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What are the perspectives of local stakeholders towards community based tourism and how has Community Based Tourism impacted the community of Ghandruk in the social and economic aspects?

Thesis Project Written By

Saroj Basnet

(Student No. 20180981)

&

Bigesh Tamang

Student No. 20181247

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Supervisor: Carina Ren

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Bigesh Tamang

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ABSTRACT

Tourism industry is one of the most profitable and favorable economic businesses in the world. The western countries especially the countries in Europe have benefited a lot while organizing their tourism industries in a manner which not only attracted the tourists from all around the world but also helped the countries economically. Tourism related businesses help in gaining more profits by the local tourists and also by the foreign tourists. In Nepal one of the most common methods of tourism is the Community based tourism method and one of the primary sources of income of its people. The region of Ghandruk is one of those areas whose economy relies heavily on the tourism business through the community based tourism method. This research paper will try to look into the stakeholders of Ghandruk region who are directly or indirectly connected with the tourism industry of Ghandruk through the method of Community based tourism. The perspective and ideology of various stakeholders will be explained through qualitative research methods and will determine how much the community based tourism has helped the area of Ghandruk economically and socially.

CHAPTER 1

1. Introduction

The concept of Community based tourism gained more attraction and interest in Nepal in the last 30 years when the communities of the Southern Annapurna region realized the importance of tourism as a major source of income and development in the region.¹

The main aim of this research is to examine the impact of community based tourism on the local community and stakeholders of Ghandruk. The region of Ghandruk is considered to be one of the top tourist attractions in Nepal for the mountain climbers and trekkers. The locals initiated various tourism businesses in Ghandruk in the 1980s and then the Government of Nepal took over the Annapurna Region and developed the Annapurna Conservation Area Project to further strengthen the tourism industry in that region.² The Government of Nepal started giving more attention to the Ghandruk region when the locals began to get more involved in the tourism business.

The official website of the Annapurna Conservation Area shows that the Community Based Tourism method has helped in the economic development of the region and has reduced poverty as well as the region developed in the social aspects too³. This research will try to focus on the development of the Ghandruk region in which Community based tourism has a pivotal role. We would be taking Ghandruk as the case study for our thesis project and will try to have an in-depth knowledge of the region both economically and socially while observing the presence of community based tourism.

Annapurna Conservation Area Project claims that it started the community based tourism in Ghandruk and it is the first project in whole Nepal in the context of Community based tourism⁴. This claim and the development claim of Ghandruk both socially and economically needs to be researched while asking directly the questions with the locals of Ghandruk. The questions related to the community based tourism and its impacts both socially and economically could be best answered by the local community rather than other sources.

¹ Annapurna Conservation Area (ACAP), *National Trust for Nature Conservation*, <<https://ntnc.org.np/project/annapurna-conservation-area-project-acap>> Accessed on July 20, 2020.

² Gopal Gurung, "Geography", *Welcome to Ghandruke.com*, n.d. <http://ghandruke.com/wordpress/?page_id=55> Accessed on May 11, 2020

³ Annapurna Conservation Area (ACAP), *National Trust for Nature Conservation*, <<https://ntnc.org.np/project/annapurna-conservation-area-project-acap>> Accessed on July 20, 2020.

⁴ Annapurna Conservation Area (ACAP), *National Trust for Nature Conservation*, <<https://ntnc.org.np/project/annapurna-conservation-area-project-acap>> Accessed on July 20, 2020.

In order to find all the answers of our questions related to the community building and tourism development in the region of Ghandruk we chose the method of qualitative research approach and to interview the local stakeholders and other locals of Ghandruk from all walks of life. The interviews will help us not only in gaining the primary sources but to have a clear understanding of community based tourism and its direct impacts on the people/stakeholders of Ghandruk socially and economically.

The stakeholders' perspectives are most important as they are directly responsible not only in the growth and development of the tourism industry of Ghandruk but will also explain to us their own approach of community based tourism and its impacts on them. The interviews with the locals who are not directly related to the tourism business will give us a neutral insight on the progress of the region both socially and economically, as they will give us the real info on poverty reduction and caste discrimination issues.

While aiming to find the answers on the growth and development in Ghandruk region, our research question is stated as follows:

What are the perspectives of local stakeholders towards community based tourism and how has Community Based Tourism impacted the community of Ghandruk in the social and economic aspects?

CHAPTER 2

2. Structure of Thesis:

The main aim of this research is to understand the concept of community based tourism along with its social and economic impacts on the Ghandruk community. It will also highlight the perception of the local stakeholders and the local population towards the community based tourism. The thesis will follow a set pattern from the start to the end and will thoroughly explain all the important aspects of community based tourism and its impacts on the region of Ghandruk. The structure of our thesis is explained below:

Chapter one will present the introduction of the thesis while highlighting the emergence of community based tourism in the region of Ghandruk, Nepal.

Chapter two will give us the insight of the thesis while providing us with the necessary intro of all the chapters.

Chapter three will give us a complete knowledge of Ghandruk village while explaining all the relevant details like its geographical setting, population, education and occupation etc.

Chapter four will briefly explain all the relevant literature of the thesis, it will give a brief explanation of the concept of community based tourism, the tourism in Nepal and social and economic impacts of community based tourism in the region of Ghandruk. This chapter will also present the collaboration theory which is highly relevant for our thesis project.

Chapter five will explain the research methodology of the thesis. As we would be applying qualitative research methods in order to seek primary sources. Various tools of analytical research like focusing on a case study and further explaining the different techniques of data collection.

Chapter six will elaborate the primary findings collected through the interviews of the local stakeholders of Ghandruk and other concerned residents. A brief analysis will be provided of all the interviews which will give us a clear understanding of the perception of all the stakeholders and the locals along with the understanding of the impacts of community based tourism on Ghandruk.

Chapter seven will further discuss the findings and will explain the relationship of community based tourism with the local stakeholders and will further discuss the impacts of community based tourism's impacts socially and economically. It will try to answer the research question and will explain that has the community based tourism been successful in poverty reduction in Ghandruk and will also discuss if it has helped socially while eradicating the caste system or discrimination in Ghandruk.

Chapter eight will wrap up the thesis while giving a brief conclusion and will suggest recommendations in the regard of development and growth through community based tourism in the region of Ghandruk.

CHAPTER 3

3. Ghandruk Village: Introduction

Ghandruk is one of the most beautiful villages in Nepal, famous for the short trekking in Annapurna region. It is located in the southern part of Annapurna conservation area. The distance between Ghandruk and Pokhara (the second biggest city of Nepal) is around 55km. The village is famous for its typical rural lifestyle which also includes the culture and tradition of Gurung community, breathtaking views of mountains like Annapurna, Hiuchuli, Machhapuchhre along with the hills full of rhododendrons (national flower of Nepal) which capture every visitor's attention. Around 30000 tourists annually visit this village in order to explore the beauty and diversity of the land and culture⁵. The village of Ghandruk is named as “Switzerland of Nepal” as its exotic scenes are very much alike the scenes of Switzerland



Figure 1: Ghandruk Village with beautiful hills and mountains.

Source: Google

⁵ Yagya Prasad Adhikari and A. Fischer, "Trend analysis and purpose of use of some important plant and animal species of Ghandruk VDC, Nepal." *Our Nature* 8, no. 1 (2010): 122-130 (123).

3.1 Topography:

The location of Ghandruk village is 2010 meter above the sea level. The Biodiversity Conservation Data Project (BCDP)⁶ (1994) also stated that the location of the Ghandruk is between 28.49°N- 83.84°E geographically. The village lies in Kaski district on southern part of Annapurna region and covers an area of 281.1-kilometer square. The village is situated in the route of Annapurna Base Camp at an altitude of 1975 (meter above sea level) on the west slopes of the Modi watershed, its topography is moderately steep while its geography is mainly facing towards the south⁷.

The village has a variety of land features like high hills, cliffs, various mountains above 5000 meters, dense forests including lowland river valleys and farmland terraces. The landscape of Ghandruk is categorized into three parts based on temperature and altitude.

High alpine Zone: This area is a treeless area of Annapurna Region as the land is full of grass and alpine bushes. The area is covered with snow for six months and the temperature of this area is extremely cold all the year round.⁸

Mild temperature Zone: This area is one of the beautiful parts of Ghandruk as it covers various forests full of rhododendron. Various trees like paiyu, utis, chutro, dhupi etc. are found in this region along with the various species of animals which are found in its forest like deer, ghoral, black bear and leopard etc. There is heavy rainfall in the monsoon and few snowfalls in the winter region.⁹

Temperate Zone: This part of land¹⁰ does not have that much forest as most of this area is used for farming. There are some forests but still it is located on the bank of Modi rivers. The temperature of this area is normally 25 degrees Centigrade over the year.

⁶ Smriti Dahal, Sanjay K. Nepal, and Michael A. Schuett, "Examining marginalized communities and local conservation institutions: the case of Nepal's Annapurna Conservation Area," *Environmental management* 53, no. 1 (2014): 219-230 (222)

⁷ Yagya Prasad Adhikari and A. Fischer, "Trend analysis and purpose of use of some important plant and animal species of Ghandruk VDC, Nepal," *Our Nature* 8, no. 1 (2010): 122-130 (123).

⁸ Gopal Gurung, "Geography", *Welcome to Ghandruke.com*, n.d. <http://ghandruke.com/wordpress/?page_id=55> Accessed on May 11, 2020.

⁹ Gopal Gurung, "Geography", *Welcome to Ghandruke.com*, n.d. <http://ghandruke.com/wordpress/?page_id=55> Accessed on May 11, 2020.

¹⁰ Gopal Gurung, "Geography", *Welcome to Ghandruke.com*, n.d. <http://ghandruke.com/wordpress/?page_id=55> Accessed on May 11, 2020.

3.2 Education status:

As far as the education status of the Ghandruk village is concerned, ten years ago most of the villagers were illiterate because they were not giving priority to education. There were very few schools established in that time period, as the location of the schools in the village was not accessible for the local population and it lacked paved roads and transportation. According to an article¹¹ explaining the education situation of the Ghandruk area the school in upper Ghandruk could not function due to shortage of teachers, though the Government built some schools but the lack of teachers could not make the schools operational. According to the 2011 census¹² by CBS (Central Bureau of Statistics), it was reported that 35 number of people of the total population graduated.

In recent times, there are some schools in Ghandruk which are trying to change their status as a primary school to lower secondary and secondary school. For instance, Fumrokha Baraha Secondary School is the first school established as primary school level and is now upgraded to secondary school. Recently, the school has more than 250 students and 13 teachers and the building of the schools is under construction with the support of the education office and foreign donors.¹³

3.3 Population:

According to the official report by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) based on national population census 2011 of the Kaski district, it was reported that Ghandruk village had a population of 4265 which includes 2054 males and 2211 females in whole 9 wards of the village¹⁴. The average household size of Ghandruk village was 3.87 according to the population census of 2011 The Ghandruk village consists of 1102 total houses in which 959 houses were mud bonded while 74 are cement bonded while 36 houses are made of wood¹⁵. According to the CBS report, 1322 people are listed in the Dalits group (Kami, Damai and Sarki) which contains 30% of the total population. The Gurung community had the highest number with 1825 people of total population. Besides Gurungs, there was influence of other castes such as Chettri, Brahmin, Magar, Tamang, Rai and others.¹⁶

¹¹ Rishi Ram Baral, "First school in Ghandruk celebrates 56 years of establishment," The Himalayan Times, published on 2018. < <https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/first-school-in-ghandruk-celebrates-56-years-of-establishment/?fbclid=IwAR1L3IxxFXh1E-dLYZJPw4e1UqqWvx4GIuhEtJ3doKlxIj-8Y0uoKm8VH9k>> Accessed on 20 July, 2020.

¹² National Population and Housing Census 2011, "Village Development Committee/Municipality," *Central Bureau of Statistics* 06, NPHC2011 (2014): 1-60 (54)

¹³ Rishi Ram Baral. Ibid

¹⁴ National Population and Housing Census 2011, "Household and Population by Sex Ward Level, Kaski," *Central Bureau of Statistics* (2012): 1-25 (13)

¹⁵ National Population and Housing Census 2011. Ibid. 3

¹⁶ National Population and Housing Census 2011. Ibid. 24

3.4 Culture and tradition:

Ghandruk is famous for its unique identity as the culture of the village is native and pure and recognized all over the country. The village recognized as Gurung village has its own language which is not similar to Nepalese and the dialects used by the people are not used in other parts of Nepal which results in the culture and identity of Ghandruk to be unique¹⁷. The culture of Ghandruk includes various forms of songs and dances including various traditional clothes, various rituals for birth, marriage and death. However, with modernization the way of living of the people is changing which may result in ignoring and forgetting their own identity and culture. Majority of people of Ghandruk village follow Hinduism while few people follow Buddhism.

3.5 Ethnic Groups:

In context to Hindu religion there has been division of people based on the caste. The castes are termed as Brahmin, Chettri, Vaishya and Sudhra. The castes that are categorized on the lower ranking are known to be Dalits. According to Bidya Nath Koirala, Dalits are considered as “group of people who are religiously, culturally, socially and economically oppressed, who could belong to different language and ethnic groups”¹⁸. Dalits are considered as ‘untouchable’ castes and it has been identified as a vulnerable and poor group of people who are always discriminated against based on their caste by other castes of people. The government of Nepal on 19 March 2002 listed 28 groups in Dalit’s category (such as Kami, Damai, Sarki, Sunar, Pote etc.).¹⁹

In the context of Ghandruk, there are various castes including high caste people and Dalits of people residing in the village. According to population census 2011 Dalits including Kami, Damai and Sarki caste of people occupy 30 percent of total population and the majority of total population includes Gurung with 42.79 percent of total population. The other caste includes Chettri, Brahmin, Thakuri, Bhujel while there are some other ethnic groups residing in the village like Rai, Tamang and Magar respectively.²⁰

¹⁷ Gopal Gurung “Geography”, *Welcome to Ghandruke.com*, n.d. <http://ghandruke.com/wordpress/?page_id=55> Accessed on May 11, 2020.

