledge than outsiders. There are evident in working more than 2 jobs to earn sufficient income to survive by locals from Dalit communities. As a result, some of them have quit their tourist work. Thus, it seems that ecotourism does not currently generate benefits equally and fairly to all local residents of Bandipur.

5.1.2. Environmental Impacts

According to Saran Singh Gurung, the information officer of the tourism department for Bandipur Rural Municipality, Ecotourism in Bandipur commenced with the main motive of *"sustaining environment and Preserve culture and traditions"* as environment and surroundings of Bandipur started to degrade due to overflow of tourists and heavy vehicles in 2003. Similar to this statement,

Amber pun Magar, the locals of Bandipur as well as the member of Bandipur eco-cultural tourism project, has also said that ecotourism has been begun in Bandipur to save authentic culture and conservation of flora and fauna along with the boosting up the economy of local enterprises. Both of these statements are consistent with the definition of ecotourism given by Zein (2019) where he mentioned that the idea of ecotourism has started to reduce the environmental degradation and acts as the alternative forms of tourism to overcome the negative impacts of tourism such as mass tourism and overflow of people in host destination as stated by Hill and Hill (2011). As a result of interviews, both positive and negative impacts of ecotourism have been discovered which are described in the following subtopics.

a. Positive Environmental Impacts

According to Thapa,

> *"The entry of vehicles is banned inside the bazaar area and it became noise free, cleaner, dust and mud free. There are garbage bins in every 10 minutes. Plantation of trees are going on. Nowadays Cutting trees are prohibited. We need to take permission from forest officer to cut the trees and also bring Syaula (bunch of leaves and branches for cattle)".*

<div align="right">Fulmati Thapa, the owner of Sourya Hotel</div>

> *"Traffic problems has been solved here after banned of vehicles in Bazaar area. Bandipur is more fresh, clean and greenery now as rules set by local committee. "[..] if somebody wants to cut trees, he or she needs to plant 5 trees."*

<div align="right">Bikram Joshi, The local Farmer</div>

Further, Joshi explained the long procedures to get approval to cut trees from local authorization.

Correspondingly, Saran Singh Gurung has pointed out the Bandipur municipality is converting forest areas into community forest and conservation of water sources such as rivers and caves are going on. Besides, he notified that wildlife conservation area is soon to be started in the local forest area and locals have been encouraged to plant trees rather cut them.

These above statements maintain the consistency with Coria &Calfucura (2012) and Diamantis (2003) where they have specified conservation of the environment is the most important factor of ecotourism. In the context of Bandipur, various steps as consequences of ecotourism can be seen such as plantation of many trees, strict regulation on deforestation, banned of heavy vehicles.

Taking into consideration Bin, Suocheng and Mei's (2008) notion where they have disclosed, the sustainability of natural resources can increase the forest area, natural resources and biodiversity and tourism resources can be enhanced during tourism development, the above statements can be examined. From the above, we can conclude that the natural resources and biodiversity of Bandipur are getting magnified. These statements demonstrate the consistency with Stem et al 's (2003) belief of ecotourism discourages deforestation and minimizes the hunting rate and increases biodiversity.

As proper planning and management are needed to maintain balance in social, environmental and economic aspects of ecotourism (Wood, 2002; Diamantis, 1999), Gurung pointed out *"Educational programs for sanitation, waste management for locals has been performed by volunteers."* Further, he added, *"waste management campaigns have been started where we encourage people to reduce, reuse and recycle the resources".*

<div align="right">Mr. Saran Singh Gurung, Bandipur Rural Municipality</div>

Similarly, awareness programs and *"training to make fertilizers from waste foods"* (Sushma Pariyar), training and aids for "*biogas made by cow dung and human waste*" (Maya Sharma) to cook food instead of using firewood has been provided. Moreover,

> *"3 garbage bins in every 100 meters, we ordered more than 1000 Dokos (wooden basket made by bamboo usually used to carry heavy things) from locals and launched awareness program to separate food products, metals and glass."*

<div align="right">Mr. Amber Pun Magar, Bandipur Eco-Cultural Tourism Project.</div>

Besides, according to Gurung, *"the government will subsidies by 10% in such startups which is based on ecological".*

Through the above statements, we can see that the various campaigns of waste management along with setting up of environment-friendly garbage bins made by bamboo to get rid of plastic materials and other environment-friendly products are utilizing to minimize nonrenewable resources. Implementation of the circular economy in Bandipur has been seen, as the resources and wastes are reduced and reuses and recycling of resources. In last decades, the consumption level of resources in the whole world has increased pressure on the environment and as a result, it causes climate change as a result (Manniche, et al, 2017) Through the principles of reducing, reuse and recycle of resources, it encourages sustainability and helps to conserve resources

(Manniche, et al, 2017). Moreover, the circular economy is saving costs as locals of Bandipur can make fertilizers from the waste for their plant and crops.

b. Negative Environmental Impacts

According to Amber Pun Magar, Deforestation had been reduced by 80% in comparison with the past but if we look towards the above response given by Vishwakarma "*illegal hunting and deforestation are still going on",* it reflects that the representative of local authorities has been trying to hide negative impacts of ecotourism.

According to the literature of this research, natural resources are protected by increasing recreational as a center of attraction (Kelkit, Ozel & Demirel, 2005) but the viewpoints of local do not match which states:

> "*overuses of water and resources at hotels, resorts, or in swimming pools, pollution occurs through the emissions of carbon-dioxide and sewage pollution through building more hotels or resorts."*

> Nikesh Vishwakarma, Tour Guide, an employee of Bandipur Hotel

Vishwakarma further added that rapid development in Bandipur is happening to lure the tourists can cause the misuse and overuse of natural resources. It seems like many hotels, resorts, and tourist attractions are made with the business motive and thus, miss-use and management of natural resources are going on in the name of enhancing tourism in Bandipur. The locals and surroundings of Bandipur might not get benefitted from ecotourism when business is the main driving force behind ecotourism as stated by Scheyvens (1999) and can destroy the resources on which it depends (Oram, 1995). These statements reflect that there is a high demand for natural resources by tourism enterprises in Bandipur, thus doubtful questions on ecotourism can be raise as argued by Diamantis (1999).

Looking towards the critical notion of Erdogan's (2017) where he has mentioned the inflows of people in such places to invest and stage the eye-catching environment in the name of ecotourism, the following respondents can be analyzed.

> "*peoples from nearby cities are migrating here to start their tourism-related business that causes overcrowding".*

> Maya Sharma, the homestay owner

"Lots of people from outsiders get attracted here. They will invest in something but in the long run Bandipurians needs to pay a lot in terms of environment and cultural perspective."

Mr. Saran Singh Gurung, Bandipur Rural Municipality

These above statements coincide with Erdogan's (2017) notion. Through these statements, it can be said that overcrowding is another negative impact caused by tourism here in Bandipur. Likewise, "forests area and public areas are destroyed in the name of creating attractions" (Fulmati Thapa), it indicates that to promote tourism, environmental degradation such as deforestation and pollution are happening as a result of tourism development activities. The rapid development of ecotourism in Bandipur has led a massive number of constructions and destroy the environment as mentioned by Folk (2019) and KC (2017). However, the local authorizations and local people in Bandipur are following other alternative actions with the help of Bandipur Ecocultural Project to maintain balance in the environment. For instance, the strict restrictions to open up new hotels and high taxation for the outsiders who have been using a massive number of resources. Similarly, Saran Singh Gurung and Amber Pun Magar exposed their plan to mitigate overcrowding and promote ecotourism in the same time by developing three different hiking routes and starting 3000 meters long trekking trails.

The table below (Table 3) summarizes both the positive and negative environmental effects that have emerged since ecotourism began in Bandipur. This table was utilized in the analysis process that was applied to the environmental consequences identified in this research project.

Table 3. Summary of Positive and Negative environmental impacts

Positive Environmental Impact	Negative Environmental Impact
• Prohibition and strict regulations for wood cutting, decrease in firewood collection. • Cleaner environment because of traffic banned in Main Bazaar area and set up of environment friendly dust bins.	• Forest and public areas are getting destroyed to create the attractions for tourists. • Overuse of water and resources by hotels, resorts. Pollutions are still causing due to the emissions of sewage through hotels or resorts.

• Wildlife conservation by converting forests into community forest and going to establish conservation area to conserve the flora and fauna of Bandipur. • Bandipurians are focusing on waste management by applying reduce, reuse and recycle of resources. • Awareness campaigns like Swoksha Batabaran (Clean environment) and Hariyo Ban Nepal ko Dhan to keep surrounding clean and to encourage people for plantation. • Encouraging people to use Biogas instead of using firewood. • Provision of Forest and wildlife conservation training for locals. • Encourage to use environment friendly products.	**Limitation of positive environmental impact** • Ongoing illegal wildlife hunting and deforestation. • Ongoing expansion of road by government forced locals to sacrifice their agricultural land.

By comparing positive and negative environmental changes stemming from ecotourism in Bandipur since it began, it can be seen that the ecotourism has resulted in an overall positive effect on the local environment. For example, even though there are negative environmental consequences seen from the forest and public areas clearance for infrastructural improvement, there are also better wildlife and forest protection management. In particular, various training provided by local authorization and governments for locals such as wildlife and forest conservation training, waste management. Similarly, locals are encouraged to follow the laws and regulations strictly and motivated to keep their surrounding clean and to plant trees rather cut them via awareness programs launched by local authorizations. Specifically, the local government has decided to launch the wildlife conservation area to protect wildlife as well as

plants. Villages in Bandipur are also getting cleaner because of improving household waste disposal and traffic banned in Bandipur Bazaar.

However, it is important to address that the limitations placed on the positive environmental impact of ecotourism through the actions of local residents who must access the forest and wildlife due to the fact their livelihoods require that they continue their dependency on nature for daily lives. This is seen through continued illegal hunting and deforestation.

5.1.3. Socio-cultural Impacts

a. Positive Socio-cultural Impacts

The outcome of interviews reveals information about the social and cultural impacts of the emergence of ecotourism in Bandipur. It appears there have been positive changes regarding the improvement of social behavior, infrastructure, construction of community facilities such as bridges, hospitals and educational institutions.

Likewise, Conservation of cultural heritage and tradition is the topmost positive socio-cultural impact of ecotourism talked by almost every respondent of this research. According to Stem, et al (2003), many cultural programs and tours are organized in ecotourism and introduce the rich culture of host destinations. The result of interviews also match consistency with Stem et al 's (2003) statement such as in Thapa's hotel organizes many cultural shows to

> *"introduce our cultural dress, dance and food to visitors, from this the new generations are learning about our culture and tradition". "local products like handicrafts, groceries are in demand. Lots of restaurants or hotels are using local products".*

<div align="right">Fulmati Thapa, the owner of Sourya Hotel</div>

These above statements provided by Fulmati Thapa match with the statement given by Folk (2019) and illustrate that the communities of Bandipur have boost up their living style as well as it helps the young generation to learn their authentic culture, traditions and values. Local people were being encouraged to maintain their cultural and traditional practices to preserve them. Apart from this, the old historical monuments such as Padma library, temples have also been promoted, protected and renovated by the local authorizations to attract tourists to the area to visit them. More importantly, the local authorities and committee reported that the cultural events and programs along with the slogan of 'one-stop in Bandipur' is held almost every year at Bandipur. As Bandipur lies in the way of the two popular towns for tourism of Nepal: Kathmandu and Pokhara, the slogan

of 'one-stop in Bandipur' can be the promotional strategies to attract those travelers and tourists who are traveling Kathmandu to Pokhara and vice versa.

Secondly, infrastructural development is another main factor that was pointed out by all interviewees.

> *"[..] development of society and community through the tourism by enhancing the local industries or creating job opportunities for local also tourism helps to the resettlement of culture and tradition and also encourage local to awareness the value of the natural and cultural site in Bandipur"*

> Bikram Joshi, The local Farmer

Similarly, Joshi's statement reflects that there is an infrastructural development like road and market areas by which they do not need to go farther as before they *"needed to go to city 20 km far from hometown to sell our goods"*.

Likewise, Magar has expressed:

> *"In order to provide good health and well -being for all, hospitals and health care has established, educational institutional with advance technology have established."*

> Mr. Amber Pun Magar, Bandipur Eco-Cultural Tourism Project.

According to Joshi, many infrastructural developments have been done in the villages of Bandipur to promote tourism such as:

> *"The people from ward no six got easy access for bazaar area recently because of construction of the permanent bridge."*

> Bikram Joshi, The local Farmer

> *"youths and kids are learning new and advanced things with the help of new improved communication."*

> Mr. Amber Pun Magar, Bandipur Eco-Cultural Tourism Project.