¹⁸ Harka Gurung, "The Dalit Context," (2005): 1-21(7)

¹⁹ Harka Gurung. *Ibid.* 6

²⁰ National Population and Housing Census 2011, “Village Development Committee/Municipality,” *Central Bureau of Statistics* 06, NPHC2011 (2014): 1-60 (24)

3.6 Occupations:

The 4 percent of total land in Ghandruk is suitable for agriculture and still the main occupation of Ghandruk is agriculture and animal husbandry²¹. Besides, most of the families are dependent on tourism business which is related to service and hospitality sectors providing various services such as accommodation, food, guidance for tourists in order to earn their livings. Apart from that, the young people especially from Gurung community join Indian and British army because they are known as Gurkhas as they made history of bravery during the Second World War. Hence, they were labelled as brave soldiers by the British Empire which further started recruiting the Gurung in its army (Shrestha, 2014).²² Therefore, Gurkhas have created a belief in Ghandruk that joining the army in Indian or British regime is better than anything else to generate income as well as status.

²¹ Smriti Dahal, Sanjay K. Nepal, and Michael A. Schuett, "Examining marginalized communities and local conservation institutions: the case of Nepal's Annapurna Conservation Area," *Environmental management* 53, no. 1 (2014): 219-230 (222)

²² Pramod Shrestha, "Visitor experiences in Ghandruk village, Nepal," (2014) (13).

CHAPTER 4

4. Literature Review:

This chapter will emphasize in gathering all the important literature regarding the tourism industry and how it has helped in the growth of the world's economy. The impacts of tourism socially and economically will be analyzed through the data in hand. Afterwards, the development through tourism in Nepal in general and Ghandruk in particular will be explained while throwing light on the social problems like discrimination through caste system and gender inequality will be touched in the community of Ghandruk. Further we would be analyzing more data on the community based tourism, its background and how it could be explained through the case of Ghandruk. Lastly, we would be linking the community based tourism of Ghandruk while understanding the perspectives of all the stakeholders involved.

4.1 Tourism and Its Development Globally:

Before we start to explain the importance of Tourism in the development sector of all the developed and developing countries we must understand what Development itself is or about or in simple words what does it mean. The notion which came into existence in the midst of the industrial revolution whose aim was to bring betterment for the modern society, that notion could be referred to Development²³. It could also be explained that when a community or a society tries hard and goes through a process of reforms and restructuring while aiming to achieve its desired goals, the gradual change in its planning and strategy towards becoming a prosperous and progressive society or community.²⁴

In the study of tourism and development²⁵ it could be considered as a tool which helps in evaluating the progress of the society or community, it also includes its progress in its cultural, economical or traditional values. It became more important and gained more relevance for the western countries after the Second World War who used development as a weapon for further colonizing and dominating the world which they cannot dominate by force thus it also helped them in introducing capitalism and countering communism in the remaining part of the world, this term development was introduced, thus the idea behind it was to spread capitalism in the third world countries as well.²⁶

²³ Jane L. Parpart and Henry Veltmeyer, "The Development Project in Theory and Practice: A Review of its Shifting Dynamics", *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 25:1 (2011): 39-59 (40).

²⁴ Richard Sharpley and David J. Telfer, eds, "Tourism and development: concepts and issues", *Channel view publications* Vol. 63 (2015): 239-240.

²⁵ Richard Sharpley and David J. Telfer, eds. Ibid. 239-240

²⁶ Jane L. Parpart and Henry Veltmeyer. Ibid. 40

According to Veltmeyer²⁷, the so-called first world countries were in a strong position and were working to enhance their power and to create a foothold in the economies of the third world countries while helping them both financially and technically so that they are not under the influence of communism. However, the world became more modernized after 1980's and the struggle for development began from the very bottom. After 1990, the idea to raise their voice for development became more efficient and more visible, when we entered into the world of globalization and with the presence of internet everything became connected and development began to appear everywhere so these dynamic changes highlight that development can come in numerous ways²⁸ and not one, further this progress in development in the western world was majored in the form of GDP which is now considered as a measuring tool to know any country's development²⁹.

The phrase Development took a major revamping as it was later on structured into Sustainable Development which could also be considered as the idea of the western countries and was more favorable for the western countries interests in the roots of the third world countries economies. The third world countries mostly rely on taking measures in getting themselves out of poverty rather than learning the new ways of sustainable development themselves³⁰. The techniques of implementing their own ideas and launching local products i.e. when the economy grows from bottom to up while strengthening the local industry and grooming a favorable environment which grows the economy and reaches inside out rather than importing ideas from outside for the local industry. This not only fulfills the needs of the locals but also develops a society socially and culturally while providing the locals with ample opportunities thus finding new ways of development³¹.

²⁷ Jane L. Parpart and Henry Veltmeyer, "The Development Project in Theory and Practice: A Review of its Shifting Dynamics", *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 25:1 (2011): 39-59 (46).

²⁸ Jane L. Parpart and Henry Veltmeyer. Ibid. 47

²⁹ Richard Sharpley and David J. Telfer, eds, "Tourism and development: concepts and issues" *Channel view publications*, Vol. 63 (2015): 240.

³⁰ Jane L. Parpart and Henry Veltmeyer. Ibid. 47

³¹ Richard Sharpley and David J. Telfer, eds. Ibid. 240

4.2 Tourism and its Significant Role

In today's world, there is a plethora of literature related to the topics of tourism and its relation to poverty reduction is available not only on the internet but could be cited in different research work too. Mostly this topic has been researched through case studies or in the comparative studies to measure development through the scale of tourism growth. A lot of research has been done to understand the impact of tourism on the poverty reduction of a society and as a part of reforms in the social levels of a society.³²

Tourism is one of the largest sources of strengthening a country's economy and its foreign reserves, as it not only helps in enhancing the foreign exchange reserves which helps the developing countries in maintaining their trade surplus and also have a positive impact on the balance of payment³³. Further, the developing countries heavily rely on the tourism sector as their most profitable source of income. Tourism industry not only involves and favors the government but also includes the involvement of NGOs. Private sector and development agencies consider tourism as a primary factor in building a country's economy and in eradicating poverty³⁴. In under developed countries people travel from one place to another, mostly they travel to the regions which are underdeveloped and its population is impoverished.

They spend their money on their trips which include accommodation, transportation, different enjoyable activities and food etc. and with their spending the locals get the opportunity to earn more money as the locals provides the tourists with their proper services and fulfill the needs of the tourists which the tourists demand.³⁵

Mitchell & Ashley³⁶ are of the view that the presence of foreign tourists in the least developed countries are far better than the aid given by the international organizations to the poor countries, to further elaborate their point they give an example of the year 2007 in which the tourists spent US\$ 295 Billion in the developing countries which was three times more than the financial assistance provided to them by the international organizations.³⁶

³² David Harrison and Steven Schipani, "Lao Tourism and Poverty Alleviation: Community-Based Tourism and the Private Sector", *Current issues in Tourism*, 10:2-3 (2008): 194-230 (195).

³³ Anna Spenceley and Dorothea Meyer, "Tourism and poverty reduction: theory and practice in less economically developed countries", *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 20:3 (2012): 297-317 (299).

³⁴ Anna Spenceley and Dorothea Meyer. Ibid. 297

³⁵ Anna Spenceley and Dorothea Meyer. Ibid. 299

³⁶ Caroline Ashley and Jonathan Mitchell, "Tourism and poverty reduction: Pathways to prosperity", *Taylor & Francis*, (2009): p.1.

This shows that tourism could be considered as the largest voluntary transfer of wealth from rich to the poor people, the common thought behind it is that once a particular area or region starts to get financially strong and when its locals begins to be wealthier then the effect will come down to the poor which will make them wealthier too³⁷. It would be too difficult here to say without proof that how much the poor got benefited out of the tourism thus some doubts will still arise as to whether or not it actually had any impact.³⁸

The tourism industry has proved that it has the potential to overcome poverty with its positive response, but mostly in the tourism research this claim has been widely doubtful³⁹. Tourism has been a main focus of developing countries as they consider it a main tool for their economic growth and this has been in the tourism studies since the 1970s⁴⁰ mostly the researchers have focused on the case studies of the areas which have been actively working on tourism industry in order to reduce poverty⁴¹. This has been because of the diverse nature of poverty which includes (economic and social) referring to the low income and slow human development. It also includes lack of purchasing strength, representation and deprivation of certain societal morals. It is too difficult to cover and mention all the poverty related issues in this research.⁴²

4.3 How Tourism Contributes in Socio Economic and Poverty Reduction

In recent times, the tourism business has been considered as one of the major service industries which contribute in saving the foreign currency in large amounts, through which the developing countries are able to support their economy. As per Spenceley & Meyer⁴³, “tourism is the major service sector that contributes the largest source of foreign exchange revenue to maintain the balance of economy of developing countries”.

³⁷ Weibing Zhao and J. R. Brent Ritchie, “Tourism and Poverty Alleviation: An Integrative Research Framework”, *Current Issues in Tourism* 10:2-3 (2008): 119-143 (120)

³⁸ Anna Spenceley and Dorothea Meyer, “Tourism and poverty reduction: theory and practice in less economically developed countries”, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 20:3 (2012): 297-317 (298).

³⁹ Weibing Zhao and J. R. Brent Ritchie. Ibid. 120

⁴⁰ C. Michael Hall, "Rethinking collaboration and partnership: A public policy perspective", *Journal of sustainable tourism* 7, no. 3-4 (1999): 274-289 (2).

⁴¹ Weibing Zhao and J. R. Brent Ritchie. Ibid. 120

⁴² Weibing Zhao and J. R. Brent Ritchie. Ibid. 121

⁴³ Anna Spenceley and Dorothea Meyer. Ibid. 298

Furthermore, Governments, non-governmental organizations, development agencies and private sectors are not only considered as a tourism development but also it is considered as an initiative developmental vehicle that aims to maintain the socio-economic growth while improving of the livelihoods and income of the poor people, especially the people living in the remote areas or in the developing countries⁴⁴. As tourists travel to the poor regions of the world for different reasons and during their travel they spend their money on their expenses such as food, accommodation, and shopping. This helps the poor people in gaining employment and while providing services to the tourist's needs this not only helps the poor people but also is beneficial for the tourism industry of the country⁴⁵. Thus, tourism is known as the backbone of many developing countries to uplift the economy of the nation by providing various opportunities such as; job, employment etc. for young people and women.

The participation of most of the developing countries has increased in the global economy. According to Richardson⁴⁶, "tourism development is increasingly viewed as an important tool in promoting economic growth, alleviating poverty, and advancing food security"⁴⁷. Thus, the relationship between tourism and poverty reduction is measured to explore whether investment of tourism in any developing or least developing countries are contributing towards national development goals. As per the United Nation World Tourism Organization⁴⁸ "Numerous studies have demonstrated that tourism can play a significant role in balanced sustainable development and that it can be effectively harnessed to generate net benefits for the poor". For instance, tourism is the source of foreign exchange for 83 percent of developing countries, and it is the most significant source of foreign exchange after petroleum.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Anna Spenceley and Dorothea Meyer, "Tourism and poverty reduction: theory and practice in less economically developed countries", *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 20:3 (2012): 297-317 (297)

⁴⁵ Anna Spenceley and Dorothea Meyer. Ibid. 299

⁴⁶ Robert B. Richardson, "The contribution of tourism to economic growth and food security", No. 1093-2016-88021 (2010):1

⁴⁷ Robert B. Richardson. Ibid. p1

⁴⁸ Robert B. Richardson. Ibid. p1

⁴⁹ Robert B. Richardson. Ibid. p1

Since 1970, tourism studies have been the main tool to measure growth in developing countries, because it is very important for economic development⁵⁰, however the areas of socio-economic alleviation in tourism has been focused by only few researchers⁵¹. According to the World Bank (1990), *“Due to the complexity of multidimensional nature (economic, socio-political and culture) of poverty, few researchers have focused on socio-economic alleviation within tourism. Similarly, this could be because of inadequate income and human development, also lack of voice, power and representation, the range of issues of poverty has been a huge challenge to cover”*⁵²

4.4 Development Through Tourism in Nepal

In the context of Nepal, according to Agarwal & Upadhyay,⁵³ ‘General Plan for the Organization of Tourism in Nepal’ is the first tourism plan that has been prepared by George Lebrech, a French national with kind cooperation of French Government in 1959; later, that organization has become a leading travel agent. Development Research and Communication Group has done one of the studies named “Economics of Tourism in Nepal”. The study was about the importance of tourism in the Nepalese economy and it showed how tourism is affecting tourism development in Nepal. People visit in Nepal for different purposes/activities, it is measured that 80-87% of people were found to travel in Nepal for pleasure purposes such as, trekking and mountaineering, and most of them travelled by air⁵⁴. Hence, Nepal has become one of the best destinations to travel for adventure such as mountaineering, rafting, kayaking, bungee jumping, paragliding, trekking etc.

Tourism has played a significant role in Nepalese economy directly and indirectly. The tourism industry is the largest industry of Nepal and it has been considered as a source of foreign exchange and revenue for the country. Nepal is a popular destination for various adventures such as mountaineering, rock climbing, paragliding, rafting and trekking. Not only have that, the heritage of Hindus and Buddhists also attracted lots of pilgrims in the country.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ C. Michael Hall, "Rethinking collaboration and partnership: A public policy perspective", *Journal of sustainable tourism* 7, no. 3-4 (1999): 274-289 (2).

⁵¹ Weibing Zhao and J. R. Brent Ritchie, "Tourism and Poverty Alleviation: An Integrative Research Framework", *Current Issues in Tourism* 10:2-3 (2008): 119-143 (121)

⁵² Weibing Zhao and J. R. Brent Ritchie. Ibid. p. 121

⁵³ Manoj Kumar Agarwal and Rudra Prasad Upadhyay, "Tourism and economic development in Nepal", *Northern Book Centre*, (2006): 26

⁵⁴ Manoj Kumar Agarwal and Rudra Prasad Upadhyay. Ibid. p. 26

⁵⁵ MoFA (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Tourism in Nepal", not dated < <https://mofa.gov.np/about-nepal/tourism-in-nepal/>> Accessed on February 16, 2020.

TRAVEL & TOURISM ECONOMIC IMPACT 2018

ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION	2017	2018*	2028*
Total contribution of tourism to GDP	Rs195b	Rs205.2b	Rs299.5b
Direct contribution of tourism to GDP	Rs99.8b	Rs104.7b	Rs152.4b
Capital investment	Rs17.3b	Rs18.7b	Rs29.4b
Domestic tourists spending	Rs96.2b	Rs100.4b	Rs140.7b
Foreign tourists spending	Rs72.5b	Rs76.3b	Rs127.1b
Spending on outbound travel	Rs23.6b	Rs27.1b	Rs44.3b
Leisure travel spending	Rs144.1b	Rs150.1b	Rs226.5b
Business travel spending	Rs24.6b	Rs26.6b	Rs41.2b
Direct jobs generated	497,500	517,000	638,000
Total contribution to employment	1.02m	1.07m	1.32m
Tourist arrivals	940,218	1.04m	1.67m

(All values are in constant 2017 prices and exchange rates; *estimates)
(Source: WTTC)

Economic contribution by Travel and tourism
Source: The Kathmandu Post

While overseeing the development of tourism from 1950 till present context, the tourism industry of Nepal has managed to earn 195 billion rupees in the economy of the country. It also created 497,500 jobs for the people in 2017. It is also estimated that the industry will help to provide around 1.32 million of employment opportunities for the people in Nepal within 2028. In the context of GDP of Nepal, tourism has directly contributed 104.7 billion rupees in the economy of Nepal in 2018 which is 4.9 percent of total GDP (Gross Domestic Product)⁵⁶.

⁵⁶ Sangam Prasain, "Travel, tourism pumps Rs195b into economy", *The Kathmandu Post*, March 28, 2018, <<https://kathmandupost.com/money/2018/03/28/travel-tourism-pumps-rs195b-into-economy>> Accessed on February 16, 2020.

4.5 Social Problems Like Discrimination in Nepal

According to IDSN (International Dalits Solidarity Network)⁵⁷, Caste discrimination affects an estimated 260 million people worldwide with the majority living in South Asia. The caste system basically divides people into various unequal and hierarchical social groups. In the context of Southeast Asia, Hindu religion has a more traditional root that is creating difference in the people in comparison to other religions. In context of Nepal Dalits are considered as lower caste people which are supposed to be known as untouchable people. Mary M. Cameron⁵⁸ on Transformation of Gender and caste Discrimination of Labor in Rural Nepal: Land, Hierarchy, and the caste of Untouchable Women stated that people of low caste have not been treated as political actors, social and cultural actors in their own right.⁵⁹

In the context of Nepal, the humiliating practices like caste discrimination and untouchability is still being carried even the new constitutions of the country already declared untouchable free country. the people known as non-Dalits in the past did not allow Dalits to get education, serve the nation and were used to make different footpaths and wells along with some restrictions to enter inside the temples even they follow same religion.⁶⁰ The people of lower hierarchical ranking are labeled as ‘Nachune Jaat’ which gives meaning of ‘untouchability’. The Dalits especially in remote areas are forcedly given the hazardous and difficult jobs. With the continuing of caste discrimination, we can see the violation of social, cultural as well as human rights.⁶¹

In context of Ghandruk, 48% of Gurungs while 30% of total population recognized as Dalits reside in the village and as the majority of Gurungs reside in the village the area is recognized as Gurung Village indicating the dominance of ‘social elite’ groups in the society.⁶²

⁵⁷ International Dalit Solidarity Network (IDSN), “Caste Discrimination: Caste discrimination affects as estimated 260 million people”, Not dated, <<https://idsn.org/caste-discrimination/>> Accessed on 18 February, 2020.

⁵⁸ Mary M. Camron, “Transformations of Gender and Caste Divisions of Labor in Rural Nepal: Land, Hierarchy, and the Case of Untouchable Women”, *Journal of Anthropological Research*, Vol. 51, No. 3 (1995): 215-246 (217)

⁵⁹ Mary M. Camron. Ibid. p. 217

⁶⁰ Bisnu Pariyar and Jon C. Lovett, “Dalit identity in urban Pokhara, Nepal”, *Geoforum* 75 (2016): 135-147 (136)

⁶¹ International Dalit Solidarity Network (IDSN), “Caste Discrimination: Caste discrimination affects as estimated 260 million people”, Not dated, <<https://idsn.org/caste-discrimination/>> Accessed on 18 February, 2020.

⁶² 28 Central Bureau of statistics (CBS).” National population and Housing Census 2011”. Published in November, 2011.

According to Amit Pokhrel⁶³ in his research based on Ghandruk Village Profile, it clearly gave us distinct ideas that the issue of discrimination in the village exists. The correspondent who belongs to Dalit community shared his experiences of being discriminated in the society. As per Sam Bahadur BK⁶⁴, Ghandruk is a society filled with discrimination. The Gurung caste discriminates against them in many aspects as he also mentions that the grants coming for the lower caste people are being misused by the people in the government from higher caste. He also stated the VDC members do not treat everybody equally and they believe that anyone who is born in the Dalits community is believed to be cursed as the village of the Ghandruk is a society which does not consider the Dalits amongst one of them.⁶⁵

The next respondent on the research study named Sumitra B.K. also shared her experience as she expressed her pain and told that the society of the Ghandruk has always been discriminating against the Dalits people.⁶⁶ Dan Bahadur Pariyar and Pradip Sunar, Bijay Sunar also expressed that the social discrimination still exists in the village. The name of the area stating Kami tole, Damai tole and Sarki tole can clearly identify that the Dalits are being categorized between each other. Simply the area where majority of Dalits reside that particular area will be named after the Dalit caste or their certain group.⁶⁷

After much deliberation and thorough analysis of the literature we could gather and read regarding the caste discrimination in Nepal we understood one thing very clearly that the caste discrimination is playing a very negative role on the community development and is affecting the lives of the people very badly. If this will continue in the same manner then this is detrimental for the growth and development of Nepal.

⁶³ Amit Pokhrel, "Ghandruk village profile, "A study of Culture Resources Management", Published on 30th April, 2014 < https://issuu.com/pokhrel/docs/gbandruk_village_profile_a_study_o?fbclid=IwAR0B-XnQW5KGSgobrU9zzw4ogszw_v3XAdAYMh4qs8e1DigPIB9vO2qy2qk> Accessed on 21 February, 2020.

⁶⁴ Amit Pokhrel, "Ghandruk village profile, "A study of Culture Resources Management", Published on 30th April, 2014

⁶⁵ Amit Pokhrel, "Ghandruk village profile, "A study of Culture Resources Management", Published on 30th April, 2014

⁶⁶ Amit Pokhrel, "Ghandruk village profile, "A study of Culture Resources Management", Published on 30th April, 2014

⁶⁷ Amit Pokhrel, "Ghandruk village profile, "A study of Culture Resources Management", Published on 30th April, 2014

4.6 Defining Community

The word Community can be defined in various ways⁶⁸. The term community is identified as a certain geographical area with the people having their own culture, traditions with their mutual cooperation and respects. In other words, we can say the community is amalgamation of individual people that share an environment with having something in common.

In the book named Community Development through Tourism by Sue Beeton⁶⁹ she further elaborated various meanings of community and explained how the term community can be understood according to various ideologies of the individuals. Delanty in his book⁷⁰ 'Community' explains that in a particular geographical area if the group of the people acts and recognize each other as one regardless of their religion, caste, color, or economic differences and still behaves as one unit that particular set of peoples is considered to be called as a community. The certain community can easily develop if everybody living there feels that they belong to the part of that group with mutual understanding and share the same goal which is the better of the society thus acting as one unit in the pursuance of their goals can bring significant development toward the community and the society.⁷¹

There are different approaches to the term community and we cannot rely on one definition as it has various approaches and connections with it, however one thing on which all the researchers and writers agree and converge to a point that community has a very important role to play in the context of tourism and development in today's world. Globally communities have acted together and gained development through tourism and as we try to look at special cases in Nepal in the village of Ghandruk which mostly consist of Gurung community and this community has been working together for the betterment of their village through the tourism industry.

In the phenomenon of tourism both the tourist and the host play a vital role. In the tourist places where tourists are considered special, the locals or the host are considered special too. This could be considered true if we look into the context of developing countries where tourism has a strong connection with the growth of the local communities.⁷²

⁶⁸ Sue Beeton, "The case study in tourism research: A multi-method case study approach", *Tourism research methods: Integrating theory with practice* (2005): 37-48 (6)

⁶⁹ Sue Beeton. Ibid. p.6

⁷⁰ Gerard Delanty, Community, Third edition, (2003), Key Ideas, Routledge.

⁷¹ Gerard Delanty, Community, Third edition, (2003), Key Ideas, Routledge.

⁷² Sue Beeton. Ibid. p.6

We can take the example of Maldives where the tourist stays in one hotel and this way a community is formed there which takes care of them with the proper hosting. Further we can look at the example of various cruise ships where its crews act as a community though for a very short time but this gives us a clear idea that community and tourism cannot be viewed separately.⁷³

In the case of rural communities, tourism plays a very important role for its development therefore it is essential here to look at the community and tourism as a single entity and to call it as community tourism. The participation of locals which acts as different stakeholders in the tourism industry is known as community tourism. It could also be known as the new psychological experience for both of the tourists and hosts which are known as community tourism. To be more precise one should not confuse the travelers with tourists the travelers who just come and visit the places cannot be called as tourists whereas a tourist is the one who visits the places and stays there for a set amount of time or days and whose presence affects the locals in a positive and profitable way should be consider as the tourists.⁷⁴

4.7 Rural Community and Community Based Tourism

It is strongly believed that tourism plays a pivotal role in the development of a community. The degrees⁷⁵ of social and economic growth in remote communities when achieved could be considered as the important source of development for the community. Tourism also helps in adding huge amounts of foreign exchange earnings towards the national savings which further helps in the economic growth of a nation⁷⁶. In general understanding the main aim of tourism is to provide employment to the locals and upgrade the living standard of the people as well as the nation. We also can agree on this point that there is a vital role of tourism economically in order to overcome poverty by adding impacts on socio- cultural development and economy of the people.⁷⁷

⁷³ Sue Beeton, "The case study in tourism research: A multi-method case study approach", *Tourism research methods: Integrating theory with practice* (2005): 37-48 (16)

⁷⁴ Sue Beeton. Ibid. p.17

⁷⁵ Sue Beeton. Ibid. p.17

⁷⁶ Nathanael Luvanga, and Joseph Shitundu, "The role of tourism in poverty alleviation in Tanzania", *Research on Poverty Alleviation* (2003): 1-52 (1)

⁷⁷ Nathanael Luvanga, and Joseph Shitundu. Ibid. p.1

According to Beeton⁷⁸, rural tourism can further produce recreational activities which can act as a community attraction, these activities could be nature based and also can include farm related tourism. Arif and Grill⁷⁹ have their own explanation of Rural Tourism as they believe that any kind of tourism which portrays and projects the rural life the culture and art attached with it and the heritage preserved in its local locations and which turn outs to be beneficial for the local community especially in the growth of economy and socially then that could be called as Rural Tourism. In clear words, any tourism that is centric to the rural areas development has got many names such as Community Based Tourism CBT, Pro Poor Tourism, Anti Poor Tourism, Eco Tourism thus almost all forms of tourism.⁸⁰

Rural tourism has its very positive characteristics⁸¹ as we can say that with rural tourism one gains the experience of a lifetime. Its locations are not that densely populated and those locations are surrounded by the natural environment. It is mixed with multi seasons and local events which are real attractions for tourists and this also helps in the preservation of culture, norms and traditions. Through the increasing interest and focus of the community and with their involvement towards tourism the CBT has gained immense popularity over the past 3 decades⁸². In the present context, we can see the influence of Community Based Tourism where lots of people are participating mostly in rural areas with the aim of tourism product business and well qualitative services with various tourism strategies⁸³. It can be generally agreed that with the implementation of tourism strategy it can contribute a lot in the socio and economic development of a country as it empowers the communities with the courage of decision making while solving the local issues as well as initiating new ideas.⁸⁴

⁷⁸ Sue Beeton, "Community Development through Tourism", *Research Gate, Landlinks Press Publisher* (2006): 1-258 (142)

⁷⁹ Fariborz Aref and S. G. Sarjit, "Rural tourism development through rural cooperatives", (2009): 68-73 (68).

⁸⁰ Fariborz Aref and S. G. Sarjit. Ibid. p.68

⁸¹ Fariborz Aref and S. G. Sarjit. Ibid. p.68-69

⁸² Harold Goodwin and Rosa Santilli, "Community-based tourism: A success," *ICRT Occasional paper* 11, no. 1 (2009): 1-37 (9)

⁸³ Peter A. Johnson, "Realizing rural community-based tourism development: Prospects for social economy enterprises," *Journal of rural and community development* 5, no. 1 (2010): 150-162 (151).