The above statements given by Joshi and Magar reflect the contrary with the statement of Coria and Calfucura (2012) where they have stated ecotourism should not consider as the source of development of communities but, "*it must be completed with other actions*". All the infrastructural development such as an expansion of road network, availability of internet, advanced educational institutions, hospitals are the outcome of the development in ecotourism in Bandipur. Similarly, constructions of roads in every village and bridge to connect villages in Bandipur are done to promote ecotourism. It seems like the construction of community facilities has brought social

happiness among the locals, who were very happy and proud of these improvements. Thus, it can be said that ecotourism can be taken as a tool for development.

b. Negative socio-cultural impacts

Some negative socio-cultural impacts have also discovered through the interviews conducted for this research. For instance;

According to Nikesh Vishwakarma, the tour guide, despite that he is working as a "*part-time dishwasher in Bandipur hotel*". Further, he clarified that *"people from my community (Dalit) are guides, porters, or dishwashers."* Inconsistent with Vishwakarma's view, Gurung claimed, *"still some people from Dalit Communities are not getting the benefit as much as other does"*.

Likewise, Vishwakarma drawn my attention by mentioning about there are lower wages for Dalit (Lower caste people) in Bandipur.

> *"the majority of homestays and hotels are owned by upper-class people; they are introducing their culture which is a very good thing but how about our culture! They have got many platforms and ways to preserve their culture, but nobody is thinking about Dalit's culture and tradition".*

Further, he added, Shoemaker of Dalit community left the place where he used to have his shoe shop due to *"the owner of the land constructed hotel to target tourists"*. Through these statements, one can argue and raise a question about social stability and harmony among community members. But in the case of Bandipur, it shows the presence of inequalities among people from different classes. Dalit communities and their culture and tradition do not come under the limelight of public and local authorization. Thus, there is a contradiction between the case of Bandipur and the notion of Bin, et al 's (2008) notion where they claimed that ecotourism enlarges social stability and maintains harmony in the community. As stated by Miller (2017), Correspondingly, the member of the local's mother group, Pariyar responded

> *"still we are afraid of opening hotels and restaurants with the fear of only a few people will show up in our business. We (people of Dalit communities) have a low confidence level in ourselves to do that."*

> Sushma Pariyar, Member of Local's Mother group

As per the above response, the doubtful question has been raised whether the members of Dalit communities are also getting involved in all those skill development training or not. To get deeper, the follow-up question has been asked to her, where she has replied to the positive response about

all training and campaigns. Thus, it can be assumed that the low confident level of members of Dalit communities is the result of social and cultural beliefs in past days. However, the local authorization along with Bandipur ecocultural project are working on it to improve it. According to Magar, *"the Dalit communities will be focused to develop their confidence level and enhance their skills"* and "*raising awareness to bring equalities*". Similarly, Gurung enlightened the "*new rule of equal wages and salaries for all has been implemented to maintain equality among different groups and gender"*. As per the new rule, *"50,000 NPR and 3 months of prison"* will be charged if somebody has found discriminating against others (Saran Singh Gurung).

Moreover, Thapa opens up another negative socio-cultural impact of tourism in Bandipur.

> *"lots of farmers and shoemaker have left their work to start tourism-related work making tourism as the main source".*

Fulmati Thapa, the owner of Sourya Hotel

It illustrates that people from other professionals are also entering in tourism business to get higher economic benefits. It can affect negatively on the economy if tourism gets down in the future. Similarly, it can damage the social and cultural system of Bandipur when ecotourism has been followed by locals to achieve higher economic benefits (Wilkinson & Pratiwi, 1995 as cited in Scheyvens, 1999).

Maya Sharma feels the threat from outsiders involved in tourism businesses and mentioned

> *"But there are still lots of enterprises and businesses prefer to hire from others since locals do not have sufficient knowledge and experience".*

Maya Sharma, the homestay owner

But Nikesh Vishwakarma took as a good opportunity of learning new skills and ideas from outsiders and also expressed

> *"working with them refers to conflicts in the clash of cultures, creation of misunderstanding. Besides that, tough and unhealthy competition within the society".*

It seems like, there is a lack of proper and poor management in Bandipur by local authorization by which social conflicts within locals and outsiders as mentioned by Bin, et al (2008). In the same way, unhealthy competition within the society to attract more tourists shows the consistency with the Scheyvens' s thought (1999).

Bikram Joshi, the local farmer reacted with a sad face and shared his bad experience:

"In the name of development actually for expansion of road, I lost my land where I used to have a farm. Also, I did not get any compensation from the government".

Contrary to this statement, from the previous literature, it has been learned that ecotourism enhanced the economic welfare of locals (Coria & Calfucura, 2012). But here, in this case, local seems like losing their properties instead of achieving economic benefits from ecotourism. Additionally, he has specified that he has not got anything in return of his land from government. It looks like local government and authorities have failed to maintain the relationship between tourism, inhabitants and natural areas. This statement makes it realize the physical development like infrastructures developed by the government to promote tourism does not always mean that locals are getting economic benefits.

Inconsistency with Zambrano, Broadbent and Durham (2010), the local authorities are *"getting complains from few locals that there are ongoing some black markets for foreigner tourists"* (Saran Singh Gurung, Bandipur Municipality) and "*local was arrested 4 months ago in case of supplying marijuana to tourists*" (Bikram Joshi, local farmer). In order to please tourists in Bandipur, it seems like the youth and locals have followed the dark paths as well. Significantly, the presence of corruption has been found at the local level. The emergence of economic benefits has played a key role in making some residents behave selfishly; for instance, "illegal hunting and deforestation are still going on in some hotels and resorts" (Nikesh Vishwakarma, the tour guide).

Apart from inequality among classes, the modernization of the building and modification of authentic food is ongoing here in Bandipur.

> "*in some hotels (I know 3 hotels), they have modified toilet, even food (a little bit less spicy), built hotels in new modern styles, looks like they have influenced by western culture. They are changing up everything like food, drinks, infrastructure".*

> Bikram Joshi, The local Farmer

The above statement of Joshi reflects the existence of a high level of western influence and in the long run, it will impact negatively on culture. On top of that, Pariyar agrees on Joshi's statement and added

> *"culture and traditional dress are only to generate income sources for youths rather to preserve by their inner core of heart"*

> Sushma Pariyar, Member of Local's Mother group

"Youths and some people are following and taking their own culture as a means of their source of income".

Maya Sharma, the homestay owner

As mentioned by Bin et al (2008), ecotourism can be the biggest challenge for authentic culture and values because of western influence, the above statements specified by Sushma Pariyar and Maya Sharma maintain the uniformity with Bin et al (2008). Furthermore, from these above statements, one can raise a question on whether locals of Bandipur have taken ecotourism as a marketing buzzword as stated by Miller (2017). The notion of Miller (2017) where he mentioned, ecotourism often used as marketing tools to promote tourism without any sustainability, maintains consistency to some extent in Bandipur as youths are using the cultural dress as a source of income. As an outcome of interviews, it can be seen that improvisation on some cultures and traditions such as food, buildings and even toilets in some hotels as per the tourist's culture can affect the authentic culture and values of Bandipur (Folk, 2019).

The table below (Table 4) provides a summary of both the positive and negative socio-cultural effects which have emerged since ecotourism began in Bandipur.

Table 4. Summary of Positive and Negative socio-cultural Impacts in Bandipur

Positive Socio-cultural Impact	Negative Socio-cultural Impact

• Infrastructural improvement
  o Expansion of road network
  o Better communication networks
  o Clean water system for all
  o Better living standard
• Construction of community buildings
  o Establishment of educational institutions with advanced technologies
  o Established hospitals in six villages and opened several health care's centers.
	• Corruption
	• Creates jealous and unhealthy competition in the community
	• Creates Selfishness as a result of emergence of economic benefits on some people.
	• Inequalities and discrimination on lower classes or low caste
	• Land displacement
	• Modernization in buildings, dresses and modification in food.

• Encourages locals to maintain cultural and traditional practices • Promotes and conservation of historical and cultural attractions. • Endorsing Bandipur as an Ancient Cultural town.	

Overall, the research findings illustrate that many positive and negative socio-cultural changes to local people have brought since ecotourism in Bandipur was commenced. The most significant factor is the ongoing encouragement of the inhabitants to maintain local cultural and traditional practices. Likewise, ecotourism has strengthened social solidarity in the community to some extent. Particularly, they have been supported in wearing their traditional style of dress, cultural food and social values. Positive social change has come about from improvements in infrastructure that have brought communal benefits. Similarly, local authorizations have also cooperated with locals, not only endorsing Bandipur as an ancient cultural town but also reinforcing the maintenance of historical and cultural attractions. Since lots of homestays, hotels, gift shops and small stores have been managed by women and lots of training has been provided to women in Bandipur, I could not sense any gender inequalities as mentioned in the literature of this research (Das & Chatterjee, 2015). Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that along with positive socio-cultural effects, some negative effects have been felt as well. Unequal distribution of wages to Dalit communities has been found out and jealousy and unhealthy competition have been observed with in the locals. These have been notified that the clothing style and eating style of youths have been slightly changed. Younger people have been taken their culture and tradition as the source of income. However, the awareness programs and classes to encourage the younger generation to follow their culture and preserve them are ongoing. Even though the issue of corruption, inequalities and few bad behaviors exists, the total positive socio-cultural impacts override the negative since there are strategies that have been following to mitigate those negative impacts. The issues of jealousy and competition, local displacement and corruption are common issues wherever and whenever finances are concerned (Scheyvens, 1999).

5.2. Ecotourism and its empowerment framework in Bandipur

Since Bandipur is the new and emerging destination of Nepal, it requires effective strategies that can be applied to ensure its long-term survival. Therefore, for this study, local empowerment is seen as the most primary element that will help to develop ecotourism as well as sustainable development of the local community. This perspective has been supported strongly by many scholars including Scheyvens (1999) who claim empowerment is an essential part of developing communities sustainably way via ecotourism. If there is a lack of empowerment at the community level, the sustainable development of local communities via tourism is difficult to achieve.

In the upcoming section, I will use an empowerment framework by Scheyvens' (1999) to discover whether ecotourism development in Bandipur has empowered local communities. Scheyvens' (1999) empowerment framework identifies how communities are being affected by tourism development.

a. Economic Empowerment

Communities are considered economically empowered by ecotourism venture when the opportunities of both formal and informal employment and business opportunities arise (Scheyvens, 1999). On the other hand, if these opportunities are "*periodic and cannot provide regular, reliable income*" (Scheyvens, 1999) then economic disempowerment occurred in communities.

Ecotourism in Bandipur appeared to have a degree of economic empowerment, as indicated by the fact that it brought direct jobs to locals such as trekking guides, waiters, cooks, jobs in ecolodges, homestays. Similarly, it has provided indirect jobs such as running shops and handicraft stores. Consequently, these jobs have created additional economic benefits for Bandipurians, as seen as improved in lifestyles such as now they can give higher education. However, there is still a considerable concern because there were many signs of economic disempowerment or at least signs that economic gains were not being provided equally and income earned from tourism activities by Dalit Communities are not sufficient for their daily lives. Thus, some people are working more than two jobs and some of them had given up their ecotourism related jobs. For instance;

> *"lower caste people are getting less wages and salaries than other"*

> Mr. Saran Singh Gurung, Bandipur Rural Municipality

"I used to craft handicrafts like metal craft, stone craft and also made small keyrings as a souvenir of Bandipur. But I used to get little than other workers as I am from low caste (Dalit) I guess, that's why I left it. Now I am working in a nearby city in the public sector".

Sushma Pariyar, Member of Local's Mother group

"obviously I need to work very hard and two jobs, sometimes more than that".

Nikesh Vishwakarma, Tour Guide, an employee of Bandipur Hotel

Some locals like Nikesh Vishwakarma have faced hardships in their living conditions and forced to rely on two or more than two jobs. Another sign of disempowerment was also noticed hotels, small vendors and souvenir shops are operated by outsiders. Outsiders are recruited over locals as they lack advanced skills in tourism-related activities. For instance, Maya Sharma reported that:

"there are many people from outside Bandipur, who has their homestay, souvenir shop, hotels and restaurants."

Similarly, Bikram Joshi states that:

"*in some big hotel, they are hiring a qualified chef for work and also some fast food industries."*

To get more economic benefits, other professions such as farmers have been abandoned by locals and started tourism-related businesses as stated by Bikram Joshi, 80% of locals are involved in tourism-related business. Since, tourism is commonly seasonal (Goodman, 2020), over-relying on tourism by neglecting other professions can cause the problem in the long run. In summary, it seems that economic disempowerment is more significant than any economic empowerment in Bandipur, because of the unfair distribution of economic benefits among community members and the existence of outsiders. This research finding is in line with the idea of economic disempowerment outlined in Scheyvens' (1999) framework.

b. Social Empowerment

According to Scheyvens (1999), social empowerment refers to the improvement of community equilibrium and maintain solidarity among residents. In terms of ecotourism, the communities are socially empowered when "*profits from tourism activity are used to fund social development projects, such as water supply systems or health clinics in the local area*" (Scheyvens, 1999).

To empower local communities socially, the community groups must include youths, women, minorities and indigenous groups of societies (ibid).

In the context of Bandipur, the finding of this research demonstrated social empowerment. A portion of the ecotourism benefits was allocated and invested in development activities to develop ecotourism in the area. For example, road expansion, solar power installation, improvement in drinking water line, education, food control organizations and health sectors. Also, maintenance and conservation activities of cultural and historical heritages. Similarly, the permanent bridges have been constructed due to which the villagers got easy access to the market area. Moreover, Sarang Singh Gurung mentioned about the launching of cable car service to promote ecotourism by which the locals get easy and fast access to Baral Chok.

> *"To develop ecotourism, we are expecting at the end of July 2020, the cable car service will be launched to travel from Thuldhunga to Baral Chok."*

<div align="right">Mr. Saran Singh Gurung, Bandipur Rural Municipality</div>

However, some signs of disempowerment were noted. Unhealthy competition and jealousy among the locals who are involving in similar tourism-related businesses were still seen. Some members of the younger generation were also described as taking cultural events and dresses as a source of income and have lost respect for their traditional culture. The traditional culture has been influenced by western influence for example in traditional food, buildings, dresses and so on. Additionally, Local residents are forced to lose their land in the process of development such as Bikram Joshi notified that:

> *"I lost my land where I used to have a farm".*

Apart from these, According to Bikram Joshi,

> "*child labor in some tourism-related organizations. some of the homestay owners pushing their kids to work and also some local people complain about the bad behavior of tourists. One local was arrested 4 months ago in case of supplying marijuana to tourists".*

Besides,

> *"there are some peoples and local authorities work by taking money under the table, so illegal hunting and deforestation are still going on in some hotels".*

<div align="right">Nikesh Vishwakarma, Tour Guide, employee of Bandipur Hotel</div>

From all these above statements, it can be seen that social disempowerment does exist in Bandipur because of child labor, local displacement, corruption and illegal hunting. As stated by Scheyvens (1999), ecotourism can occur social disempowerment when tourist activities cause crime, crowding, displacement of traditional lands and loss of authenticity.

Since, the government and local authorities with the help of the Bandipur eco-cultural tourism project, have been implementing new rules and strategies to mitigate inequality as stated by Saran Singh Gurung and Amber pun Magar. For instance, hiring elder people of Bandipur to maintain authenticity and grading and reward system for homestay. Thus, in overall, the social empowerment seems to have been more significant than disempowerment, due to the new plans and strategies set by local authorities coordinating with Bandipur Eco-Cultural Project to mitigate the negative impacts of ecotourism that causes social disempowerment in Bandipur.

c. Psychological Empowerment

As stated by Scheyvens (1999), Psychological empowerment helps communities to reevaluate the worth of their culture and environments that lead to an increase in self -esteem and pride of local residents through tourism activities. However, ecotourism that "interferes *with customs by, for example, interfering with the integral relationship between a group of people and their land"* (Scheyvens, 1999), can occur psychological disempowerment.

It was observed that Bandipurians' confidence has been improved as consequences of the provision of specific knowledge and skills through the training offered by local authorities and ecocultural project concerning the tourism. In particular, local authorities are providing training for waiters, guides, training for homestays, to make handicrafts. Similarly, Sushma Pariyar mentioned that women of Bandipur got training to make local incense sticks, paper bags by making local Nepali paper, candle and key rings. Additionally, she has pointed out the campaigns like 'Praudh Shikshya' education for elderly people has been conducted by which they able to read and write. In other hands Maya Sharma explained:

> *"I was just a guide and one day, there was an announcement of training for homestay launched by the municipality, then now here I am the owner of homestay".*

These above statements clearly have shown that the training and skills development classes launched by Bandipur Eco-cultural project and local authorities have enhanced the confidence level of locals and empowering women as well. Thus, it can be said that ecotourism has empowered socially in Bandipur as stated by Scheyvens' (1999), the local community can be

psychologically empowered if it maintains the sense of self-esteem and well-being. However, a sign of psychological disempowerment was also noticed, in confidence level for people from Dalit communities. Due to deep-rooted cultural structure, Dalit communities were considered as the untouchable in the past days. But still, there are some people of Dalit communities who have low confidence to open their restaurants or homestays and working only as a guide, porters or dishwashers. It can be said that the Dalit communities are not getting enough skill development trainings to boost up their confidence level.

Similarly, Nikesh Vishwakarma mentioned:

> *"They have got many platforms and ways to preserve their culture, but nobody is thinking about Dalit's culture and tradition".*

It indicates the existence of inequalities among different communities in Bandipur and as a result, this led to jealousy and unhealthy competition among locals.

Overall, psychological empowerment appears to be more significant than psychological disempowerment in Bandipur because the majority of respondents were talked about the training and skills development classes brought improvement in the wellbeing, for instance, locals can communicate with tourists, get access to grab the job opportunities, and capable to start their own business through the training. However, it is still questionable as to whether or not psychological empowerment has been fully provided to Dalit communities since they still lack confidence level.

d. Political empowerment

According to Scheyvens, the community will be empowered politically when the political structure of the community represents the needs and interests of all community groups and the involvement of local communities in decision making bodies (1999). In the context of Bandipur, the local authorities have heard the complaints and set up new rules and strategies to mitigate the problems of illegal activities such as selling or smuggling marijuana, inequalities on wages and salaries for Dalit communities. Thus, it can be said that Bandipur has empowered politically. However, political disempowerment has also been noticed. For instance:

> *"All women must attend the awareness programs, if someone could not attend the programs, then there should be one family member on her behalf otherwise she will be fined by 300 NPR".*

> Sushma Pariyar, Member of Local's Mother group

"We need to go through long process and procedures to get approval to conduct any training, campaigns and awareness programs".

Maya Sharma, the homestay owner

From these statements, it can be said that political disempowerment does exist in Bandipur. The decision-making bodies of the community level are not real authorities who take the decision here in Bandipur, they still need to take approval from the national level of authorities and get through long procedures. As per the empowerment framework of Scheyvens (1999), the autocratic leadership and the requirement of official approval by the government in decision-making process are the signs of political disempowerment. Even though the locals are getting involved in training, awareness classes and campaigns through their groups such as Magar Samaj, Gurung Samaj, Newa Groups and Local Mother's group, their involvement in decision-making bodies could not find in Bandipur. Viewing towards the statement provided by Saran Singh Gurung, where he mentioned that there are not any representatives of Dalit communities in decision making bodies. Through this, one can raise the question on whether the voice of Dalit communities has been involved or not in all those decisions made in Bandipur regarding tourism activities. In overall, the signs of political disempowerment in communities of Bandipur seems to be more notable due to the questionable condition of involvement of Dalit communities in decision making bodies of community level.

It was revealed that much information from the data collection in this research match with literature to some extent. From the literature of this research, I learned local participation is one of the most crucial elements of ecotourism, and ecotourism in Bandipur started with the motive to develop the region sustainably. But in reality, the benefits of ecotourism have been limited to the ones who have been involved in tourism directly keeping the Dalit communities away from such benefits as other get.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This research intended to inspect the contribution of ecotourism on the sustainable development of local communities of Bandipur, Nepal. It has been documented that the number of tourists is increasing every year in Nepal. Through tourism development in Nepal, many villages and towns are emerging as a new destination. Among them, Bandipur is also one of the emerging destinations. According to Dahal (2017), increasing the flow of people creates a huge influence

on the consumption of natural resources and can destruct the environment. Thus, the focus of this study was on trying to scrutinize the contribution of ecotourism towards the local communities of Bandipur, to identify the positive and negative impacts of ecotourism in Bandipur and to make recommendations to help ensure the sustainable development of local communities through future ecotourism activities.

The primary aim of this research was to assess the ecotourism in Bandipur and examine its contribution to local sustainable development.

In order to achieve the aim of this research three objectives were set up:

    d. To identify the economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts of ecotourism within the context of sustainable development.

    e. To analyze the contribution of ecotourism to communities within Bandipur

    f. To make recommendations to ensure the sustainability of future ecotourism activities.

Ecotourism in Bandipur has had both positive and negative effects on the local community. positively, there is the protection of environment and wildlife, opportunities of direct and indirect employment, and economic wellbeing of locals are enhanced. Public infrastructure, education and health are upgraded. Whereas on the negative sides, the construction of such facilities led to the destruction of natural resources, air and water pollutions, locals have lost their lands. Corruption, jealousy and the lure of financial benefits among community members led to an increase in unhealthy competition. As a consequence, a loss of respect towards cultural dress and tradition can be seen.

However, in Bandipur, the positive effects on the environment, economy and socio-cultural were found to be more significant than negative effects due to the fact of development of ecotourism was observed to be the main channel for protecting wildlife and the environment, generating additional income, boosting social well- being and maintaining culture in the area.

The empowerment framework can be a useful means to understand the ecotourism because it helps to discover the areas in which local people are empowered and disempowered. According to Scheyvens (1999), "*empowerment framework has been devised to provide a mechanism with which the effectiveness of ecotourism initiatives, in terms of their impacts on local communities can be determined*". Thus, the framework of empowerment has been used as an appropriate

tool to gain a general understanding of the sustainable development of the local community through ecotourism.

The below table (Table 5) gives an outline the conclusions by employing Scheyvens' (1999) empowerment and disempowerment framework that can be drawn from the research findings. In this respect, I do not maintain that these findings are universally relevant, but rather that it may help to provide understandings for investigating similar ecotourism destinations and projects in other contexts.

Table 5. Signs of empowerment and Disempowerment of ecotourism in Bandipur

	Signs of empowerment	Signs of Disempowerment
Economic empowerment	• Tourism brings direct as well as indirect jobs and benefits to the locals • Cash earned is spent on individual household items such as improved water systems, better lifestyles.	• Ecotourism does not provide continuous economic benefits for local residents: for instance, • Benefits is not equally shared between many households in Bandipur. • Lower class people such as Dalits are not getting benefits as other does • Recruiting outsiders, hotels and souvenir shops are operated by outsiders. • Abandonment of other professions to involve in tourism related business
Social empowerment	• Community development includes infrastructure improvement. o Expansion of road network	• unhealthy competition and jealousy among community members who has been involving in tourism businesses.

	- Improved water supply - Installation of biogas energy - Better communication system - Construction of community buildings such as new educational institutions with higher level of educations and technology and construction of bridges. - Establishment of hospitals, health cares - Museums to preserve ancient and local culture and traditions.	- Younger generation appear to take traditional culture as source of income. - Western influence on buildings, Food and dresses. - Local displacement such as Bikram Joshi lost his land in the name of development. - Black markets, corruption, child labor illegal hunting and deforestation are ongoing.
Psychological empowerment	- Bandipur Eco- Cultural tourism project coordinated with local authorities to provide essential training and skills such as hotel or home stay management, waiter, cook, guides, forest guard to locals and build up their self-esteem. - Trainings of silk farming, poultry farming, providing modern machinery and equipment to increase the	- Still lack in confidence level in members of Dalit community. - Local residents with other professionals getting discouraged and started tourism related business.

	confidence level of community members. • English courses for all and classes for elder people have been provided they can communicate with tourists. • Trainings for women to craft handicrafts,	
Political empowerment	• Involvement in trainings via different groups such as local mother's groups, community groups.	• Being autocratic by implementing rules of penalties to those who does not involve in meetings. • No representatives from Dalit Communities in decision making bodies.

The above table 6.1. shows that the local communities of Bandipur have empowered as well as disempowered through ecotourism.

Ecotourism has the potential to play an essential part in contributing to local sustainable development if locals are equipped in the context of economic and political empowerment (Scheyvens 1999). In my opinion, when the economic and political empowerment of Bandipurians is placed at the main focus of any development efforts this potential can be optimally realized. Consequently, psychological and social empowerment will be automatically achieved when local communities are empowered politically and economically. This includes focusing on the primary concerns of the local people, income issues, making sure to involve locals' voice and opinion in the decision-making process and improving the quality of life. It will lead to the improvement of well-being and social conditions as well as it will help to mitigate illegal activities such as illegal wildlife hunting, deforestation and so on. However, it is significant to keep in mind that there should be proper planning and management on ecotourism development

(Wood, 2002), otherwise over-tourism or mass tourism and other negative impacts like reduced in quality of life, negative environmental impacts can be caused to get higher economic benefits. In the context of Bandipur, Bandipurians has taken ecotourism as the only source of development of local communities and started to get involved in tourism by leaving other professions behind, as stated by Coria and Calfucura (2012), ecotourism should not be considered as the only source of development instead it should be taken as the complemented with other actions.