⁸⁴ Harold Goodwin and Rosa Santilli. Ibid. p.10

It could be expected that when the community gets involved with the tourism activities its effects are really positive and will have great impact on the lives of the general public and ultimately will uplift the lives of the poor⁸⁵ further CBT helps in devising a mechanism which helps all the stakeholders involved with the tourism business through the decision making which is consensus based and which is helpful for the local development.⁸⁶

Community based tourism has the capacity to become an alternative to the mainstream tourism and according to the World Wildlife Fund⁸⁷, CBT is a form of tourism, where the local population has great control in the development and management of local tourism and when the major percentage of the profits remains in the local community. The concept of CBT is very flexible in its approach as it includes all kinds of activities which involve the support of the aim of economic and social developments of the communities.

The Concept of CBT or the model of CBT which is largely based on the involvement of community towards developing the local tourism industry, power sharing, cooperation and social capital creation was first used by Okazaki⁸⁸ in a case study of the CBT project which was started by the local community of Palawan in the Philippines. Zapata, Lindo and Vanderschaeghe⁸⁹ have further elaborated the characteristics of CBT which helps in understanding the socio and economic development through CBT as they explained it in the case study of Nicaraguan.

CBT would be not complete if we do not discuss the major characteristics of it as CBT is strengthened by the effects of these characteristics in any community or society; the benefits achieved by these characteristics are beyond the economic benefits as they also involve development at the social level as well. We would be discussing the characteristics of CBT in the following subchapter.

⁸⁵ Kathleen Andereck, Ksrim M. Valentinme, Richard Knof and Christine Vogt, "Residents' perceptions of community tourism impacts," *Annals of Tourism Research* 32, No. 4 (2005): 1056-1076 (1057)

⁸⁶ Anna Spenceley and Dorothea Meyer, "Tourism and poverty reduction: theory and practice in less economically developed countries", *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 20:3 (2012): 297-317 (298)

⁸⁷ Harold Goodwin and Rosa Santilli, "Community-based tourism: A success," *ICRT Occasional paper* 11, no. 1 (2009): 1-37 (11)

⁸⁸ Okazaki, Etsuko. "A community-based tourism model: Its conception and use." *Journal of sustainable tourism* 16, no. 5 (2008): 511-529 (511).

⁸⁹ María José Zapata, C. Michael Hall, Patricia Lindo, and Mieke Vanderschaeghe, "Can community-based tourism contribute to development and poverty alleviation? Lessons from Nicaragua," *Current Issues in Tourism* (2011): 1-25

4.8 Importance of CBT and its characteristics

CBT also includes the study of the social impacts which are directly or indirectly linked with the local tourism. As local tourism not only reshapes the physical geography of a certain region but also restructures the social life of a community⁹⁰ when the development of tourism grows and outshines then the next positive thing which happens to a community is the development in their society and social approaches which undergoes spectacular changes.⁹¹

As Beeton⁹² in his work has mostly emphasized on the participation of the local community in the development of tourism as tourism cannot excel outside the local community or without local participation as the cooperation within the locals helps in strengthening the assets of the local community as they grow as one⁹³. With participation, it is meant that how much willingly people share their ideas while actively taking part in the tourist activities this includes profit sharing, collaborating and also the decision making required for the tourism development process. With the assurance of partiality and fair distribution the locals tend to participate more in the local community based tourism.⁹⁴

Moreover, the process of community's participation⁹⁵ is linked to those actions in which the locals are capable enough to counter any difficulty which comes their way or which include their activities of self-initiating and self-governing and taking favorable steps towards betterment of community and towards the positivity of the locals lives. Hence it is considered as a process which empowers the local people to work for the development of each other. It includes mutual gains and benefits and working in partnerships taking responsibility in order to plan, manage and control while assessing the collective steps of each other.⁹⁶

⁹⁰ Doohyun Huang, "Influence of Social Capital on Community Based Action in Tourism Development: A Story of Social Network Analysis," *Illinois at Urbana-Champaign* (2012): 1-268 (213-214).

⁹¹ Doohyun Huang. Ibid. p.213-214

⁹² Sue Beeton, "Community Development through Tourism", Research Gate, Landlinks Press Publisher (2006): 1-258 (143)

⁹³ Okazaki, Etsuko. "A community-based tourism model: Its conception and use." *Journal of sustainable tourism* 16, no. 5 (2008): 511-529 (512).

⁹⁴ Isaac Manu and Conrad-J. Wuleka Kuuder, "Community-based ecotourism and livelihood enhancement in Sirig, Ghan", *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 2 No. 18 (2012): 97-108 (98).

⁹⁵ Cevat Tosun, "Limits to community participation in the tourism development process in developing countries," *Tourism management* 21, no. 6 (2000): 613-633 (615)

⁹⁶ Cevat Tosun. Ibid. p.615

Community participation is considered as an important tool which helps in balancing power or reshaping the local community rules as local authority sometimes act unfavorable for the locals or it helps in redefining professional ways of fruitful involvement and further stops a specific group or community from manipulation in the community based tourism process .⁹⁷

4.9 CBT and Some Shortcomings

There has been a lot of research and literature available on the importance of CBT and its impacts on the development of a community or towards a nation but there has also been some research work done which has emphasized on the shortcomings of CBT or which has shown that CBT is not an absolute solution for all the problems related to development. As Sebele⁹⁸ in her research work discovered that the communities in the District of Botswana were only called for consultation during the start of any project but were not permitted to participate further in the project. This brings lots of problems like lack of trust, lack of community cooperation within the community. Another research work showed that the bigger organizations or NGOs only want the local people to produce local products and should only be involved in selling them or only they could be involved in the business of homestay, this makes it almost impossible for them to take further business-related decisions.⁹⁹

Different examples from other parts of the world have also been mentioned in different tourism related research work, one of the examples is of the National Park of Ghana as they highlighted the study of Tourism Benefit Sharing Scheme. The main purpose of this Benefit Sharing Scheme was to upgrade the deprived and poor section of Ghana by sharing the profit with the local people but the profit sharing is not even as the locals receive very small amount out of that profit which further leads to conflicts and rifts between the locals and the higher authorities as the locals believe that they have been cheated upon and not evenly distributed¹⁰⁰. It is believed that the greater part of the profit returns back to the private or international organizations who own the Tourism business in the local's area and are well networked with the local elites who own a major part of the tourism business.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ Cevat Tosun, "Limits to community participation in the tourism development process in developing countries," *Tourism management* 21, no. 6 (2000): 613-633 (615)

⁹⁸ Lesego S. Sebele, "Community-based tourism ventures, benefits and challenges: Khama rhino sanctuary trust, central district, Botswana," *Tourism management* 31, no. 1 (2010): 136-146 (142)

⁹⁹ Lesego S. Sebele. Ibid. p.142

¹⁰⁰ David Mwesigye Tumusiime, and Paul Vedeld, "False promise or false premise? Using tourism revenue sharing to promote conservation and poverty reduction in Uganda," *Conservation and society* 10, no. 1 (2012): 15-28 (20-21).

¹⁰¹ David Mwesigye Tumusiime, and Paul Vedeld. Ibid. p.20-21

Similar case was noted in Kenya¹⁰², where it was revealed that the multinational organizations running the local business which included tour packages had a whopping share ranging from 40-70% which showed that they acquired major share out of the profit.¹⁰³

If we analyze it critically with the above mentioned examples of profit sharing within the community we can have a clear idea that CBT just cannot reach to a point where one can undoubtedly claim that CBT has been a primary factor in reducing poverty or in building the community, if a community is mostly developed by the international organizations or by the Donor agencies then one cannot claim that it is community development as community development requires local participation and the production & promotion of the local brands.¹⁰⁴

A huge criticism has been done by the researchers on the Community Based Tourism and to a level that some have suggested that it should be called as “Community Centered Tourism”¹⁰⁵ rather than Community Based Tourism. Further the communities mostly suffer because they do not have enough cognition of the functioning of the Tourism business or how they can excel in this business while receiving more tourists on a regular basis.¹⁰⁶

Community Based Tourism does help the community in development and growth but requires proper administration which is fair enough to deal equally with everyone and which has the authority to do proper scrutiny on the distribution of profits and which ensures that the main aim of Community based tourism which is directly linked with the purpose of uplifting the lives of the marginal section of the society rather than making the elites more rich and eating up all the profits which is supposed to reach fairly to the poor first. Such an administration should be responsible for ensuring that everyone in the community is positively and actively participating for the development of the community.

¹⁰²John S. Akama, and Damiannah Kieti, "Tourism and socio-economic development in developing countries: A case study of Mombasa Resort in Kenya," *Journal of sustainable tourism* 15, no. 6 (2007): 735-748 (744).

¹⁰³John S. Akama, and Damiannah Kieti. Ibid. p.744

¹⁰⁴Anna Spenceley and Dorothea Meyer, "Tourism and poverty reduction: theory and practice in less economically developed countries", *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 20:3 (2012): 297-317 (298)

¹⁰⁵Anna Spenceley and Dorothea Meyer. Ibid. p.298

¹⁰⁶Anna Spenceley and Dorothea Meyer. Ibid. p.298

4.10 Participation of CBT in the case of Ghandruk

This section of our thesis will highlight the contribution of Community based tourism in the case of the Ghandruk village which is the region of our research interest. Ghandruk village is connected with the Annapurna Conservation Area ACA which is known for its trekking and tourist attractions. A very little amount of research work has been done on this part of the world as far as tourism studies are concerned. We got some important data from the official website of the ACAP which helped us in gaining the knowledge of the community based participation and development achieved by it in the region of Ghandruk.

According to the ACAP website they claim that how it all started without the funding of the Government and the Army and how they were able to gather capital from the community while managing the natural resources of the region. The website also informs that with the help of the local participation and involvement the ACAP thrived in the tourism industry and has been able to grow since it was first launched in 1986¹⁰⁷, but this claim of the ACAP needs to be checked with some research work as one could say that the official website is speaking highly just because it is their belief and may contain biasness so we need to get more sources for this claim.¹⁰⁸

A research work¹⁰⁹ showed that the involvement of people in the tourism activities in the region of Ghandruk has been commendable and has been able to resolve the economic issues while ensuring the safety of the environment and the wellbeing of the locals. Some other researchers¹¹⁰ do agree with the fact that the local participation has resulted in growth and development of the community in both economic and social areas and has allowed the Ghandruk village in gaining the bottom up developmental approach.

¹⁰⁷ Ellison Heil, "Through the eyes of Asa; the role of integrated conservation development programs in Ghandruk, Nepal", *World Journal of Environmental Research* Vol. 07 Issue 1 (2017) 17-26 (1)

¹⁰⁸ Ellison Heil. Ibid. p.1

¹⁰⁹ Gurung, Hum Bahadur. "Fusioning: A Grounded Theory of Participatory Governance in the Annapurna Conservation Area, Nepal," *Griffith University* (2008).

¹¹⁰ Andrew Holden, "Exploring stakeholders' perceptions of sustainable tourism development in the Annapurna Conservation Area: Issues and Challenge," *Tourism and Hospitality Planning & Development* 7, no. 4 (2010): 337-351 (340)

Further towards the end the research study¹¹¹ highlights that the locals are not that much interested in participating as they consider the tourism business as seasonal and not professional or stable so they do not rely on it much and another point is that the Village Development Committee does not allow the locals to participate in the decision making and everything is controlled by the ACAP. It is further explained that the tourism business might not be able to become a permanent solution in order to have maximum amount of development and growth in the region.¹¹²

Another research work¹¹³ shows that the tourism projects carried by the ACAP mostly involved the locals to fulfill the project needs and did not pay them back fairly. The ACAP has been ignoring the issues of the local community and not taking required measures. Further it also states that the locals have not been that active too and the community has not been able to get empowered because of the ACAP and the Village Development Committees hegemony on controlling the decision making process¹¹⁴. The research also shows that the community based tourism projects mostly involve the participation of women and not many men or Dalits which reflects the failure in societal and cultural harmony¹¹⁵. This also shows the uneven distribution of power and profit sharing within the community plus the “Aama Samuha” the Local Mothers Group has an influence on the decision making and on the Ghandruk community.¹¹⁶

4.11 Collaboration Theory:

The theory of Collaboration is a renowned theory which is widely accepted and applied in the tourism studies, planning of the community tourism and local body governance in most parts of the developed world. It is also being used in the underdeveloped or the developing countries as different ways of cooperation and collaboration in the fields of climate change and globalization are evolving in the lives of the locals of those areas.¹¹⁷

¹¹¹Andrew Holden, "Exploring stakeholders' perceptions of sustainable tourism development in the Annapurna Conservation Area: Issues and Challenge," *Tourism and Hospitality Planning & Development* 7, no. 4 (2010): 337-351 (340).

¹¹² Andrew Holden. Ibid. p.342

¹¹³ Smriti Dahal, "Understanding the participation of marginal groups in Annapurna Conservation Area, Nepal ", *Texas A&M University*, (2011): 1.249 (63).

¹¹⁴ Smriti Dahal. Ibid. p.63,74

¹¹⁵ Smriti Dahal. Ibid. p.103

¹¹⁶ Smriti Dahal. Ibid. p.62

¹¹⁷Tazim Jamal and Amanda Stronza, "Collaboration theory and tourism practice in protected areas: Stakeholders, structuring and sustainability," *Journal of Sustainable tourism* 17, no. 2 (2009): 169-189 (169)

Other authors¹¹⁸ also explain it “as cooperation for the development in the community based tourism is a vast process which undergoes a collective decision making of all the important stakeholders involved in the community based tourism business and also work together to plan and find proper solutions for the problems related inside that domain”. Collaboration allows us with a wide spectrum where we can easily analyze the planning and techniques of all the stakeholders involved in the planning and development of the community based tourism business¹¹⁹. Collaboration further leads to partnerships amongst the agencies and the tourism operators and it helps in rising foreign funding for the development of the area.¹²⁰

Collaboration and partnerships are very important in the context of community based tourism due to the diverse tourism system. Some authors¹²¹ argue that this system functions while keeping focus on sustainability and adopting different strategies which results in the permanent development rather than temporary thus this system requires all the decision makers to converge on one point.