As stated by Diamantis (1999), benefits of ecotourism to the destination based on the geographical situation, the scale of tourism, size of the country. In the case of Bandipur, cultural bias has been seen as Dalit communities do not have platforms to save and promote their culture and traditions like others do. Similarly, homestays, restaurants and hotels operated by Dalit communities were not found since they have low confidence levels and afraid to go against more than a hundred years old social structure and the caste system. These people are treated as the non-touchable since hundreds of years and dominated by upper caste people, with this kind of psychology on themselves, it is challenging for ecotourism to benefit them in the current situation. Thus, it can be said that deep-rooted cultural system can be another factor in Bandipur that determines the benefits of ecotourism towards Bandipurians mainly Dalit communities.

Other issues that Bandipurians are concerned about is the western influence in culture brought by tourists in Bandipur. Along with the growth in ecotourism, commodification of traditions and culture, modification on foods and so on are increasing as well in Bandipur and most of the participants of this research have talked about it. However, they seem to be more aware and cautious to preserve their authentic culture.

Chapter 7: Recommendations

Bandipur is an attractive place for ecotourism. Tourism plays a vital role in socio-economic development as well as psychological development. It became one of the major sources of foreign currency for Bandipur by attracting tourists showing wildlife, beautiful nature and unique experience of culture. To promote further ecotourism development and contribute to the sustainable development of local communities in this area, the following recommendations should be taken up.

    a. **Recommendations for the local government, committees, and authorities**

The migration of outsiders is one of the biggest issues that can cause environmental degradation and can create issues for authentic culture and tradition (Oram, 1995). In the context of Bandipur also, the issues of immigrants from outsides to invest have been seen. Thus, the regulation should be created for those private businesses owned by outsiders such as guesthouse owners, souvenir shop owners and tour operators to provide them with the means for exemplifying their commitment to share tourism benefits to local people and community. If locals receive sufficient economic benefits, they will not perform illegal activities such as wildlife hunting, smuggling marijuana, and deforestation, instead of that, they will become committed to protect the environment and supports ecotourism.

Additionally, Bandipur is a small town and the inflow of tourists is increasing every year. If the number of tourists increases considerably, it may become unsustainable on the grounds that environmental resources will be destroyed, and wildlife will migrate to other places due to the growing presence of humans. The development of ecotourism can cause destruction to the host destinations in the context of the environment, the economy as well as socio-cultural factors, especially if there is no presence of proper management, strategies, planning and participation of all levels of the community. This idea is also supported by Wood (2002) and Diamantis (1999) and explained the necessities of management and proper planning of ecotourism to maintain balance on the economy, social and environmental aspects of communities. To maintain sustainability, policy and institutions must include the opinions of community members from the very beginning. The community participation in all phases of planning and implementation plays a crucial role to reduce the negative impacts of ecotourism on local people and creates positive cultural and environmental influence. Thus, planning and good management on a number of tourists coming to Bandipur each day should be taken into consideration.

Thirdly, the community-based ecotourism development approach should be adopted in Bandipur on which locals are the one has huge control (WWF, 2014). This involves taking such steps as ensuring that any local administration committee includes local residents, because community participation in administration roles is a key point to the success of ecotourism development. Additionally, the voice of all community members especially who have affected by ecotourism should be taken into account in administrative decision making. While some can argue that local residents are usually get influenced by others because of low skills and too limited education to be capable of making such contributions (Miller, 2017). On the other hand, Dalits are still working

on low wages and salaries than others, it can be said that Dalit communities do not get opportunities to have participated on such a decision-making community. Thus, inhabitants of Bandipur should be provided effective tools such as advanced training to everyone including Dalit communities, to encourage minorities and less privileged locals and make them able to represent their interests and ideas. Representatives from Dalit communities should also be in decision-making board so that the issues and voices of Dalit get involved in such a process. In the same way, it is also very important to consider the local community as the central point to place economic and political empowerment. However, it is significant to keep in mind that representatives from each community should be involved in decision-making process otherwise some people or communities might misuse the control by keeping the benefits and power on his/her own without any concern for the communities as a whole.

It should be noted that in the case of Bandipur, the locals are losing their farmlands due to the development. The government would have to provide satisfactory compensation to locals so that they would not abandon their original profession. Similarly, the government should regulate strict laws to avoid inequality among community members and regulate high taxation to those businesses who have high emission of carbon footprints and destruct the surroundings of Bandipur. Apart from that, the legal actions should be taken for tourism businesses which have influenced by western culture and should provide classes about the culture and its authenticity.

Additionally, the government should provide incentives or deduction on tax to the local business that follows the three approaches of sustainable: Economic, environmental and socio-cultural sustainability.

Since ecotourism started, the basic infrastructure and training that supports ecotourism have been provided to locals of Bandipur. However, Dalit communities are still in lack of confidence and skills so that they got behind from other groups. Mostly, Dalits are engaging in handicrafts made from wood, metal and stone. There is potential for upgrading and further developing handicrafts in Bandipur and other nearby villages as well, so that it could expand tourism benefit for Dalit communities and encourage them for more cultural activity. Handicrafts reflect the traditional arts, skills and culture. Thus, local authorities and local government should promote local handicraft production which could provide consistent benefits, especially for Dalit communities.

Most importantly, the findings of this research would recommend that the local authorities should provide more training and skill development courses to its locals to avoid hiring others from outsides.

b. Recommendation for further research

The findings of this research provide guidelines for future study of this topic in other destinations. The findings of this study might be useful for development planners, decision-makers, local community organizations, researcher and students. Since this research was limited to investigate the impacts of ecotourism and to analyze the contribution of ecotourism towards the sustainable development of local communities of Bandipur, it could be interesting to research the socio-cultural impacts of ecotourism to go deeper and to find out whether ecotourism can contribute in bringing changes on bad socio-cultural practices or not. Not only, but this study can also further scrutinize how ecotourism can help to develop the marginalized group of communities such as Dalit communities. Likewise, the study on existing and potential challenges of ecotourism can be done to get better understanding of potential opportunities of ecotourism in developing countries. Additional research about the types and effectiveness of ongoing training for locals who are interested to participate would also be valuable. Particularly, the research can be done to recognize the programs that increase the empowerment of member of local communities so that they can move forward to manage the ecotourism projects by themselves. Due to the limitation of the research, this study has been based on skype interview, field observations and face to face interview could be done for further research. In future researches, it would be significant to analyze the effect of tourists' activities have on the local communities. Similarly, it could be interesting to study the potential opportunities of other forms of ecotourism such as Agro tourism and community-based ecotourism.

References

Asian Development Bank. (2019). *Nepal/Poverty*. Retrieved from adb.org:
 https://www.adb.org/countries/nepal/poverty

Adams, W. M. (2009). *Green Development: Environment and Sustainability in a developing
 world* (Vol. 3rd edition). London and New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.

Ali, A. F., & Halis, M. (2017). The Interactional Relationship between Ecotourism and
 Sustainable Development. *Imperial Journal of Interdisplinary Research, 3*(8), 166-173.

Al-Saadi, H. (2014). *Demystifying Ontology and Epistemology in Research Methods.* University of
 Sheffield. Researchgate.net.

Berg, B. L. (2007). *Qualitative Research Methods for social sciences* (Vol. 7th edition). California
 State University.

Bhatta, D. P. (2015). *Ecotourism in Nepal.* Quality Printers Kathmandu.

Bin, L., Suocheng, D., & Mei, X. (2008). Ecotourism Model and Benefits of Periphery Regions in
 Western Sichuan Province. *Chinese Journal of Population Resources and Environment,
 6*(2), 80-86.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2008). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualtitative Research in
 Psychology, 3*(2), 77-101.

Brouneus, K. (2011). In-depth Interviewing: The process, skill and ethics of interviews in peace
 research. In K. Hoglund, & M. Oberg, *Understanding Peace Research: Methods and
 Challenges* (pp. 130-145). London, New York : Routledge .

Bryant, R. L. (2005, July 05). Beyond the impasse: the Power of Political Ecology in Third World
 Environmental Research. *Royal Geographical Society, 29*(1), 5-19.

Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods.* Oxford University Press.

Bryman, A., & Bell, E. (2007). *Business Research Methods.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ceballos-Lascurain, H. (1987). The future of ecotourism. *Mexico Journal*, 13-14.

Central Intelligence Agency . (2020). *Library*. Retrieved from Central Intelligence Agency:
 https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/np.html

CIA. (n.d.). *the world factbook*. Retrieved from cia.gov:
 https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/np.html

Cobbinah, P. B., Amenuvor, D., Black, R., & Peprah, C. (2017). Ecotourism in the Kakum
 Conservation Area, Ghana: Local politics, practice and outcome. *Journal of Outdoor
 Recreation and Tourism, 20*, 34-44.

Coria, J., & Calfucura, E. (2012). Ecotourism and the development of indigenous communities:
 The good, the bad, and the ugly. *Ecological Economies, 73*, 47-55.

Crossman, A. (2019). *Pros and Cons of Secondary Data Analysis*. Retrieved from thoughtco.com:
 https://www.thoughtco.com/secondary-data-analysis-3026536

Crowe, S., Cresswell, K., Robertson, A., Huby, G., Avery, A., & Sheikh, A. (2011). The case study
 approach. *Medical Research Methodology*.

Dahal, R. (2017). *Prospects of Ecotourism in Nepal: A case study of Basantapur- Guphapokhari
 Corridor in Tehrathum.* Tribhuvan University, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.
 Kathmandu: Central Department of Rural Development.

Das, M., & Chatterjee, B. (2015). Ecotourism: A Panacea or a Predicament? *Tourism
 Management Perspectives, 14*, 3-16.

DeFranzo, S. E. (2011). *What id difference between qualitative and quantitative research?* Retrieved from Snaps Survey: https://www.snapsurveys.com/blog/qualitative-vsquantitative-research/

Diamantis, D. (2004). The Concept of Ecotourism : Evolution and Trends. In S. Williams, *Tourism: New directions and Alternative tourism* (Vol. 4). London: Routledge.

Doaa, S. M., & Merna, N. (2019). Favoring technocentrism over ecocentrism evidence from Finland and Bhutan. *Bussecon Review of Social Sciences, 1*(1), 13-23.

Dowling , R. K., & Fennell, D. A. (2003). *Ecotourism Policy and Planning.* Wellingford, UK: CAB International.

Duffy, R. (2008, May). Neoliberalising Nature: Global Networks and Ecotourism Development in Madagasgar. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 16*(3), 327-344.

Elliott, J. A. (2006). *An Introduction to Sustainable Development.* London and NewYork: Routledge.

Erdogan, N. (2017). Critical views of Mainstream Approaches on Ecotourism. *Journal of Tourism and Gastronomy Studies, 5*(1), 20-31.

Fennell, D. A. (2015). *Ecotourism.* Routledge.

Flora of Nepal. (2014). *Country Information*. Retrieved from Flora of Nepal.org: http://www.floraofnepal.org/countryinformation

Folk, E. (2019, January 18). *impacts-ecotourism* . Retrieved from theecologist.org: https://theecologist.org/2019/jan/18/impacts-eco-tourism

Goodman, P. (2020, February). *Advantages and Disadvantages of tourism* . Retrieved from Soapboxie.com: https://soapboxie.com/economy/Advantages-and-disadvantages-of-tourism

Gossling, S. (2003, September). Market Integration and Ecosystem Degradation: Is Sustainable Tourism Development in Rural Communities a Contradiction in Terms? *Environment, Development and Sustainability, 5*, 383-400.

Government of Nepal . (2019). *Nepal Tourism Statistics 2018.* Government of Nepal, Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation . Kathmandu: Ministry of Culture, Tourism & Civil Aviation.

Henn, M., Weinstein, M., & Foard, N. (2006). *A short introduction to social research.* London: Sage Publications.

Higham, J. (2007). *Critical Issues in ecotourism : Understanding a complex tourism phenomenon.* Oxford: Elsevier Ltd.

Hill, J. L., & Hill, R. A. (2011). Ecotourism in Amazonian Peru: uniting tourism, conservation and community development. *Geography, 96*(2), 75-85.

Himalayan News Service. (2020). *Bandipur to get more hotels.* Damauli: The Himalayan Times.

Info Nepal. (2011, 02). *Terai Region of Nepal*. Retrieved from Subnepal.blogspot.com: http://supnepal.blogspot.com/2011/02/terai-region-of-nepal.html

K.C. , A., & Thapa Parajuli, R. B. (2014, January 05). Tourism and its impact on livelihood in Manaslu conservation area, Nepal. *Environmental Development sustain, 16*, 1053- 1063.

KC, A. (2017, 2017). Ecotourism in Nepal. *The Gaze journal of Tourism and Hospitality, 8*.

Kelkit, A., Ozel, A., & Demirel, O. (2005). A study of the Kazdagi (Mt. Ida) National Park: an ecological approach to the management of tourism. *International Journal of Sustainable Development & World Ecology, 12*(2), 141-148.

Keyser, H. (2002). Tourism Development.

Khatri, A., & Shrestha, R. (2019). *Sustainable tourism in relation to Social Entrepreneurship: A case of Nepal.* semester project.

Kolk, A. (2016). The social responsibility of international business: From ethics and the environment to CSR and sustainable development. *Journal of World Business, 51*(1), 23-34.

Leslie, H., & Storey, D. (2003). *The Development Fieldwork: A Practical guide.* (R. Schyevens, & D. Storey, Eds.) London: Sage Publications.

Libreros, M. (1998). *A Conceptual Framework for a Tourism Satellite Account.* UNWTO, Tourism Statistics. OECD.

Lindberg , K., Enrique, J., & Sproule, K. (1996). Ecotourism questioned: Case studies from Belize. *Annual of Tourism Research, 23*(3), 543-562.

Manniche, J., Larsen, K. T., Broegaard, R. B., & Holland, E. (2017). *Destination: A circular tourism economy- A handbook for transitioning toward a circular economy within the tourism and hospitality sectors in the South Baltic Region.* Centre for Regional & Tourism Research.

Marzuki, A. (2011). Resident Attitude Towards Impacts from Tourism Development in Langkawi Islands, Malaysia. *World Applied Science Journal (Special Issue of Tourism and Hospitality), 12*, 25-34.

Mawhinney, M. (2002). *Sustainable development: Understanding the green debates.* Oxford: Blackwell Science Ltd.

McCool, S. F. (2016). The Changing Meanings of Sustainable Tourism. In S. F. McCool, & B. Keith, *Reframing Sustainable Tourism , Environmental Challenges and Solutions* (pp. 13-32). Springer.

Mensah, J., & Casadevall, S. R. (2019). Sustainable development: Meaning, history, principles, pillars, and implications for human action: Literature review. *Cogent Social Sciences, 5*(1).

Miller, C. C. (2017). *Challenges and Potentials of Ecotourism as a form of Conservation and Sustainable Development on Zapatera Island, Nicaragua.* Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Department of Urban and Rural Development. Uppsala: Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.

Ministry of Culture, Tourism &Civil Aviation. (2019). *Nepal Tourism Statistics.* Kathmandu: Ministry of Culture, Tourism &Civil Aviation.

Nash, D. J. (2000). Doing independent overseas fieldwork 1: Practicalities and Pitfalls. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education, 24*(1), 139-149.

Nath, T. K., & Alauddin, M. (2006). Sitakunda Botanical Garden and Eco-park, Chittagong, Bangladesh: Its impacts on a rural community. *International Journal of Biodiversity Science and Management, 2*, 1-11.

Nepal in Data. (2018, January 29). *Resource/local resource map*. Retrieved from Nepal in data.com: https://nepalindata.com/resource/local-resource-map---bandipur-rural-municipality/

Nepal Tourism Board. (2020). *Places to see/ bandipur*. Retrieved from Discover Nepal: https://www.welcomenepal.com/places-to-see/bandipur.html

Oliveira , F., & Silva, F. (2010). Tourism as a tool of community development: an ecotourism project in Cantanhez, Guinea-Bissau. *Sustainable Tourism, 139*, 551-561.

Oram, M. B. (1995). Toward a more desirable form of ecotourism. *Tourism Management, 16*(1), 3-8.

Overton, J. (1999). Sustainable Development and the Pacific Islands. In *Strategies for Sustainable Development: Experiences from the Pacific* (pp. 1-18). London: Earthscan.

Overton, J., & Diermen, P. V. (2003). Using quantitative techniques. In R. Scheyvens, & D. Storey, *Developmeny fieldwork: A Practical guide* (pp. 37-54). London: SAGE Publications.

Pandey, R. N., Chettri, P., & Kunwar, R. R. (1995). CASE STUDY ON THE EFFECTS OF TOURISM ON CULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT: Nepal. *Cultural and Tourism in Asia, 4*.

Paudel, P. K., Bhattarai, B. P., & Kindlmann, P. (2011). An Overview of the Biodiversity in Nepal. In P. Kindlmann, & P. Kindlmann (Ed.), *Himalayan Biodiversity in the Changing World.* Springer Science + Business Media.

Prasain, S. (2017). *Tourism pumped Rs 177 b into Nepal's economy.* The Kathmandu Post.

Purvis, B., Mao, Y., & Robinson, D. (2019). Three pillars of sustainability:in search of conceptual origins. *Sustainability Science, 14*, 681-695.

Redclift, M. (1991). *Sustainable Developmet: Exploring the contradictions .* London: Routledge.

Regmi, N. (2016). *Rural Tourism in Nepal: Development and Sustainability : A case Study of Parbat District, Nepal.* Thesis, Centria University of Applied Sciences, Degree Programme in Tourism .

Ruane, J. M. (2005). *Essentials of research methods: A guide to social science research.* Maiden: Blackwell Publishing .

Ruska, E. (2012). *The Road to Recovery and Rebirth The Social Construction of Tourism Development in Bandipur, Nepal.* Wageningen University and Research Center, Leisure Tourism and Environment. Wageningen University and Research Center.

Salkind, N. (2010). Primary Data Source. Encyclopedia of Research Design.

Scheyvens, R. (1999). Ecotourism and empowerment of local communities. *Tourism Management, 20*, 245-249.

Scheyvens, R., Nowak, R., & Scheyvens , H. (2003). Ethical Issues. In R. Scheyvens, & D. Storey, *Development fieldwork: A practical guide* (pp. 139-166). London: Sage Publications.

Schirnding, Y. v. (2005). The World Summit on Sustainable Development: reaffirming the centrality of health. *Global Health, 1*(8).

Schroeder, K. (2015). Cultural Values and Sustainable Tourism Governance in Bhutan. *Sustainability, 7*, 16616-16630.

SDG Nepal. (n.d.). *about us.* Retrieved from sdg.npc.gov: http://sdg.npc.gov.np/

Sharpley, R. (2006). Ecotourism: A Consumption Perspective. *Journal of Ecotourism, 5*(1 &2), 7-22.

Sharpley, R. (2015). Tourism and Development : Conceptual Perspective.

Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information, 22*, 63-75.

Showkat, N., & Parveen, H. (2017). In-depth Interview. *Media and Communication Studies*.

Sigdel, T. P. (2014, 11 18). Prospects of Ecotourism in Bandipur. *The Third Pole: journal of Geography Education, 11*, 50-55.

Smith, S. J. (1994). Qualitative Research. In R. J. Johnston, D. Gregory, & D. M. Smith, *The Dictionary of Human Geography* (pp. 491-493). Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

Sofield, T. H. (2003). *Empowerment for Sustainable Development.* Oxford: Pergamon.

Stem, C. J., Lassoie, J. P., Lee, D. R., & Deshler, D. J. (2003). H*ow Eco is Ecotourism? A Comparative Case Study of Ecotourism in Costa Rica.* J*ournal of Sustainable Tourism,* 11(4), 322-347.

Stumpfegger, E. (2017, 11 07). *Trustworthiness of research* . Retrieved from munichbusiess school: https://www.munich-business-school.de/insights/en/2017/trustworthiness-of-research/

Thapa, M. B. (2012). *Tourism and Sustainability Community Developmeny in Nepal.* Central Ostrobothnia University of Applied Science, Tourism . Central Ostrobothnia University of Applied Science.

The International Ecotourism Society. (2015, January 7). *principles of Ecotourism*. Retrieved from ecotourism.org: https://ecotourism.org/news/ties-announces-ecotourism-principles-revision/

The longest way home. (2019). *Nepal/overtourism*. Retrieved from the longest way home.com: https://www.thelongestwayhome.com/blog/nepal/overtourism-problem-in-nepal/

TIES. (2019). *What is ecotourism* . Retrieved from ecotourism.org : https://ecotourism.org/what-is-ecotourism/

UNDP. (2020). *Sustainable Development Goals*. Retrieved from Undp.org : https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/background/

UNEP & UNWTO. (2005). *Making Tourism More Sustainable - A Guide for Policy Makers.* Paris and Madrid : UNEP and UNWTO.

UNEP. (2001). Industry and Environment . *Ecotourism and Sustainability, 24*(3-4).

UNEP. (2013). Tourism: Trends, Challenges and Opportunities . *Green Economy and Trade*, 259-291.

UNESCO. (2008). *The UNESCO declaration on cultural diversity.* UNESCO. Retrieved from https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000127160

United Nation . (n.d.). *SDGs*. Retrieved from Sustainabledevelopment : https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs

UNWTO. (2007). *Tourism will contribute to solutions for global climate change and poverty challenges. .* Communication Department . Berlin, Madrid: United World Trade Organisation Press .

Visit Nepal 2020. (2019). *Sustainability*. Retrieved from Visit Nepal Year 2020: https://visitnepal2020.com/#sustainability

White, P. (2003). Making use of secondary data. In N. Clifford, & G. Valentine, *Key Methods in geography* (pp. 67-85). London: SAGE Publications.

Wilson, C. (2014). *Interview techniques for UX Practitioners: A User- Centered Design Method.* Morgan Kaufmann Publishers.

Wood, M. E. (2002). *Ecotourism: Principles, Practices & policies for Sustainability.* United Nations Environment Programme, Division of Technology, Industry and Economics.

United Nations Publication. Retrieved from wedocs.unep.org:
http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/9045/-
Ecotourism_%20%20Principles,%20Practices%20and%20Policies%20for%20Sustainabilit
y-2002518.pdf?sequence=2

World Travel and Tourism Council . (n.d.). *Economic Impact* . Retrieved from Wttc.org:
https://www.wttc.org/economic-impact/

WWF. (2014). *A Study on Promoting Community Managed Ecotourism.* Kathmandu: WWF
Nepal, Hariyo Ban Program.

Yin, R. (2009). *Case study research design and method* (Vol. 4th edition). London: Sage
Publications Ltd.

Zein, Z. (2019, June 18). *ecobusiness.com/opinions*. Retrieved from Ecobusiness.com:
https://www.eco-business.com/opinion/reflections-from-nepal-is-there-a-sustainable-
future-for-tourism-in-asia/

Appendix I

    A. Interview with hotel owner

Name: Fulmati Thapa

Gender: Female

Age: 38 years old

Local Residents/ Owner of Sourya Hotel.

1. What do you think about tourism in Bandipur?

It is becoming one of the major income sources of Bandipurians. I think it is good to have more tourists here. Lots of Bandipurians has job because of tourism. Tourism is growing here in Bandipur.

2. Do you know about eco-tourism in Bandipur?

- I heard about it, it is about being responsible to the nature. But does not know in detail. I just know that we need to care for nature and surroundings while performing tourism.

3. What are the main tourist activities in Bandipur?

- Mostly, they come here for sightseeing and Adventures like hiking. Recently, I have seen some tourists are here for bird watching, to explore food, and learning cultural history.

4. How do you feel to see tourists coming to Bandipur?

- I like when there are tourists. It feels so lively.

5. Are you involved in any tourism? if yes how are you involved?

- yes, I have my own hotel, it offers cultural dances, foods to tourists.

    How many employees are there in your hotel?

      - There are 10 in total,

6. What kind of benefits are you receiving due to tourism?

- I personally having economic benefits from eco-tourism but because of hotels and tourism I am able to provide job opportunities to other people here. There is one student who is working here in my hotel so that she can study further. Thus, I am very glad that I can give back to societies. It is all because of tourism.

7. Have you seen or experienced any changes on your livelihoods since ecotourism in Bandipur started?

- I have seen many examples and experienced by myself: In my case, I belong to middle class family, me and my husband used to struggle a lot for our income, now our lives has been improved. My son (14) and daughter (9) are learning English so that they can communicate with them. Bandipurians used to go to other cities for better life but now who was migrated before 10 years to other cities like Dumre and Kathmandu are coming back to their hometown and working and doing something here. I heard that it became ghost town before 20 years as lots of people migrated from here now Bandipur gets its life back.

Do you and your hotel contribute to livelihoods of people of this communities?

- My hotel is providing job to lots of people and I am basically use products that are produced in local farm here in Bandipur.

How about local products in rooms or for hotel decorations?

- We are using local products such as our traditional utensils, local carpets in every room and also few local crafts in every rooms. Since, there are guests from different parts of world, I am using western arts and blankets just to comfort and please visitors.

8. Have you seen or experienced any environmental changes after tourism started in Bandipur? Can you explain (positive or negative).

- Actually yes, there are more positive changes, the entry of vehicles is banned inside the bazaar area and it became noise free, cleaner, dust and mud free. Plantation of trees are going on. Nowadays Cutting trees are prohibited. We need to take permission from forest officer to cut the trees and also bring Syaula (bunch of leaves and branches for cattle). There are garbage bins in every 10 minutes.

- Ummm Negative, let me think ; Number of tourists are growing, it is good for economic point of view, but in Bandipur, there are old and historical heritages such as Padma Library (one of the oldest library in whole Nepal), Purano Kot and Gadhi, these heritages might get damaged because of over tourism.