Most organizations work in a different manner and do not involve all the local community in the decision making which creates problems like internal conflicts which results in creating challenges for the community development¹²². In the case of Bolivia¹²³ it was found that mostly the community members were ignored from participating in the tourism practice and the responsible leadership was lacking in their case which could have joined all the stakeholders for the collaboration purpose.

Collaboration involves the presence of highly skilled and innovative stakeholders as these are the ones who come up with useful ideas, provide solutions to all the problems whereas contribute in the form of investment and take the business ideas from planning to developing¹²⁴. The involvement of stakeholders is also very important in the context of finding out the main causes of conflict which results in the breaking of the collaboration as they treat everyone equally in order to have successful development in their tourism business.¹²⁵

¹¹⁸ Tazim B. Jamal and Donald Getz, "Collaboration theory and community tourism planning," *Annals of tourism research* 22, no. 1 (1995): 186-204 (187-188)

¹¹⁹ Tazim B. Jamal and Donald Getz. Ibid. p.195

¹²⁰ Ryan Plummer and David A. Fennell, "Managing protected areas for sustainable tourism: prospects for adaptive co-management," *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 17, no. 2 (2009): 149-168 (150-152)

¹²¹ Tazim Jamal and Amanda Stronza, "Collaboration theory and tourism practice in protected areas: Stakeholders, structuring and sustainability," *Journal of Sustainable tourism* 17, no. 2 (2009): 169-189 (170)

¹²² Tazim Jamal and Amanda Stronza. Ibid. p.171

¹²³ Tazim Jamal and Amanda Stronza. Ibid. p.183

¹²⁴ Ryan Plummer and David A. Fennell. Ibid. p.156

¹²⁵ Tazim B. Jamal and Donald Getz. Ibid. p.196

Further the stakeholder's presence is also very important in the context of the local community building as the local stakeholders have a much clear idea about the specialties of their area and they know better which idea will be fruitful for them and the community¹²⁶. The business ideas related to tourism require meaningful cooperation and collaboration of the whole community which understands each other well.¹²⁷

The Collaboration Theory is the most important theory as it focuses on the collaboration of the stakeholders or the parties involved in the development of tourism, thus it is considered as an important aspect towards the successful community based tourism and its development. It has many positive impacts not only in the economic field but also in the social development of the community.

As collaboration theory refers to the collaboration of the stakeholders involved in the tourism industry and specifically in the community based tourism it is very important here to give a brief explanation of all the stakeholders involved in the community based tourism. In the following we would be discussing in detail the stakeholders which include the Local community, the Government, private sector and the Tourists.

4.11.1 The Local Community

The most important role in the community based tourism development is played by the Local Community¹²⁸ as the Local community is the one which is considered as the main source which is responsible for ensuring the sustainability of the product. The Local Community acts as the host for the tourists as they welcome the tourists in their lands and offer them their services required for the tourism activities. They operate within the borders of their lands and present the tourists with their culture, natural sites and attractions.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ Susana Lima Celeste Eusébio, and Maria Do Rosário Partidário, "Determinants for tourism and poverty alleviation," *Tourism & Management Studies* 7 (2012): 43-53 (46)

¹²⁷ Susana Lima Celeste Eusébio, and Maria Do Rosário Partidário. Ibid. p.46

¹²⁸ Lesego S. Sebele, "Community-based tourism ventures, benefits and challenges: Khama rhino sanctuary trust, central district, Botswana," *Tourism management* 31, no. 1 (2010): 136-146 (136)

¹²⁹ Manu and Conrad-J. Wuleka Kuuder, "Community-based ecotourism and livelihood enhancement in Sirigu, Ghana," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 2 No. 18 (2012): 97-108 (99).

In theoretical sense, one can say that the local community or the host community is said to be the owner as well as one of the beneficiaries in any community based tourism or any other tourism related business as some view tourism as a sole community based industry.¹³⁰

In the community based tourism development, the opportunities of the local employment are really high¹³¹. Sometimes the local community does not involve in the tourism development and acts as a neighbor or while just residing near the tourist's spots, national conservation areas and parks and sometimes the local community itself becomes a tourist attraction for e.g. in the case of Bwindi Impenetrable National Park where mostly the locals are involved in the tourism related business as tour operators and mostly the employment opportunities goes to them.¹³²

Another common case is that sometimes the community members are referred as poor or marginalized people and are considered to be those who do not have proper education and lack certain resources. Most of these people are considered to be in the developing countries or the ones living in the rural areas of the underdeveloped countries. These people do not have proper knowledge of the tourism related business and do not know how this industry works.¹³³

The involvement of Local community is the key role towards developing community based tourism in a region or a nation. It not only helps in giving an economic boost to the community but also brings societal harmony through collaboration and cooperation which is very important for the development of a society.

¹³⁰ Wilson, Suzanne, Daniel R. Fesenmaier, Julie Fesenmaier, and John C. Van Es, "Factors for success in rural tourism development," *Journal of Travel research* 40, no. 2 (2001): 132-138 (133).

¹³¹ Lesego S. Sebele, "Community-based tourism ventures, benefits and challenges: Khama rhino sanctuary trust, central district, Botswana," *Tourism management* 31, no. 1 (2010): 136-146 (140).

¹³² Robertico Croes and Manuel Vanegas Sr, "Cointegration and causality between tourism and poverty reduction," *Journal of travel research* 47, no. 1 (2008): 94-103 (96).

¹³³ Susana Lima Celeste Eusébio, and Maria Do Rosário Partidário, "Determinants for tourism and poverty alleviation," *Tourism & Management Studies* 7 (2012): 43-53 (46)

4.11.2 The Government

In the past few years the majorities of Government agencies and organizations which are related to the tourism industry have willingly stepped back and have allowed the private business to step forward in the tourism industries in most of the countries around the world. The Government on the other hand is happy and satisfied in collecting the yearly taxes or to get funding from the international donors.¹³⁴

As the awareness of development through terrorism has increased so tourism is considered as an important aspect which could greatly contribute to the economic, national and social issues. There has been an increased lobbying of NGOs, tourism organizations in this industry and have been of great interest to the governments in the context of tourism development.¹³⁵

After the introduction of Millennium Development Goals¹³⁶ in the year 2000, the primary objective of almost all the governments of the developing countries have been the eradication of poverty, the Millennium Development Goals is considered to be the international standards to measure the progress rate in the development sector. Thus, poverty reduction has been the basic aim of the governments and in order to do so they have been actively supporting the tourism industry in their countries as tourism related business helps in overcoming the socio and economic issues.

In the tourism industry, the main role of the Government is to make sure that the revenue generated by the tourism industry is equally and evenly distributed amongst all, not like the elite class gaining all the benefits and profits and the working or the poor getting the smallest of shares. This helps in the collective growth of a society and not of a particular section.¹³⁷

If there is lack of governance in the tourism industry or the government is not present through its authority then the section of the society which is not that capable of doing tourism business or investment on their own would suffer the most on the hands of the elites and will face degradation and discriminated in the society.¹³⁸

¹³⁴ Murray C. Simpson, "Community benefit tourism initiatives—A conceptual oxymoron?" *Tourism management* 29, no. 1 (2008): 1-18 (6)

¹³⁵ Murray C. Simpson. Ibid. p.6

¹³⁶ Andrea BĂLTĂREȚU, Andreea, "Methods of alleviation the poverty through sustainable tourism," *International Journal of Academic Research in Accounting, Finance and Management Sciences* 2, no. 1 (2012): 167-177 (167-168)

¹³⁷ Weibing Zhao and J. R. Brent Ritchie, "Tourism and Poverty Alleviation: An Integrative Research Framework", *Current Issues in Tourism* 10:2-3 (2008): 119-143 (129-131)

¹³⁸ Susana Lima Celeste Eusébio, and Maria Do Rosário Partidário, "Determinants for tourism and poverty alleviation," *Tourism & Management Studies* 7 (2012): 43-53 (47)

Thus, in order to gain maximum development and growth through the tourism industry the public sector should also be proactive in the fields of education, cooperation and coordination, creating and implementing ideas.¹³⁹

4.11.3 Private Sector

The Private Sector's involvement in the tourism industry is widely accepted and appreciated worldwide as it provides immense benefits to the community. As one of the researchers believe that "we believe that the tourism business and the trade wonders are capable of starting business in different locations as they can adapt in any business-related environment and can commit to responsible working through transparent and accountable manner". Thus, the corporate business can be helpful in capacity building, micro financing which includes small, medium and micro businesses.¹⁴⁰

Private sector business helps the people who earn through the growth of the community mostly play an active role in the community decision making and in the formulation of the policy¹⁴¹. Though there is very little data available in this context that private sector business owners play an important role in the development of tourism a study did a comparison between a private tour operator and a development organization in Ecuador. The findings through that study explained that the private tour operator was successful in gaining benefits for the community than the development organization. As the private business or the private sector business owners are free from all the barriers and constraints like reporting and monitoring the projects on a large scale.¹⁴²

4.11.4 Tourists

Tourists are considered to be the main source of income towards tourism development as they spend a lot of money out of their income in the activities of travelling and are valued customers for the host countries where they travel.¹⁴³

¹³⁹ Weibing Zhao and J. R. Brent Ritchie, "Tourism and Poverty Alleviation: An Integrative Research Framework", *Current Issues in Tourism* 10:2-3 (2008): 119-143 (130)

¹⁴⁰ Murray C. Simpson, "Community benefit tourism initiatives—A conceptual oxymoron?" *Tourism management* 29, no. 1 (2008): 1-18 (9)

¹⁴¹ Murray C. Simpson. Ibid. p.9

¹⁴² Louise Mary Erskine and Dorothea Meyer, "Influenced and influential: the role of tour operators and development organizations in tourism and poverty reduction in Ecuador," *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 20, no. 3 (2012): 339-357 (147-149)

¹⁴³ Weibing Zhao and J. R. Brent Ritchie. Ibid. p.130

Along with being customers they also spend a lot of their time while travelling in the host country, they could not be called as important stakeholders as they do not contribute in the planning and development of the community based business¹⁴⁴. Another reason why the tourists are not being considered as the part of the stakeholders is that the tourists have their own identity and travel for their own pleasure while having a diverse identity as tourists. It is thus not an easy task to involve tourists in the decision making and collaboration process.¹⁴⁵

Mostly researchers recognize tourists in the context of cultural exchange, marketing and also in the perspective of socio economic issues like poverty reduction and social empowerment like the discrimination issues as well. This contribution of tourists cannot be ignored.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ Weibing Zhao and J. R. Brent Ritchie, "Tourism and Poverty Alleviation: An Integrative Research Framework", *Current Issues in Tourism* 10:2-3 (2008): 119-143 (130)

¹⁴⁶ John S. Akama and Damiannah Kieti, "Tourism and socio-economic development in developing countries: A case study of Mombasa Resort in Kenya," *Journal of sustainable tourism* 15, no. 6 (2007): 735-748.

CHAPTER 5

5 Research Methodology:

In this chapter, the description for the choices of research approach is used along with the empirical collection of data and the analysis. The data for this research was collected from various newspapers, journals and reports along with interviewing local stakeholders of Ghandruk. Moreover, the reflection of authors and criticism and limitation of the research is used at the end of this section.

5.1 Research Approach:

The main aim to do this thesis is to have an understanding of the ideology of the local stakeholders and their perspectives towards the growth of Community Based Tourism (CBT) with its impact on social and economic issues in the village of Ghandruk (Nepal). Hence, we will be using a case study approach by using various reports of past studies which allows us to explore and understand the complex issues related to the CBT and its stakeholders. Through the case study method, we will be able to go deeper and understand the behavioral condition through the actors' perspectives. The methods of qualitative research are also used along with the method of case study as we have conducted interviews with the local stakeholders of Ghandruk which are connected with the Tourism industry.

5.2 Case Study

Case study design is widely used in the research methods as it helps in understanding, examining and investigating different situations, cases and trends. According to Harrison¹⁴⁷ "Case study research design is widely recognized and accepted as an efficient methodology used to investigate and understand various complicated issues in the real world". In the view of another researcher¹⁴⁸ "case study allows a researcher to examine and investigate the information or data in a specific research area. The case study method usually selects a geographical area and limited number of people related to the research study". It is further noted that that case studies not only help in gaining the qualitative research data but also helps in describing and understanding the data and events of real life. Case study research approach is also very helpful and could be applied in the context of Community based tourism which has developed and gained huge recognition in the tourism business and development.

¹⁴⁷ Helena Harrison, Melanie Birks, Richard Franklin, and Jane Mills. "Case study research: Foundations and methodological orientations." *In Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, vol. 18, no. 1. 2017.

¹⁴⁸ Zaidah Zainal, "Case study as a research method," *Journal Kemanusiaa* 5, no. 1 (2007): 1-7 (1).

In the view of Suriya¹⁴⁹, she believes that Community based tourism is heavily exaggerated and prompted around the world as its positive outcomes are not fast paced and a doubt is always there whether its projects will perform successfully or not. She further explains¹⁵⁰ that the community based tourism projects are lengthy and take a lot of time to give positive results to the concerned stakeholders and this results in the community's disbelief towards the community based tourism projects. She¹⁵¹ also states that mostly the tourism based projects are dominated by the community leaders or elites and eat up and grasp most of the profit share and opportunities. This situation badly affects the spirit of the community based tourism whose main aim is to provide and share the benefits amongst the community members.