- forests area and public areas are destroyed in the name of creating attractions.

9. Have you experienced positive socio-cultural impacts because of tourism? explain.

- In my hotel as well, we have cultural shows where we introduce our cultural dress, dance and food to visitors, from this the new generation are learning about our culture and tradition.

- local products like handicrafts, groceries are in demand. Lots of restaurants or hotels are using local products.

- locals are getting employment opportunities, some are working as a guide, translator, some has opened souvenir shops.

- New schools and colleges are established, if we compare to past 15 years, we needed to go down to Dumre for further study, there were schools only up to 5 classes.

10. Can you please explain the negative socio-cultural impacts of tourism? (If any)

- There are lots of farmers and shoes maker have left their work to start tourism related work making tourism as the main source. I think It can be problem when tourism goes down. Before 7 years ago, there were only few hotels including mine now there are so many. As a result, there are tough competition among hotels and restaurants.

11. Is there any awareness classes or campaigns for locals by local authorities regarding tourism? (explain).

- There are some programs launched by Bandipur municipalities to teach youngsters how to play traditional musical instruments, classes for traditional dance. My daughter is attending class for traditional folk dance of magar like Ghatu dance, Maruni and so on. Everyone can select their classes according to interest.

- different programs are going on every Saturday. Last Saturday there was training for waiters and waitress launched by municipality. I think in coming Saturday, there are classes for guides: isn't Maya (asking her niece).

- Hari my neighbor just started silk farming after training of 3 weeks. Now so many tourists (domestic) are coming there to visit and view the whole process.

12. Are there any outsiders working in tourism related activities?

- yes, there are many of them. Actually, I count on my finger (started to laugh and count in her figures). Sita comes from Dhading (the vendor shop keeper) I guess.

13. How do you think about that? Is it good or bad?

- In my opinion, it is ok until she pays tax to the local authorization. She has also hired two people (Bandipurians) in her shop, so It is a good thing.

14. Do you see the community is developing? Why and how do you think it is developing?

- yes. Better transportation facilities, even though we need to walk 10 minutes from bazaar area. High schools, hospitals, health care center, colleges, has established in comparisons with past 10 years.

15. Do you have any recommendation on tourism for betterment of communities?

- hire local peoples in tourism project, provide trainings for farmers and other professions as well, we have more than enough hotels, homestays, I guess. And strict regulations should be applied to control western influences.

Appendix II

B. Interview with local

Name: Bikram Joshi

Gender: Male

Age: 50 years old

Profession: Local farmer

Address: Thanimai, Bandipur.

1. What do you think about tourism in Bandipur?

- Bandipur is the one of the trending tourism area of Nepal, it has retained old cultural attributes such as temples, shrines, sacred caves, innumerable festivals, and a Newari architecture. it is the combination of Natural and cultural beauty, including different outdoor activities. I think everyone have to visit Bandipur at least once in their life.

2. Do you know about eco-tourism in Bandipur?

- Well Bandipur is all about ecotourism, as I mentioned already it is the mixture of natural and cultural beauty. and the tourism board focus on activities involving natural tour to hills, trekking, paragliding and cultural visit and organic village visit. which has low impact to environment.

3. What are the main tourist activities in Bandipur?

- The main tourist activities are cultural area visit which includes Temples, and some other Newari culture and food, trekking, caving, paragliding, rafting and rock climbing with the nature.

4. How do you feel to see tourists coming to Bandipur?

- Well, it's always better to have numbers of tourist, especially in the place like Bandipur. which is not so much developed and now the tourists are increasing not only national from

international as well due to eco-friendly adventure. so overall, I am glad that tourism industries increasing due to tourists from all over the world.

5. Are you involved in any tourism? if yes how are you involved?

- well, I have an organic farm where we grow organic vegetables and fruits. So, these vegetables and fruits we sell in the local market and hotels and some home stay in our areas. And sometime tourists also visit to our organic farms and they buy fresh organic local fruits.

6. What kind of benefits are you receiving due to tourism?

- In the name of development actually for expansion of road, I lost my land where I used to have farm. In addition, I did not get any compensation from government.

- Before there were less market and we needed to go to city 20 km far from hometown to sell our goods and also less opportunities for job, so we needed to depend on income earned by only one member in family. But now there are lots of job opportunities, I think 80 % of locals are involving in tourism.

7. Have you seen or experienced any changes on your livelihoods since ecotourism in Bandipur started?

- Yes, now we have water system in every house, before we had only 1 drinking water pipeline for 10 houses, but it is changed now.

- infrastructural development for example, hospitals have been established just in 5 km away from my home. There is each health post in every villages of Bandipur.

- Better lifestyle. As I said before, I used to travel to other town just to sell my vegetables, now I am getting order just from hotels, and restaurants. In fact, I do not need to go anywhere, they come into my home, give orders from phone.

8. Have you seen or experienced any environmental changes after tourism started in Bandipur? Can you explain (positive or negative).

- Most of the products are used in tourism organizations like hotels, homestays, are local products. Traffic problems has been solved here after banned of vehicles in Bazaar area. Old historical monuments are renovated time to time to conserve them.

- I feel Bandipur is more fresh, clean and greenery now as rules set by local committee, if somebody wants to cut trees, he or she needs to plant 5 trees.

- In my personal experience, I haven't seen much negative changes in environment due to tourism as Bandipur is focuses on eco-tourism which has less impact on environment.

Is it allowed to cut trees over there?

- No, we need to take permission from local authorization, it has long process. We need to go for local committee first to provide our reason to cut trees then go to VDC (Village Development Committee) then municipality then again to local committee to get one paper and to local forest department. ufffs it is so long process better not to cut trees, (saying with a big smile).

9. Have you experienced positive socio-cultural impacts because of tourism? explain.

-Yes, we can see the development of society and community through the tourism by enhancing the local industries or creating job opportunities for local also tourism helps to resettlement of

culture and tradition and also encourage local to awareness the value of natural and cultural site in Bandipur.

Will you please explain on Resettlement of culture and tradition?

- Ooh yes, we are able to introduce our culture and tradition to domestic as well as international tourists and even the new kids who are always busy on their new gadgets, they are also learning about our culture by watching cultural show presented for visitors.

10. Can you please explain the negative socio-cultural impacts of tourism? (If any)

- Frankly speaking, I am bit worried about our culture, yes ecotourism in Bandipur helps to introduce our culture to tourists, and also to young generation, but in some hotels (I know 3 hotels, they have modified toilet, even food (a little bit less spicy), built a hotels in new modern styles, looks like they have influenced with western culture. They are changing up everything like food, drinks, infrastructure. If it will be going on like this, it might create damages for our culture in a long run.

- I have also seen child labor in some tourism related organizations. some of the home stay owner pushing their kids to work and also some local people complain about the bad behavior of tourist. One local was arrested 4 months ago in case of supplying marijuana to tourists.

11. Is there any awareness classes or campaigns for locals by local authorities regarding tourism? (explain).

- There are some campaigns going to be conduct from next year 2077 (in the beginning of May 2020) to aware the value of natural and cultural site and also classes are going on but been stopped due to corona to improve the tourist industries. every new person who wants to start new local business there will be guidance from local authorities how to start and how to promote local goods and services.

12. Are there any outsiders working in tourism related activities?

- Yes, in some big hotel they are hiring qualified chef for work and also some fast food industries we can see the outsider selling foods and gift shops in street.

13. How do you think about that? Is it good or bad?

- I feels bad. I think, it is not good for the communities. I believe that the tourism board need to concentrate on this and also support local people by providing the training and education for higher skills need job. So local can get the opportunities to work and revenue just running inside the community.

14. Do you think community is developing? Why and how do you think it is developing?

- If we compare the past times and present, yes, it is developing. There are job opportunities for locals now whereas before we needed to go to other cities for income. Even farmers like me do not need to go far away from here, it is because of more hotels, homestays and restaurants. New and modern machineries for farmers are available in each committee we can just go and borrow by paying reasonable amount. When I was young, I walked 3 hours down to Dumre for my study now, today's youths and kids can get quality education without any geographical obstacles. And also, my younger sisters used to wake up early morning to go to the river to fetch water, life was very difficult at that time, now it has improved a lot.

15. Do you have any recommendation on tourism for betterment of communities?

- In Bandipur, there are lots of educational institutions focusing on hotel management, despite of that, I will rather to suggest on starting agricultural courses and home stay management so that new generations also learn agriculture and we can also promote agro tourism in future.

Appendix III

C. Interview with Bandipur Rural Municipality.
Name: Saran Singh Gurung
Gender: Male
Position: Information officer- Tourism Department

1. **How long have you been working on this province?**
   - Thank you for question, And this interview. It is going to be seven years on this May.
2. **How did 'ecotourism start in Bandipur and why?**
   - Ecotourism in Bandipur started with the concept for sustaining environment and preserve culture and traditions. After construction of prithivi highway, Bandipur was left isolated and lots of people migrated to other cities for better opportunities. In late 90's, an English entrepreneur named Tony Jones launched an adventure tourism in Bandipur to offer rafting and trekking expeditions. When tourists started to come here, the outsiders migrated here just to do business in the name of tourism. lots of hotels and service sector has been established by outsiders. The environmental degradation gradually started because of the heavy vehicles and over tourism. In 2003, communities of Bandipur decided to create committee to start ecotourism specially to conserve cultural heritages, historical monument, to support local enterprise and to revive economic activities.
3. **What are the main principles of ecotourism followed in Bandipur and why?**
   - We are focusing on to enhance, upgrade and conserve the historical monuments, natural environment, at the same time to boost economic status of each and every local of all six wards (villages) of Bandipur.
4. **What do you think about sustainable development of local community?**
   - It is about to sustain community for future. Sustaining environment, culture, social values for future refers to sustainable development.
5. **Will you please explain the terms sustainable development of local communities in context of Bandipur?**
   - Well, in Bandipur, the different strategies have been made to meet the sustainable development. such as we have standard based physical infrastructural development which works to provide clean water for everyone, green city, road network to connect every villages.
   - Establishment of health posts, maternity hospitals and food control organization for healthy life of Bandipurians.

- We are mainly focusing to promote homestays and encourages locals to open homestay to offer tourists real experience of Bandipur.
- Technology school, sports school, grounds, and high quality of educational institutions are opening up to provide education for all, technology for youth and better life option skills for youth.
- In order to maintain ecological balance, forests are converted into community forest, conservation area is going to start soon. Conservation of wetland, rivers, caves has been started. The hiking development committee has been established to promote hike here specially in three routes: Pataldwar-siddhaGufa-Bandipur, Gohore-Aanadapuri-Jalbhanjyang and Ramkot-Tarevirr- tesro lake.
- Similarly, waste management campaigns have been started where we encourage people to reduce, reuse and recycle the resources. We encouraged locals to use induction or biogas to cook food rather to use gas cylinder.
- Encourage locals to use local products to sustain the local market.

6. **What environmental changes good or bad, have you seen from ecotourism since you started working here?**
- It has changed in positive way. Number of Flora and Fauna are increasing than past. Ponds, rivers and other water resources has getting cleaner. As awareness campaigns with the 'Swoksha Batabaran' (Clean Environment) were held last year, we had local youth as our volunteers to go door by door to aware locals about renewable and non-renewable products. Recycling things are mostly adapted by almost all locals here in Bandipur. There were lots of peoples who were dependent to the income earned by cutting trees and sell them. But now locals of Bandipur are working with different service industries as well own their own shop, some of them are working as porters, guides. I have seen many locals who used to sell their land to others for better future of their children, now they are able to do something without selling their properties. They can invest on their own land by opening farm, shop, giving lease to others.

7. **Have you seen economic changes here after ecotourism started?**
- Yes, I think I already answered before, it is the one of biggest positive aspect that have been achieved through ecotourism. Demand of local products, handicrafts are increasing. Also, demand of organic and local food is growing because of large number of tourism sector.
- Well, there are also large number of people (belongs to low caste) have not been benefitted equally as other does. But we are trying to involve them as well. Some of them are working as porters and guides.

   Are there any strategies to involve those people as well? (will you explain)
- Yes, trainings for home stay are still going on for those people from low caste group. We had many programs to promote local products, lots of handicrafts are made by those lower caste people.
- **Is there any representative from Dalit communities?**

- Not yet.

8. What are socio-cultural aspects that are affected (positive and negative) by ecotourism?
- Locals are getting opportunities to enhance their skills, languages
- Cultural dances have been learned by new generation.
- Educational programs for sanitation, waste management for locals has been performed by volunteers
- Locals has got access to health care. Health posts in every wards and hospital has established.
- I will say equality among Gender.
- The people from ward no six got easy access for bazaar area recently because of construction of permanent bridge, before there were temporary and risky bridge made by wood. It has made life easier of villagers who lived on ward six. It was made to promote tourism in this area,
- In terms of negative, we are getting complains from few locals that there are ongoing some black markets for foreigner tourists, but we are working on it to mitigate these stuffs.