5.3 Qualitative Research Method:

According to Piekkari and Welch, Qualitative Research approach is widely used in examining data in order to seek deeper knowledge and to produce new relevant data related to the research topic¹⁵². They¹⁵³ further explains that these methods are helpful in interpreting written or textual data. Case studies¹⁵⁴ are considered to be one of the methods of qualitative research approach which gives an in-depth analysis of an individual or a specific case. Case studies are unstructured, semi structured interviews which are mostly used in understanding the previous experiences and behavior of an individual, a group towards a specific topic.

In this case study, we would be using the qualitative research methods as our main aim was to understand, observe and analyze the available data. In our research, we mostly focused on finding the trends of community based tourism and its impacts on Ghandruk socially and economically.

Qualitative research methods are helpful for our research work in a way that we were mostly interested in gaining the information regarding the perspectives of the local stakeholder and the development of tourism in Ghandruk and necessary future planning while knowing about the current problems of the stakeholders involved. Our qualitative research approach will include semi structured interviews as we seek to understand the situation of the concerned stakeholders of Ghandruk related to the community based tourism while asking them all the relevant questions.

¹⁴⁹ Komsan Surya, "Impact of community-based tourism in a village economy in Thailand: An analysis with VCGE model," *In EcoMod2010 conference*, Istanbul, Turkey. Retrieved May, vol. 1 (2010): 1-24(3).

¹⁵⁰ Komsan Surya. Ibid. p.3

¹⁵¹ Komsan Surya. Ibid. p.3

¹⁵² Rebecca Piekkari and Catherine Welch, "Reflections on using qualitative research methods in international business," *Liiketaloudellinen aikakauskirja* 4 (2006): 565-575 (566).

¹⁵³ Rebecca Piekkari and Catherine Welch. Ibid. p.566

¹⁵⁴ Rebecca Piekkari and Catherine Welch. Ibid. p.566

5.4 Data Collection Technique:

The whole process of gathering information is known as data collection technique or method. Mainly, information can be collected through primary and secondary sources. In order to know the socio-economic aspect of development of CBT in Ghandruk both primary and secondary data has been used in this research.

5.4.1 Collection of Data from Ghandruk:

Our thesis project earlier was planned with a field interview in the village of Ghandruk as we decided to have hands on information from the locals and the community members related to the community based tourism business. We wanted to look at the community based tourism in Ghandruk from all angles which included everyone from the community. The field work on Ghandruk was badly affected by the spread of COVID-19. As all the international borders were closed so we were not able to fly to Nepal and conduct our fieldwork which included interviews and surveys.

Our research work also included the secondary sources like books, published articles, official websites but we were more interested in getting the data from the primary sources too. With the problem like COVID -19 and not the permission to fly to Ghandruk we decided to gather info on our case study through the semi structured interviews while interviewing all the concerned locals of Ghandruk.

As one of us happen to be the former resident of Ghandruk so it was easy for us to have basic understanding and information of the place but since we have not been to Nepal for almost 3 years so we don't know the current ground realities of the village so interviewing different concerned people of Ghandruk was very important for our project so that we could know the actual situation of the village.

We decided to gather info through interviews while using the technology of video and voice calling which eased our info gathering. We conducted semi structured interviews with different people first of all was of the well reputed travel agent and trekking guide of the Annapurna Base Camp named Roshan Thapa. While conversing on the video call he told us about the latest developments in the village which helped us in understanding the rate at which development related to tourism has been done.

The next video call which we did for the sake of gathering info was with the senior governmental engineer Mr. Sunil Banmala who is currently employed in the Tourism Board of Nepal. He answered our questions which were directly related to the performance of the government towards the development in the tourism industry and various tourism related issues which concerned the local community and the government.

Along with the video calls which we mentioned above we called different other concerned people and other sections related to the tourism industry like the local governmental organizations and also the private organizations in order to have more in depth knowledge of the community based tourism related projects.

5.4.2 The Interview Method:

The methods we used for conducting the interviews were semi structured. As we were more interested in gathering qualitative data so semi structured methods of conducting interviews were used. The interview method is attached in the Appendix and referred as Appendix 1.

We prepared different sets of questions as we wanted to have thorough info of all the stakeholders' perspectives on the community based tourism. For the Government officials, we used different styles of questioning and did not ask them directly about the development in the infrastructure and community development programs but asked the questions while comparing the government's efforts with the previous years. For the local stakeholders like the private business owners like hotel owners or tour operators we used different sets of questions (not fixed) but in the manner to understand how much the community based tourism has helped the community of Ghandruk economically and socially. With the local stakeholders, we started our interviews while asking them about the Civil war in Nepal from 1996-2006 and how it impacted their livelihood and how do they feel now as the war has ended and what positivity they have experienced since then.

The interviews with various stakeholders were conducted in Nepalese language. For better understanding we translated all the interviews into English.

5.4.3 Description of The Interviewees

The research was based on the finding of Community based tourism's impacts on the village of Ghandruk where the residents of that village are mostly associated with the community based tourism business. We as researchers were mostly interested in knowing the perception of all the stakeholders involved in the growth of Ghandruk village through the Community based tourism business. In our research work we tried to interview all the stakeholders thus including almost all the sections of the community from small tea stall owners to the three-star hotel owners, from

government employee to a common man. As we are from Nepal and one of us belongs to the Ghandruk village so we have a clear idea that how much our country and the village Ghandruk is divided into multiple castes, so it helped us in a way that in order to gain more info on the stakeholders involved in the community based tourism business and development we gathered the point of view of all sections from the high caste to the low caste people. The low caste people are known as the Dalits which is said to be the poorest of all having not enough for a living, these people are socially outcast and in our understanding the most deprived and marginalized section of the society. The caste system was also relevant for our research topic which was largely on the social issues of racial discrimination and in this case the Dalits were the ones who were socially unwelcomed and discriminated to get a clear idea particularly on how much community based tourism has worked in order to elevate the position of the Dalits in the society both economically and socially and generally on the rest of the residents.

The following are the details of the interviewees and various stakeholders on the given table below:

S.NO.	Name of Interviewees	Types of Stakeholders
1.	Sunil Banmala (M, 37 years old)	Engineer, Nepal Tourism Board
2.	Tej Bahadur Gurung (M, 53 years old)	Chairperson of VDC, Ghandruk
3.	Roshan Thapa (M, 35 years old)	Travel Agent, Guide
4.	Kiran Poudel (M, 45 years old)	Owner of Homestay
5.	Kumar Bahadur Gurung (M, 48 years old)	Local, Carpenter
6.	Lali Maya Gurung (F, 47 years old)	Local, Caretaker of Old Gurung Museum
7.	Purna Bahadur Gurung (M, 50 years old)	Local
8.	Chandra Bahadur Basnet (M, 73 years old)	Former Resident of Ghandruk

9.	Geeta Devi Gurung (F,40 years old)	Local resident
10.	Ramu BK (M, 51 years old)	Local, (Dalit)
11.	Gooma Pariyar(F, 43 years old)	Local farmer, (Dalit).
12.	Man Bahadur Gurung (M, 43 years old)	Hotel owner
13.	Radhika Pandey (F, 50 years old)	Tea shop owner
14.	Sundari Gurung (F, 55 years old)	Chairperson of Aama Samuha (mother group)
15.	Suntari Gurung (F, 37 years old)	Local

5.5 Ethical Consideration:

While conducting a professional research it is the moral obligation of the researcher to respect the ethical standards, culture and physical existence of the study area as every society has its own values, customs and norms¹⁵⁵. The most respectful party in an interview is its participant and should be given maximum preference while ensuring their privacy.¹⁵⁶

Our basic aim while conducting the interviews was to ensure that we meet complete ethical standards during our semi structured interviews. Before the interviews we requested all the interviewees and explained them our main aim of conducting interviews. We informed them about our research project and our educational background which helped them in adjusting with us quickly. We ensured them that their information would be used only for our thesis and would not be used elsewhere for any political or social matter.

¹⁵⁵ D. J. Nash, "Doing independent overseas fieldwork 1: practicalities and pitfalls." *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, 24(1) (2000): 139-149 (146)

¹⁵⁶ Emma Bell and Alan Bryman, "The ethics of management research: an exploratory content analysis," *British journal of management* 18, no. 1 (2007): 63-77 (64)

We respected the identity of all the participants and gave equal respect to everyone from the community. We did not use the word “Dalit” while interviewing them and called them as community members just to make sure that the Dalits do not feel inferior by any of our question or comments. We requested them for the interview in their most convenient time and requested them through formal emails and phone calls. We asked them in which mode they were more comfortable audio call or the video call and only with their consent we used the video calling facility like Skype or WhatsApp.

For general ethics, we used the word village development rather than the word community development as community only projects a group or a fixed section of the society as we wanted to be broad and to have a general understanding we used the word village development.

5.6 Trustworthiness of The Research:

The main focus of our research project was based on qualitative research methods so we used the term trustworthiness of research for our project and not reliability and validity. As validity and reliability are the terms which are more appropriate in the context of quantitative research¹⁵⁷. Thus, it is suitable to use the term Trustworthiness to ensure that this research is credible, transferable and dependable (Shenton 2004).¹⁵⁸

Credibility

The term Credibility depicts the authenticity of the research¹⁵⁹. As being locals of the said area and having full cognition of the culture and social values we gained further knowledge through the interviews, the opinions of the participants could be considered credible as we can analyze and evaluate their info with the situation of Ghandruk where one of us were born and brought up so the info provided by them is authentic but it could change in the future if the social and economic situation of Ghandruk changes with time.

¹⁵⁷ Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis & Adran Thornhill, “Research methods for business students,” *Pearson educ* (2009) (193-194).

¹⁵⁸ Andrew K. Shelton, "Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects," *Education for information* 22.2 (2004): 63-75 (63-64)

¹⁵⁹ Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis & Adran Thornhill. *Ibid.* 222

Transferability

The information presented in this research could be used and applied in future for further research work if the main aim of the research effort is to highlight poverty and social discrimination in the relevant studies.

Dependability

As mentioned above the participants opinion and views may change in the future in the similar geographical context but different economic or social context. Similar results could be achieved in the future research on the same topic if the situation of the participants is similar to the one projected in this research work.

5.7 The Researcher's Positions

As researchers, we tried to maintain the academic standards of being neutral and transparent in our research approach. We know this notion that researchers could be pointed as biased if they are researching the case studies of their respective nationalities. While having extensive knowledge of the culture and social values of Nepal it was our moral obligation and really important for our thesis to use these capabilities in order to find the most authentic and truthful picture depicting the real situation of Ghandruk in the context of community based tourism and its social and economic impacts on the local community.

5.8 Limitations:

The project was completed through the desktop research approach and also through the qualitative approach since we collected data through interviews as well with the related stakeholders in carrying out this research. As with the unfortunate outbreak of COVID-19 we were unable to travel to Nepal as the international borders were closed. We believed that field research could have helped to answer the project more in detail. Our research topic has not been that much researched before in the context of social issues like discrimination so we lacked some major sources which could have given us some real info on the discrimination situation in Ghandruk. We have critically analyzed all the literature which we studied to get more suitable answers for our research questions. We gathered information from 15 people of the Ghandruk village however we could have interviewed more but due to pandemic and language barriers we had to stick with 15 concerned stakeholders. Our analysis could have been broader had there been more people interviewed but still the findings are real, credible and neutral in all approaches.

CHAPTER 6

6. Analysis:

This section of the thesis will give us insights of the info obtained from the interviewees during the research. We structured the data into two parts in this chapter. Firstly, we will be presenting the perception of stakeholders on CBT in Ghandruk and in the second part we will be focusing on the role of various stakeholders in Ghandruk Development.

15 individuals were interviewed during the research as most of the individuals are mostly the residents of the village. While some of the stakeholders are temporarily residing because of their jobs. During the interview, we came to know some interviewee's being local have dual roles in the locality as they were involved in private sectors and civil society respectively so it was sometimes challenging for us to understand stakeholders individually as some of them had dual roles.

6.1 Stakeholders' Perception on Ghandruk Development:

In the above literature review, we have discussed tourism as a tool to reduce poverty and improve livelihood. It is necessary to explore how the stakeholders of Ghandruk view the development of tourism in Ghandruk in order to investigate whether the stakeholders perceive tourism as steps to development and diminish poverty along with inequality.

During the interview, most of them corresponded with Ghandruk in the phase of development as various changes have happened on the basis of infrastructure. Most of the villagers were concerned about the changes after the end of civil war. They also agreed on Ghandruk changing in recent days as various businesses are operated and introduced and also trekking routes are getting busy in recent years.

“Before the outbreak of civil war the village of Ghandruk was the center to lots of tourists and some of its villagers gained jobs related to the tourism industry but during the civil war everything changed. The infrastructure of the village was destroyed as buildings, hotels and schools were heavily damaged and there came a point where there were no tourists at all. In 2006 when the civil war ended the village was rebuilt. New link roads were constructed which linked the Ghandruk village to other nearest cities and villages. This has helped the tourist industry as many international and domestic tourists have visited the village over the years.”

Kiran Poudel, owner of hotel, Ghandruk

Purna Bahadur Gurung another local of the Ghandruk village also talked about the destruction of the village due to the civil war and the developments done afterwards he states:

“If there was no civil war we would have been far better in terms of development and standard living. The civil war hampered our economy as there were no tourists in the village for a long time. The governmental offices were destroyed but now slowly we are on the right track and there is a long way to go”.

Purna Bahadur Gurung, Local, Ghandruk

In terms of progress, many of the locals responded positively to the questions of developments in the village regarding infrastructure and construction of new roads, communication, better health facilities, and building of public toilets thus all these have positively impacted and changed the lifestyle of the people.

“It has developed a lot; actually, the village has everything like a town. We have good roads so that we can travel to Pokhara within a few hours. There are schools, health posts, small markets which have made the life of people really good and easy.”

Man Bahadur Gurung, owner of hotel, Ghandruk

In addition, Mr. Sunil Banmala (engineer, Nepal Tourism Board) has a similar point of view as Man Bahadur has, according to him:

“I have been working as an engineer in different trekking routes such as Ghandruk, Landruk, Langtang, Goisainkunda. Amongst all of these the Ghandruk has developed at a very rapid pace. It has developed in providing better facilities in the field of transportation, hotels, medical clinic, school as well as building new youth clubs. When I began working in Ghandruk in 2011, It took me more than 6 hours to reach Ghandruk from Nayapool by walk as there were no proper roads, with the newly constructed road I can take my bike near to Ghandruk village. I heard that the VDC (Village Development Committee) of Ghandruk has started a daily transportation system in connection to Pokhara.”

Mr. Sunil Banmala, Engineer, Nepal Tourism Board, Ghandruk

However, there are some locals who are not well satisfied with the recent developments even though the village is developing gradually. Furthermore, they even compare Ghandruk with other villages like Chomrong in terms of various changes.

“We can see various changes in Chomrong. Every village needs to learn the way that village is progressing. In a short period of time, the village has everything like internet, communication, clean water, health post and market. Sometimes we need to go there to buy things/goods if we are out of products in our village. Tourism has changed that village a lot and we need our village to be changed.”

Lali Maya Gurung, caretaker of Old Gurung Museum, Ghandruk

Also, the chairperson of the Ama Samuha (mothers group) thinks the village is really progressing but still the locals need more awareness to do more development.

“I think we are getting better in the development of infrastructure but still it would be better if we prioritize more on women empowerment. If we could empower at least one woman of the house it will help a lot in development of the village. We also need to focus on education for everybody like that is currently done in Dhampus village and also in Chomrong village.”

Suntali Gurung, local

The locals residing in Ghandruk who moved to Ghandruk have different points of view.

“I cannot compare my old village (Pisang) with Ghandruk. Many facilities are available here. In Pisang the basic needs such as access to clean drinking water, proper infrastructure like roads, and fully equipped supermarkets were not available even for the medical treatment we had to move to other villages, as things have changed in Ghandruk and we have better life style so we are very happy with the facilities we are having in the recent time.”

Geeta Devi Gurung, non-resident of Ghandruk

During the conversation, we got a chance to meet one of the senior villagers who has known Ghandruk for more than six decades. He was pretty much satisfied with current development of Ghandruk but still he thinks that facilities provided by the Government in the village are not equally distributed as he says:

“If we compare with the past we can understand that there have been lots of positive changes in the village as far as the development has been concerned. The lower area of the village is more developed than the area located on the upper side of the village. The upper part of the village is mostly populated with the Dalit caste people which are not that much privileged with the facilities of road, better means of communication and health post etc. They usually have to walk for hours to reach the market and don't even have toilet facilities in their houses.”

Chandra Bahadur Basnet, local, Ghandruk

One of the locals was hopeful and of the belief that the recent developments will bring good prospects for the coming generation of the Dalit community, he expressed his views in this way:

“I can confidently say that our village has changed a lot. When I was young I didn't have the opportunity to go to school but i am happy that my children got the opportunity to go to school. Earlier the Dalits had no right to speak and to have their own representation but now we have our own community which tries to solve our problems and raises our issues and concerns to the concerned authorities.”

Ramu B.K., local (Dalit), Ghandruk

Beside the locals, the guide from Pokhara who is recently working in Annapurna trekking route which is near to the village pointed out various positive things regarding the development of Ghandruk.

“Everything has now changed in Ghandruk as there are good roads, proper cleaning water and good health care system which previously was not provided to the locals of Ghandruk if I compare it with my first experience when I visited Ghandruk for the first time. The only source of occupation in Ghandruk was agriculture but now most of the local people are associated with the hospitality and tourism industry.

The young generation is also very much active through their youth clubs as through that they actively participate in various social works regarding cleaning and sanitation, proper training for the locals to host the foreign tourists at their homes thus adding more development towards the village.”

Roshan Thapa, Guide, Annapurna Trekking Route Near Ghandruk.

The above opinions illustrate that each interviewee has its own approach on the development of Ghandruk and we can see their assessment on the different levels of development which concerns them and also the impacts of these developments in the social changes of the society.

For some of the locals, the availability of infrastructures like schools, health posts, markets, roads are the indications of development while some of the locals believe the provision to get education to their children was entitled as development in villages. Similarly, Roshan Thapa, the tourist guide who travels often to Ghandruk can clearly express that there have been various changes and confirmed the positive development of Ghandruk Village.

6.2 Perceived role of Community-Based Tourism:

As seen in the literature review, Goodwin & Santilli¹⁶⁰ were some of the researchers arguing that tourism will become effective and eventually benefit everybody when the community itself is involved. In this section, we will examine how the locals have perceived the benefits from tourism. According to the interview, most of the locals engaged in the tourism and hospitality sector which are benefited economically by the community based tourism say that:

“We are privileged to have all the required needs in order to have a comfortable life that includes access to clean water, toilets, electricity, internet, luxury hotels and fully equipped super markets. I think it's because of community based tourism. Due to the increasing number of tourists in the village, everybody has understood that in order to strengthen the tourism industry and to earn good profits we need to provide our tourists with the best facilities to overcome the needs of tourists.

Kumar Bahadur Gurung, local, Ghandruk

¹⁶⁰ Harold Goodwin and Rosa Santilli, "Community-based tourism: A success," *ICRT Occasional paper* 11, no. 1 (2009): 1-37 (11).

In some cases, the motivation of tourism is so strong that mostly people who have collective goals are united and as a result of their unity various actions are jointly taken in consideration of their shared interests, one of them is of the view that:

“As the government planned to build proper road linking to ACAP (Annapurna Conservation Area Project), but the villagers from the trekking route including the people from Ghandruk were not in support of the construction of the roads as with the construction of main road the tourist will no longer stay in Ghandruk and with the facility of the newly constructed road they would prefer leaving the village rather than spending more days in Ghandruk. As the villagers went on to the strike against the government on the building of the road, this caused the government to stop the building of the road for some indefinite time. The locals also claimed that they along with other community investors which are related to the community based tourism invested lots of money in the building of new hotels in the village so that the tourists can stay for long in Ghandruk so the building of the road will allow the tourists to go back on the same day and we won't be able to have good profits so we really need tourists to stay in order to survive.”

Purna Bahadur Gurung, local, Ghandruk

With the statement of Purna Bahadur Gurung, we can agree that the people in the village themselves don't want larger scale development on transportation as they want tourists to stay longer so that most of the tea shop, homestay, and hotel owners can be benefited through that. The strike from the villagers against advancement of the road by the government is one of the cases that prove locals themselves are being obstacles for the large-scale development which has many advantages for the other people. However, the way villagers have thought from their perspective for the long run economy, also needs to be specified as in their aspect if the road is being made, they might lose lots of tourists in the village and they cannot generate more money like they are getting in the present context.

While talking about tourism there are many benefits, not only economic benefits but there are various indirect benefits which are the reasons for the positive attitude of locals towards tourism especially in Ghandruk.

“Due to tourism development in Ghandruk, locals are getting both direct and indirect benefits and assists. As direct benefits, tourism is providing employment opportunities, and a person who has enough capital can run his/her individual business such as, homestay, tea house, and hotel but there are also indirect benefits. It's been more than 10 years; I have learned weaving traditional rugs from a group of volunteers from another country. Now, most of the girls are involved in weaving traditional rugs as a full-time occupation.”

Sundari Gurung, local, Ghandruk

“Through the development in community based tourism the villagers of Ghandruk got the opportunity to interact with the foreign people who came from the whole world. They are able to learn many new ideas through the foreign tourists. New training programs for the locals have helped them in hosting the tourists properly and with the development in education, health and sanitation sectors the community based tourism has helped in strengthening not only in the tourism industry and also in upgrading the lifestyle of the locals associated with it.”

Sunil Banmala, Engineer of Nepal tourism Board

It's due to tourism that girls like Sundari Gurung have accomplished various skills which are beneficial for her lifetime. In this case, the value of tourism lies far behind the money which she can earn. In the same way, Lali Maya Gurung shares similar related experiences as well as exposure.

“I and my husband were engaged in agriculture also. We were not able to earn that much as it was difficult to survive for our living. In recent years, we have invested some money in this museum and we are really happy and satisfied with our earnings as we can support our children's education and other needs that are living in Pokhara”

Lali Maya Gurung, caretaker of Old Gurung Museum, Ghandruk

In the interview, one of the interviewees claimed that he is not that much dependent on tourism as most of the people are engaged in tourism.

“Most of the people in the village are engaged in the business of renting out their homes to the tourists as people are building new hotels, providing homestay near trekking areas, so I prefer to have another job through which I can earn some money for living.

Kumar Bahadur Gurung, local, Ghandruk

His job as a carpenter is not precisely correlated to tourism, so he admits that he can earn for his living without being dependent on tourism fields. In the long term, the jobs of carpenters will be in high demand in the village of Ghandruk. Nevertheless, carpenter is a skillful job that alters the tourism industry but it plays a crucial role in progression of the village. So, due to tourism, people like Kumar Bahadur can get more employment opportunities that can uplift the living standard of the locals.

“Tourism became an integral part of our lives as with the help of tourism we can interact with the people from all around the world. In this globalized world, we can learn about different cultures, languages and traditions of different people of the world. Along with that we are getting different grants to build schools, to improve health care and also for the pure water.”

Kiran Paudel, owner of hotel, Ghandruk

During the interviews, we came to know that there are many benefits directly and indirectly in the lives of the community locals but there are some locals (Dalits) who do not see any direct benefits.

“As we have been termed as a Dalit, so we cannot get much benefits from tourism. Our families are not allowed to work inside the hotel of the village as we are considered untouchables or the ones who are from the lowest caste. In our village, mostly people have this perception that we Dalits should only work in the construction or other low jobs. I only work in the field of my landlord just like my father used to do.”

Goma Pariyar, local (Dalit), Ghandruk

Ramu also has the same feeling as Goma has. As Ramu shared his experience that;

“If you are from another community or if you are not Dalit then you can easily get jobs related to tourism sectors but being a Dalit people does not hire us but now the thinking of people are changing day by day.”

Ramu B.K., local (Dalit), Ghandruk

This social and economic barrier is deep rooted in the caste system where the Dalits are considered as inferior to other castes, and other castes are superior. During the interview, we came to know that most of the Dalits are dependable on tourism as they think that they will get financial support from tourists. On the other hand, Dalits also get financial support from the government as a Dalits allowance or annuity. The people especially from the Dalits community in the village are less motivated and more dependent as they know they can get financial support easily and do not take any responsibility.

“Now a day there is not much discrimination in our society towards Dalits and many jobs are available for them on equal merits but the Dalits most of the time ignore these jobs as they do not wish to work. The Dalits do get funding from the government and are also helped by the upper-class people who also provide them with food and also for their clothes. The foreigners also support their children in the field of education but still they rely on others rather than working on their own.”

Roshan Thapa, Guide, Ghandruk

There are many locals who contradicts that tourism is not enough for the development of Ghandruk as it makes people dependable especially on the foreign tourists.

“We can see lots of people being sponsored for education. The people especially the Dalits take it as grants so that they don't work hard for their families and rely on others while working less which is not enough.”

Geeta Devi Gurung, non-resident, Ghandruk

Not only in education that people are more dependable for donation but also, they seek to get aid for their living.

“Our village gets lots of donations and aid for the welfare of the village from various sponsors and organizations. In some people's point of view, we should be happy that we could utilize the budget in development of villages but there are some people who think that money is given for them and they go on expecting every year. Now you can see many people in the village who do absolutely nothing and expect the aid and in case if they don't get it they trigger this issue of discrimination on Dalits and that they are ignored and neglected in the community.”

Sunil Banmala, Engineer of Nepal Tourism Board

People's viewpoint about tourism is that it is an industry where people can generate income in less period of time. This kind of perception is one of the drawbacks of tourism.

“You can see a lot of people working in the business of homestays, hotels during the peak season as there is a set mind set of the people that they can earn straight away. Also, lots of students in the village stay home to help their family economically which consequences them to drop the school. Also, people without knowledge on the hospitality sector lead low qualitative services to the tourist which affects tourism in the long term.”

Radhika Pandey, tea house owner, Ghandruk

Another drawback is migration as people migrate from village to city areas in search of various opportunities. There are many families who earned a lot through tourism and now they are settled and established in bigger cities like Pokhara and Kathmandu. This will result in the downfall of tourism as if the locals will migrate then who will host the tourists. However, the trend of migration is both ways as while conducting the interviews we got to know that there were some interviewees who moved to Ghandruk in search of gaining good job opportunities from the old villages.

“We moved to Ghandruk for better opportunities. Now, we have our own house and my children study in a school in Ghandruk. We are not that much economically strong so that we cannot send them to Pokhara or Kathmandu. But I am earning good money from the tea shop so I can pay for the education of my children. Let's see what happens in future?”

Geeta Devi Gurung, non-resident, Ghandruk

The chairperson of the village development community thinks that tourism is beneficial for the village but he also believes that there is uneven distribution in terms of earning generally.

“The village is getting lots of opportunities but I think the travel agencies are earning a lot more than the villagers. The tourists come to visit villages through the travel agents and the people with good business relations often get lots of tourists whereas on the other hand the locals who do not have a bigger network or good working relations often do not get the fair number of tourists and earn less so we need to work on providing equal opportunities for all.”

All the above statements given by the locals give us this idea that tourism is considered beneficial directly in terms of employment, business as well as in the development of various infrastructures like health, education, market, sanitation and other facilities indirectly.