9. Do you think ecotourism helps on empowering locals of Bandipur? Explain
- I think yes, it helps on empowering locals of Bandipur. As I said above, job opportunities, education, healthcare, trainings of different professions like guide, waiter, to make handicrafts and so on. I

10. Are all locals benefitted from ecotourism? How do you ensure?
- I think yes, but still some people from Dalit Communities are not getting benefit as much as other does. We are organizing different classes to develop their skills and have trainings for homestay, traditional musical classes.
- We have ward offices for each ward where locals from those areas are working so they inspect by going through all communities to get the feedback and to know perspectives of locals.

11. What are the potential opportunities of ecotourism in Bandipur? Are there any steps taken by government to promote ecotourism in Bandipur? Explain
- We are promoting tourism with the slogan 'one stop in Bandipur' since it is situated in way from Kathmandu to Pokhara and nearby Chitwan. We have made a plan to convert community forest into wildlife conservation area, we are still researching on forest for the best choice for conservation area. Similarly, museum of local culture will be established to preserve cultural art, traditions, dresses of all ethnic groups of Bandipur. There are many languages which are in about to extinct, therefore we have programs to develop those languages such as Newar, Tamang and Kirati languages.
- And also, we have launched cultural events to encourage youths to learn and present their culture, dance, and folk music, it is more like competition, and there are rewards for the

best presenter. By this competition, there are two benefits, firstly, we will get tourists in the name of such cultural programs and events. Secondly, our youths will get motivated to learn their culture.
- To develop ecotourism, we are expecting at the end of July 2020, the cable car service will be launched to travel from Thuldhunga to Baral chok to enjoy the top hill attractions and sun rise and sun set.
- In coordination with Blue sky flying school, we have started to train Bandipurians to be a paragliding pilot. By this, tourism will be increased and at the same time employment for locals has been created. And we are getting success to decrease the number of people who goes study for work.
- There is a plan to construct a glass view tower in Tundikhel, Bandipur with the main aim of supporting the promotion of tourism in Bandipur. We have already started the tender process for its construction.
- The construction of 3000 metres long trekking trails along with the Mukundeshwori Wall resembling the Great wall of China has been initiated in Thanimai temple to promote trekking tourism.

12. Have you experienced negative impacts of ecotourism in Bandipur?
- Lots of people from outsiders get attracted here. They will invest on something but in long run Bandipurians needs to pay a lot in terms of environment and cultural perspectives.

13. How did the government address the negative sides of ecotourism?
- We have made a new rule of high taxation to address this problem. And it is necessary to involve 80% of locals on every kind of sector. Raw materials and local products should be used. And so on.

14. Are there any future strategies to combat negative impacts of ecotourism in this area? Can you please explain.
- There will be deduction on taxes to build their home and buildings in cultural style. We have set the criteria for the buildings, and everyone must follow the criteria to build any kind of buildings. The government will subsidies by 10% in such startups which is based on ecological.
- To raise awareness to foster our culture and traditions.
- All schools should have different courses to teach about culture, environment.
- lower caste people are getting less wages and salaries than other, so new rule of equal wages and salaries for all has been implemented to maintain equality among different groups and gender. There is a fine of 50,000 NPR and 3 months of prison, if somebody found for discrimination in any sector here.

Appendix IV

D. Interview with member of Local's Mother group

Name: Sushma pariyar

Age: 45 years

Gender: Female

1. **What do you think about tourists and tourism in Bandipur?**
   - Tourism is the major economic sources here in Bandipur. Flow of tourists are increasing both domestic and international tourists.

2. **Are you involved in any kind of tourism activities? If yes how?**
   - No not now, but other women from Ama Samuha has been involving in tourism activities, there are lots of women who has been working for handicrafts, some of them has home stay, shop.

   a. **Why did you stop now?**
   - I used to craft handicrafts like, metal craft, stone craft and also made small key rings as a souvenir of Bandipur. But I used to get little than other workers as I am from low caste (Dalit) I guess, that's why I left it. Now I am working in nearby city in a public sector.

   b. **How many women from your Ama Samuha (Mother's group) are involved in tourism activities?**
   - There are 2 Mother's group in each village, each group contains 20 mothers. 80% of them works in tourism related business and 18% of them involved indirectly such as farmers. And 2 % are like me.

   c. **Why the number of farmers is less here in Bandipur?**
   - Almost everyone was farmer before 10 years ago now because of growth in tourism, they have left farming and opened hotels, restaurants, travel agencies.

3. **Have you seen or experienced any changes on livelihoods (environmental)of women since ecotourism in Bandipur started?**
   - In context of people from upper class, livelihoods have been drastically changed. Now they are able to give high quality education to their children. Some has sent their children to Kathmandu and abroad for higher education. Everyone has learnt something new skills by which they generated income. Before, women were supposed to stay home for household work and depend on husband's income. Now they are independent and earning by themselves.
   - And in our case, our lives have improved but not like others. Since we are dalit, there are still some so-called cultural values and restrictions for us such as we should not open restaurants as we are considered as untouchable, even though government has implemented rules, it is hard to change the social belief. So, we need to work either as a guide or a porter and also make handicrafts. These professions have less money than

other profession on tourism related companies. Women from our class are hardly earning 12000 NPR rupees in a month but for that they need to work for 3 types of crafts and other side jobs for their survival.

- But still, I am taking trainings and classes offered by local authorities. Right now, I am taking classes of how to make compost fertilizer from our waste food.

4. What kind of benefits are this communities receiving due to tourism in general?

- I would say, women empowerment is the major benefits that communities of Bandipur received by tourism.
- Now, women started to make local incense sticks, paper bags made by Nepali paper, candle, key rings and so on. All these products will be supplied to local vendors and also someone uses these on his/her own shop. And good thing is that, we do not need to go far away to buy raw materials for these products, these products are made by local products.
- The children and youth from lower class also getting the same and equal opportunities for education, health and water supply. Ramesh Vishwakarma, my nephew has got higher education and became doctor for eye. He is working on Bandipur Hospital. All these happens because of tourism, many educational institutions were established by government after development of tourism in Bandipur.

5. Is there any awareness classes or campaigns for locals' women by local authorities regarding tourism? (explain).

- There is a project, I forgot the name, it is like Bandipur tourism Project has launched many programs. We learned to make incense sticks, and handicrafts through the campaigns named 'employment for all' launched by that project.
- Similarly, environmentally friendly campaigns are still going on I guess, it was started from last month, where both men and women are taking participation on this and learning to make our own fertilizer.
- Campaigns like 'Hariyo ban Nepal ko Dhan' was launched for everyone to raise awareness and discourages us to cut trees and encourage for plantation instead. Our group of 20 women went to plant trees and plants in nearby forest.
- There are many women who does not know how to read and write, so 'Praudh Shiksya' (Education for elderly people).

6. Are all the women of your village involved in those campaigns?

- As Local mothers' group brought these campaigns and classes in coordinated with local authorities and other NGOs, all mothers get informed through the meetings which is held every Saturday. All women must attend the awareness programs, if someone could not attend the programs, then there should be one family members on her behalf otherwise she will be fined by 300 NPR. But in case of trainings and programs, the interested women or her family members can take part on it.

7. Have you seen or experienced positive socio-cultural impacts because of tourism? explain.

- Conservation of Cultural heritages and tradition are done.
- Same level of opportunities for us as well. However, there are still a lot to change but in comparisons to our past lives it is far better.
- Because of tourism, no one needs to sacrifice their meal for their children. Bandipurians has Better quality of life now.

8. **Can you please explain the negative socio-cultural impacts of tourism? (If any)**
- The new generation and youths are getting influenced by western culture, dress. Some new generation does not know how to eat by using hands. In my viewpoint, the youth feels more fashionable when they wear dress like foreigners. They prefer to wear more western dresses such as miniskirts, jeans, shorts and so on and only wear traditional dress when he/she are on cultural events and to attract foreigners. Thus, I feel, culture and traditional dress are only to generate income sources for youths rather to preserve by their inner core of heart.

  there should be equality for everyone, like everyone also for Dalits.
- **So, do you want to say there is inequality in Bandipur among Lower and upper class?**

  Yes, there is inequality, you will not find hotels, homestays, and restaurants owned by Dalits. Only upper-class people involved in such high-class work, we work like porter, guide or like as craftsmen. We can count in finger Dalits who has been involving in such high-class work. There is some level of changes in this case but still we are afraid of opening hotels and restaurants with the fear of only few people will show up in our business. We (people of Dalit communities) have low confident level in ourselves to do that.
- **Do you see the Bandipur is developing?**

  In context of infrastructural, yes, it is developing, now it has health sectors, educational and connection road network. everyone has knowledge, there should be equality, no discrimination, it is gradually changing.

10. **Do you have any recommendation on tourism for betterment of communities?**
    - In Bandipur, we should have recreational activities as well such as water parks, amusement park and so on.

Appendix V
E. **Interview with Tour Guide**

Name: Nikesh Vishwakarma
Age: 35
Gender: Male
Profession: Tour Guide/ Part time employee of Bandipur Hotel

1. What do you think about tourism in Bandipur?

As Bandipur is one of the best tourist destinations in Nepal that is situated near the mountains and has different natural sceneries, such as, dense forests, hills as well as diverse species of flora & fauna along with the richness of ancient cultures and tradition, I believe tourism in Bandipur excites both national and international. In fact, this place can be the dream place for tourists to dab up to do the adventurous activities as well. Thus, if this place gets the desired highlights then the opportunities for local people being self-employed is possible. Plus, this can also country in boosting up the economy of the country.

2. Do you know about eco-tourism in Bandipur?

Since the government has planning to establish national park under the name of this place (i.e. Bandipur National Park) with the intention of conserving the wildlife and maintaining the environment sustainability, I certainly would say that I know about the eco-tourism that happens in Bandipur.

3. What are the main tourist activities in Bandipur?

There are many tourist activities that foreigners can enjoy in this place. From enjoying the view of summit of the Himalayan or Ganesh mountain to exalting the sunrises and sunsets, from trekking to exploring the sacred and divine caves & temples designed in 18th century, from rafting or paragliding to experiencing Nepalese ancient rural life & trying the exotic luscious meals at the same time. Apart from this, in few years, tourists might get attracted even more to witness the wildlife in Bandipur National Park by riding an elephant or jungle safari.

4. How do you feel to see tourists coming to Bandipur?

Certainly, feels good to see travelers coming to our hometown. In fact, I feel proud and fortunate to get born in such country like Nepal, which not only is rich in natural resources but also has residents that are rich in pure heart. Therefore, people not only of this place but from the entire places of this nation always get ready to welcome new tourists with open arms as well as to meet & greet.

5. Are you involved in any tourism? if yes how are you involved?

Of course! I am a tour and travel guide and part timer dishwasher in Bandipur hotel. Mostly people from my community (Dalit) are guides or porters or dishwashers

6. What kind of benefits are you receiving due to tourism?

For me, the first benefit I would say that I earn as much as amount compared to 20000 NPR ($ 165) per month, obviously I need to work very hard and have two jobs. In fact, sometimes more than that. Another advantage would be self-employment.

7. How much were/are you dependable on environment for your livelihoods? (such as for firewood)

To be fact, we try to use the woods that are fallen on the ground to decline the deforestation of forests and minimal use of natural resources.

8. Have you seen or experienced any changes on your livelihoods since ecotourism in Bandipur started? Explain.

Without the doubt, I would say yes! There are many changes in this place. The concept of reconstructing the divine places, prioritizing the traditions, rituals, language, securing and

conserving the wild animals & interaction with these species and forests has been in the top of the list.

9. Have you seen or experienced any environmental changes after tourism started in Bandipur? Can you explain (positive or negative)
positive
Like I have been mentioning that after tourism the growing concern towards environment conservation and environment sustainability has been enhancing gradually. This practice is done through managing the waste, garbage and congestion control as well.
Interested Locals are now getting training for Wildlife conservation from government so that locals can work as a forest guard.
Negative:
In other hand, overuses of water and resources at hotels, resorts or in swimming pools, pollution can occur through the emissions of carbon-dioxide and sewage pollution through building more hotels or resorts.
sometimes, I attend some tourists who wants to go for hunting, I usually inform them, that we are not allowed to do hunting here in Bandipur. But still, there are some peoples and local authorities works by taking money under table, so illegal hunting and deforestation is still going on in some hotels and r. We could not do anything because of corrupted government officers.
To be honest, people are aware of preserving surroundings and natural resources through the campaigns and seminars. In contrast, as government tries to develop the different facilities to lure the tourists, the misuse of natural resources is certain.

10. Have you experienced positive socio-cultural impacts because of tourism? explain
Obviously, the positive socio-cultural impact would be acceleration in the revenue of local residents, improvement in high-technology, quality of life, quality of education, facilitates in communication, multimedia as well, which enforce government and residents to invest in preserving nature, living organisms, heritages, languages, rituals, ethnicity.

11. Can you please explain the negative socio-cultural impacts of tourism?
As most of the tourist areas are busy and rush, it turns out to be difficult to maintain the area clean and tidy. locals may influence by western culture.
I feel like, there is bias among cultures, the majority of homestays and hotels are owned by upper class people, they are introducing their culture which is very good thing but how about our culture! They have got many platforms and ways to preserve their culture, but nobody is thinking about Dalit's culture and tradition. It might be because of we belong to minorities.

- One of my friends whose name is Suresh Pariyar, he was shoemaker and used to have his own shop by taking rent that place. But later he needed to leave that place because the owner of land constructed hotel to target tourists. He could not get bigger space as he had so now, he is making shoes in his own home and as a side job he is working as a porter.

12. Is there any awareness classes or campaigns for locals by local authorities regarding tourism? (explain)

As this is the digital world, people are also becoming active in this digital world. They are becoming smart as their smart phones through the interaction with different international people of different nationalities, which results to becoming knowledgeable about nook and corner of the world.

- How about any awareness programs launched by local authorities?

There was some, most of the awareness programs are launched by NGOs, and some social organization. And also, we have youth committee and committees they are organizing awareness programs about environment, tourism, and our local culture and traditions.

13. Are there any outsiders working in tourism related activities?

I have seen many outsiders working here. certainly, there are some people who are fascinated with the beauty of physical features of Nepal and have wonder to work related with tourism industry. So there are many tourism businesses conducted by outsiders.

14. How do you think about that? Is it good or bad?

Actually, it's mixed of both! It is because working with outsiders means getting an opportunity to learn extra and new skills or ideas, methods, strategies, planning etc. Nevertheless, working with them refers to conflicts in the clash of cultures, creation of misunderstanding. Besides that, tough and unhealthy competition within the society.

How do you think about development of community?
- Infrastructural development such as construction of Hospitals, educational institutions.
- Employment opportunities for everyone.
- Equality and no poverty
- And Bandipur is slowly developing.

15. Do you have any recommendation on tourism for betterment of communities?

- Involvement of Dalits as well. Museums to preserve Dalits' musical instruments should open here. Same level of wages should be provided for all. Even though, I am earning pretty much like other people, there are other people who have not got such opportunities.

Appendix VI

F. **Interview with Homestay owner**

Name: Maya Sharma
Age: 28 years
Gender: Female
Profession: Homestay owner

1. What do you think about tourism in Bandipur?

The tourism of Bandipur is getting better in recent years as we can see lots of tourist travelling the place.

2. Do you know about eco-tourism in Bandipur?

- I came to know after I started training for homestay. Otherwise I did not know.

3. What are the main tourist activities in Bandipur?
The unique view of Himalayan range above 8000m and valley below 3000m range at same frame, enjoy unique architectures, diverse culture and relax in natural environment.

4. How do you feel to see tourists coming to Bandipur?
The village is earning lot of income, so we feel good seeing tourist coming in this area.

5. Are you involved in any tourism? if yes how are you involved?
I was working as guide being associated with travel agency in Pokhara area which is near to Bandipur. Now I have opened 3 homestays in three villages of Bandipur by which I tries to introduce our culture to international tourists.

6. What kind of benefits are you receiving due to tourism?
The local are getting employment. If we take a look on my case, I was just a guide and one day, there was an announcement of training for home stay launched by municipality, then now here I am owner of my own homestay. There are so many local peoples who has started their own enterprises and creating lots of employment opportunities. But there are still lots of enterprises and businesses prefer to hire from others since locals does not have sufficient knowledge and experience.

7. How much were/are you dependable on environment for your livelihoods? (such as for firewood)
Since I was born in another village of Bandipur and got married here so I spent my life here for 28 years now. I grew up by seeing my mother uses firewood for the cooking and we used to go forest to cut trees, since I was child, I did not know about its impact. Besides that, on those days, we were encouraged by our parents to cut trees to sell firewood as well in our leisure time. These activities led deforestation. But in comparison from past lives and present times, in my home and my mother's home as well, they are using biogas made by cow dung and human waste. Of course, we are dependent on environment for air, water, and natural resources, but our dependency on environment specially for firewood is decreasing.

8. Have you seen or experienced any changes on your livelihoods since ecotourism in Bandipur started? Explain.
As I said earlier, people now are using solar power, biogas made from cow dung and other animals' manure as an alternative of firewood. And also, nowadays, no one needs to sell firewood for their survival now. In Bandipur we have more and better opportunities like job, for education and so on. I am providing job for more than 20 local people. Since my homestays are based on ecotourism, I am using local and organic food and meat products in homestays. All these products supplied from local farmers, similarly, I have bought crafts from local craftsmen to decorate each and every room for my 3 homestays. I can say that, I am helping locals to change their livelihoods in directly as well as indirectly.

9. Have you seen or experienced any environmental changes after tourism started in Bandipur? Can you explain (positive or negative)

people are focusing on making village green by plantation. People are using biogas instead of using firewood by which deforestation has been controlled now.

Pollutions overcrowd and modernization are some of the negative factors of tourism here in Bandipur. I think over development is going on here. Recently, more hotels, and restaurants are established. In my opinion, there should be control on new hotels and restaurants otherwise, it may create pollutions, excessive usage of resources. Because of good potentialities of tourism in Bandipur, peoples from nearby cities are migrating here to start their tourism related business that causes overcrowding.

10. Have you experienced positive socio-cultural impacts because of tourism? explain

Because of tourism, youth are learning English language which helps them to grab good job opportunity as matter of fact there is good scope in tourism sector.

11. Can you please explain the negative socio-cultural impacts of tourism?

People specially are forgetting their culture and adopting the western culture. Youths and some people are following and taking their own culture as a means of their source of income. But still preservation of culture and traditions are going on.

12. Is there any awareness classes or campaigns for locals by local authorities regarding tourism? (explain)

As far I know there are various programs like training on various fields held by the women's groups and there are lions' clubs which is working on cleaning task for making village pollution free. There are also many skills development programs for locals so that we all get skills and capacity to I also got trainings for homestays, hospitality and also learned English language to communicate.

13. Are there any outsiders working in tourism related activities?

There are various INGOS AND NGOs working on tourism activities. Apart from NGOs and INGOs, there are many people from outside Bandipur, who has their homestay, souvenir shop, hotels and restaurants.

14. How do you think about that? Is it good or bad?

I think it has both good and bad impacts on societies. Different kind of trainings, campaigns are going on with the help of outsiders as well.

15. Do you have any recommendation on tourism for betterment of communities?
- Courses related with cultural, tourism and environment should be made mandatory in each and every schools from primary levels.

Appendix VII
G. Interview with Bandipur Eco- Cultural tourism Project

Name: Mr. Amber Pun Magar

Profession: Relation Officer of Bandipur Eco- Cultural tourism Project

1. **How long have you been working on this project?**
   - It will be 5 years now.

2. **How did Bandipur eco-cultural tourism project and why?**
   - This project was formed in motive to preserve authentic culture and conservation of environment and its flora and fauna. It is also emphasizing on local enterprises to revive the economical condition. Once, it was popular as a trade route and so many people from outsiders such as china and India as well came here, they used to stay here, do business, use our resources for their business and returned their hometown without giving anything to Bandipur. Again, after few years, the route from Kathmandu to Pokhara was started, then lots of local people migrated from here to do business to other cities. When we started this project, there were only few local enterprises.

3. **What are the main principles of ecotourism followed in Bandipur and why?**
   - We had focused on economic on our initial stage with the aim for employment for all and to enhance local products and local market. presently, we are focusing on more environmental and cultural aspects.

4. **What do you think about sustainable development of local community in context of Bandipur?**
   - Actually, we are working on it. Bandipur is on the way to maintain sustainable by sustaining local market, government has plan to eliminate poverty by providing employment opportunities. In order to provide good health and well -being for all, hospitals and health care has established, educational institutional with advance technology has established. Apart from it, we have been working to protect the other lives on land.
   - We are conducting to raise knowledges about responsible consumption of resources and production.
   - Solar power has been distributed on reliable price and trainings for biogas has been provided and also, we also offered some help on construction of gover gas: biogas from cow dung to the people.

5. **What environmental changes good or bad, have you seen from ecotourism since you started working here?**
   - There are more positive sides than negative after ecotourism started since, I started working here. Environment is clean now in comparison to past days. Before, people used to throw their garbage in nearby river and in one corner of road, after we started campaigns of clean city and we set up 3 garbage bins in every 100 meters, we ordered more than 1000 dokos (wooden basket made by bamboo usually used to carry heavy things) from locals and launched awareness program to separate food products, metals and glass. Additionally, locals now aware to make fertilizers from waste foods in their home by which waste management is going on here.

- Due to clean city campaign, we get success to maintain rivers as well as other watershed areas clean. With the help of Gover gas: the biogas to cook food, deforestation has been reduced by 80% now.
- Bird watching and jungle safari are drawing attractions here in Bandipur by which we are bit worried, if the number of tourists for bird watching and jungle safaris keep increasing, it might cause bad impacts on flora and faunas. Thus, we are still doing research on it to overcome from possible problems.

6. **Have you seen economic changes here after ecotourism started?**
   - Obviously, it has created lots of job opportunities to locals, they are able to empower themselves because of tourism. There is economic growth in Bandipur due to the development of tourism.

7. **What are socio-cultural aspects that are affected (positive and negative) by ecotourism?**
   - With the help of trainings that we provided, there are many homestays and ecolodges in Bandipur. We are inspecting all homestays of Bandipur in every year to check whether they are maintaining authenticity or not. For that we have hired elder people around age of 50 and 60, among them we have expert on culture. There are grading system and reward system for homestays and ecolodges, Green color of Batches will be given to those homestays and ecolodges which has authenticity and Red and yellow batches will be given to those who needs to improve their services. We have followed this to encourage all owner to maintain local taste, culture and tradition.
   - As a consequences of tourism development here, infrastructural development like road network, construction of bridges, new buildings for hospitals, schools, colleges and communication development are going on. Due to which, there are easy access from one village to another, youths and kids are learning new and advanced things with the help of new improved communication.
   - I have not seen any negative impacts yet.

8. **Do you think ecotourism helps on empowering locals of Bandipur? Explain**
   - Definitely yes, through ecotourism, lots of women who used to stay home and managed household purposes, they are learning how to crafts handicrafts, they can earn by crafting while they are in home. Similarly, lots of trainings have launched such as hotel management trainings for youths who are interested to be a waiter, housekeeper, and cook so that they can get better job in their future. Not only that, local doko maker are also earning alots through the high demand of doko by municipalities to use as environment friendly garbage bins. Farmers are getting advanced machineries for their farm. Trainings for Hatcheries, Poultry farm and Hiving are going on. Recently, silk farming has been established by many locals, these farms are drawing tourists' attractions as well.
   - I already mentioned about homestays and ecolodges. Now locals have their own ecolodges, homestays, teashops, souvenir shops and cafes and restaurants.

- Similarly, to enhance their skills and build up confident levels, different classes are going on.

9. **Are all locals benefitted from ecotourism?**
   - I will say yes. There are still some lower classes people. I don't want to call them as a lower-class people, but they consider themselves as a Lower class. I saw, they still lack confidence, they don't want to open homestays and lodges. We are still working on it to involve everyone from communities to get benefit from ecotourism.
   - In our next plan which will be starting right after releasing from lock down, the Dalit communities will be focused to develop their confident level and enhance their skills.
   - Even though societies do not look Dalits in same way as in past but still we are raising awareness to bring equalities.
   - From 2 years we have started to contact different committees like mother's group, Gurung Samaj, Newa samaj to conduct trainings and campaigns and involve everyone.

10. **What are the potential opportunities of ecotourism in Bandipur? Are there any steps taken to promote ecotourism in Bandipur? Explain**
    - In coming years, Bandipur will be recognized as the green or eco city. We are organizing cultural programs and streets festivals where tourists can enjoy local foods, drinks, tourists can get 50% discounts on that day in all museums and attractions of Bandipur. We have a plan to bring ziplining, bunjee jumping here by coordinating with Bandipur Municipality. Similarly, Walkathon has been done in the starting of 2020 to promote ecotourism and visit Nepal year 2020. However, visit Nepal year has been cancelled because of corona virus outbreak.

11. **What are the challenges of ecotourism in Bandipur in general?**
    - Political issues are the most challenges for ecotourism in Bandipur. We need to go through long process and procedures to get approval to conduct any trainings, campaigns and awareness programs.

12. **Have you experienced negative impacts of ecotourism in Bandipur?**
    - Not yet.