However, the stakeholders agree on negative consequences also. Some of them believe that funds from tourists, and the government are making locals more dependable especially Dalits which is making low motivation toward the hard work. Also in the name of earning money people are neglecting their school in peak seasons. Lastly, the numbers of people migrating to cities for better opportunities are increasing day by day but still we can see a balance being created as there are some people who are moving inside the Ghandruk from other remote areas. After listening to all the locals most of them expressed their opinion that locals are indirectly benefited from tourism which has higher values in comparison to direct benefits like employments. Now there is a question: are these indirect benefits enough to overcome socio economic problems?

6.3 Contribution towards Caste discrimination and Poverty reduction:

According to many researchers such as Zhao and Ritchie¹⁶¹, tourism has the potential to reduce poverty. This contrasts researchers like Hall¹⁶² who remain critical regarding the role of tourism in case of poverty alleviation as the benefits are exaggerated. Finally, Mbaiwas¹⁶³ believes that tourism enhances unequal distribution in the socio-economic fields rather than reducing it.

While interviewing the locals most of them claimed that they are poor but after much deliberation found that the term being poor is always comparative as they compare themselves with one of the richest people in the village and believe that they are poorer than the rest of the villagers.

In the interview, most of the locals agreed on the socio-economic impact through tourism development. We also asked regarding the poverty situation with caste discrimination between the locals of the village and many of them agreed the poorest of poor so-called Dalits are still poor. Still the lifestyle of every villager is changing and improving.

¹⁶¹ Weibing Zhao and JR Brent Ritchie, "Tourism and poverty alleviation: An integrative research framework," *Current Issues in Tourism* 10, no. 2-3 (2007): 119-143 (119).

¹⁶² Colin Michael Hall, "Tourism planning: Policies, processes and relationships," *Pearson Education*, 2008.

¹⁶³ Joseph E. Mbaiwa, "Enclave tourism and its socio-economic impacts in the Okavango Delta, Botswana," *Tourism management* 26, no. 2 (2005): 157-172.

“Tourism has played an important role in reducing poverty, the bank facilitates the villagers by providing them with loans if they want to start a new business which is linked with the tourism industry as they are of this assurance that people will earn and will pay them back the loan with interest.”

Man Bahadur Gurung, local, Ghandruk

Also, Man Bahadur shared his personal experience on the loan he got from the bank and the investment he did on the hotel industry. He also believed that most of the people are encouraged by the tourism sector and made up their mind to choose business related to tourism and the opportunities from it. Thus, it can overcome various socio-economic problems. However, there is suspicion in the village between the people regarding the gain of profits through the tourism industry.

“Many people who are associated with the tourism industry are benefitted from this business but it depends on the ones who have a more innovative mind. There are also some individuals like the (Dalits) who face difficulty in making the ends meet all around the year but the tourism industry has also helped them in getting low level jobs in the hotel industry like cleaners, helpers or in the dishwashing section in order to fulfill their needs.”

Kiran Poudel, owner of hotel, Ghandruk

Man Bahadur Gurung stated his own opinion on his personal experience while Kiran thinks the people who are not directly involved in the field of tourism are still the poorest of the poor and still Dalits are discriminated against in society.

“The lifestyle of the residents of Ghandruk is becoming good if we compare it with the past years. I do not know how much they are earning yearly but almost everyone, even the Dalits are no longer poor as I often see them shopping in my outlet.”

Geeta Devi Gurung, non-resident, Ghandruk

On the other hand, locals like Geeta Devi who is currently a shop owner in the village is of the view that people are not poor anymore even the Dalits. She further state that people do not have time to disfavor on social discrimination and poverty. Dalits of the village also agree on statements by diverse speculations.

“In the past, most of the people were illiterate, and they were unaware of the bad impacts of the caste system so I saw how the high castes were highly prioritized and their way of discriminating the lower one’s (Dalit), But In the recent years, people have their own occupation or business, also we can see the Dalits getting selected for the governmental jobs and are respected by all villagers. Now, mostly people don’t have much time in discriminating others and still if they try to discriminate they could be fined by the government based on the act passed on social injustice.”

Ramu B.K., local (Dalit), Ghandruk

The chairperson of the village also accepts that tourism has helped a lot in reduction of poverty at certain levels but is not certain that it will eliminate the social discrimination and poverty.

“The way of living has changed and we are living a good life if we compare our current situation with the past but still we are poorer than other high caste people and there is still discrimination in the village.”

Goma Pariyar, local (Dalit), Ghandruk

Still there is an existence of hope in the Dalits that their children will do better in the coming future through tourism.

“Recently, we are getting benefits from tourism. My children are going to school and they get free education. All this is happening from tourists and donor agencies. I hope one day my kids will do something for the living and will come out of poverty.”

Ramu B.K., local (Dalit), Ghandruk

Poverty and social discrimination are really difficult terms to be defined as mentioned in above literature review. We also can see how locals view and evaluate the level of poverty in their village as it is different from each other's perspectives.

“I cannot say who is either poor or a rich in the village. I can see many Dalits children buying food and other expensive goods in my shop but still I can feel they wear dirty and old clothes in hopes of getting noticed by the tourists and elites so that they can provide them financial support. I think they need to prioritize things and use the money in a better way. I tried to suggest them (Dalits) many times but they ignored me.”

Radhika Pandey, tea house owner, Ghandruk

During the discussion, Dalits feel that the social caste system is the restriction that makes them behind in every aspect. As Dalits, they are not treated equally in the village as they are considered as untouchables.

“As the times have changed and people are changing their minds towards discriminating against the Dalits but still there are some people whose attitude is really bad towards the Dalits. They do not allow the Dalits to enter into their homes. They make them work like slaves. The older generation does not possess tolerance but the young generation does not carry that much hatred towards the Dalits.

Goma Pariyar, local (Dalit), Ghandruk

It is not an easy task to analyze poverty on the basis of the opinion of few people in the village. During the interview, most of them told that they were poor and also accepted that the tourism industry has brought numerous changes in improving their lifestyle and they are not that poor as they were in the past

Talking about the discrimination issue, according to our understanding people are changing, we can expect that it will take some more years to get the people living in rural areas to get opportunities which can uplift their lifestyle. As we can see there are some people who are more privileged than the others as there is uneven distribution of development in villages between the Dalits and the upper caste people.

Sub-Conclusion:

The associates including locals have experienced various changes in Ghandruk, and have no doubt that CBT can act as a tool for the development of the village. Some of them believed that the Ghandruk village would not have developed if the tourism industry would not have flourished in that region and would have been like the other small villages which are less developed and if tourism was not given priority to Ghandruk.

Still many locals believe and expect that the development could be more exceptional as we have seen them comparing the village of Ghandruk to the village of Chomrong which is more developed and prosperous. The locals affiliated or engaged in various development works are optimists and idealists and also believe that tourism will play an important role in development of Ghandruk.

There is skepticisms between the people that people who are getting richer move to the urban areas like Pokhara, Kathmandu in order to pursue their dream and good life for their family while the poorest of poor so called Dalits are becoming more dependent and inferior on the funds and sponsorship they get without doing any effort to change their livelihood.

Skepticism is perceived when we talk about the role of tourism in socio-economic alleviation. Most of the people believe that tourism has helped poor but Dalit don't think much change in their lives. However, everybody including Dalits are hopeful for the future of their children. Also, we can see the view of people towards the Dalits are changing day by day but still there should be more serious and sincere efforts required from the locals including Dalits so that job opportunities and facilities could be distributed equally.

Lastly, it is really important to have all stakeholders' commitment if they want to overcome socio-economic alleviation through tourism in Ghandruk. We would be focusing on the stakeholders' involvement and their various roles in development of Ghandruk in the next part.

6.4 Stakeholders' involvement and their role in development of Ghandruk:

In this study, we have interviewed the local residents of Ghandruk village along with the staff member of Nepal Tourism Board and a tourist guide from the Annapurna region. After the interview, we have categorized stakeholders into three parts; first is as a local community, second is as tourism and travel agency and another as governmental where various roles and involvement will be discussed.

The Local community

The locals are considered as important stakeholders in terms of ensuring the stability of the tourism industry by using the key resources. They host the foreign and national tourists and provide unique and scenic locations to the tourists and also promote their culture and tradition. In the case of Ghandruk, we could see the living standards of people as it varies from each other so we can distinguish them as poor-rich, educated-illiterate but still they have contributed somehow in tourism in providing services to the visitors directly or indirectly. At the same time, we came to know various committees have been formed like youth clubs, Ama Samuha (Mother's group) to work for the development of the areas. We can see the role of community being changed with the change in time.

The Tourism and the Travel Agency

The tourism industry and travel agencies have also significant roles in the development of Ghandruk. The government and travel agencies are different stakeholders having their own way of function and impact. We were unable to be in touch with other travel and tour agencies like Getaway Nepal Adventure, Benchmark Tours and Travel, Blue sky travels and tour Pvt. Ltd. etc. as they operate from various areas of Nepal and they were closed due to lock down in the country because of the spread of Corona Virus (Covid-19) across the world. In the interview, we came to know the tourism and travel agency role after the conversation with the travel guide Mr. Roshan Thapa and got this understanding that the tourism industry's involvement is really important in order to achieve development.

The Government:

The other vital stakeholder of Ghandruk is the local government. In recent times the Government of Nepal has implemented various plans in the village with a vision to develop the areas in Annapurna trekking route. Recently the government has invested money on the area through the yearly budget provided for the sustainable development in the trekking areas and nearby areas and Ghandruk is one of the villages. Not only that the government has also implemented various plans and policies for upgrading so called Dalits in terms of socio economic aspects.

The aim of this research is also to examine the role and involvement of the stakeholders. During the interviews, we classified their roles and involvement in three different aspects like social, economic and environmental aspects in terms of development in Ghandruk.

6.4.1 Involvement of Stakeholders in Social aspects:

Talking about the social aspects of Ghandruk recently we can see lots of people being aware of inequality amongst the people and we can see Dalits still being discriminated against but that is not that much as it was in the past. In the current times the Dalits are starting to get involved in various community works by establishing their own Dalit group.

“We were not given a fair chance to express ourselves in the past but now we have established our own Dalit community in which we discuss our problems and work on finding proper solutions for them. The Head of the Dalit group further puts forward our problems and concerns before the main Village Development Committee for their possible solutions.”

Goma Pariyar, local (Dalit), Ghandruk

A mother's group has also been created for the empowerment of the women in the village but often there are people from the upper caste who do not get involved in this group, on the other hand the Dalits who don't find opportunities don't get involved in tasks such as the development of the committee.

"I have not joined my mother's group. They are contributing to various works for the welfare of the community. Maybe I should join but the thing is that I could not give time every day as I have to take care of the customers and I have to pay membership fees too."

Sundari Gurung, local, Ghandruk

While talking about the engagement for community development, many of them express various opinions stating their reason for less involvement. Most of them express the financial situation of their family being a reason for not getting involved in the community's developmental work.

"We don't have prosperous family backgrounds so we need to struggle each and every day to feed our family. We rarely get time to think about the community. If we could earn more and generate good revenue then we could think about the society and its development."

Kumar Bahadur Gurung, Local, Ghandruk

The chairperson of Ama Samuha (Mothers' Group) thinks the locals of the village are mostly poor and are not educated so they prioritize various religious work rather than development work.

"We started our group in order to make people aware of the development of villages, especially upgrading the women in the area. Most of the people are poor and they are just involved in doing religious work. If they make themselves aware of this group and give time to various activities along with religious duties then they can do lots of positive and humanitarian works and also can involve in the development of the village."

Sundari Gurung, Ama Samuha, Ghandruk

In terms of social aspects, we can see the more influence of tourist and travel agencies in the village. Talking about the role and involvement the people are really happy with the role and involvement of tourists and travel agencies even there are some drawbacks of them in the youth as people are getting influenced by western culture.

“The people in the village, especially the youth are giving focus to western culture as they don’t wear their own cultural dress often. The cultural dance is no more performed often. People want to earn money through tourism. In some way, we are earning money but at the same time we are losing the authenticity of our own culture”.

Lalimaya Gurung, care taker of Old Gurung Museum

“Now-a-days, most of the people are prioritizing various international foods in their hotels, and they are not promoting local foods of Ghandruk. The youth needs to understand the value of our local foods and culture.”

Chandra Bahadur Basnet, local, Ghandruk

One of the locals named Sundari Gurung is worried as well as happy about her son's future. Her son Sunil wanted to travel to a foreign country after he got in touch with the tourist who came from New Zealand and told him about the bright prospects in staying abroad.

“My son finished his bachelor's degree and now he wants to move to New Zealand. He was told by one of the tourists that he will be able to seek good education and a good life in future. Being a mother I am happy that my son can have a good life in comparison to Ghandruk but still I am worried if he would not want to return then what will happen when we will be old. We have seen a lot of youth not returning back to the village.”

Sundari Gurung, Local

In recent times, some of the locals are involved in NGOs like the Lions club and other civil society groups but most of the locals think these organizations which are active in community development are not for the poor people. Talking about the role of NGOs, most of the locals were really happy with the works carried out in the village.

“There are many organizations which come with various programmes in the village like health, sanitation, and other training for the welfare of the village. Most of the youth are encouraged by various organizations to go to school and we are really grateful for their work.”

Lali Maya Gurung, caretaker of Old Gurung Museum, Ghandruk

Some of them also expressed doubts about the NGOs in the development of the community. Some of the poor and uneducated people think that powerful people are driving the organization in the wrong way.

“The people who are well networked and influential get associated with the NGO’s. The funds do not reach the needy people which are supposed to be spent for the welfare of them but are not used properly. They try to convince that they have spent the money on the people and the deserving community but still certain sections of the society doubt that the funds have been misused for their own personal use.”

Goma Pariyar, local (Dalit), Ghandruk

“There are numerous projects which are initiated by different organizations and NGO’s in the village but what I understood is that they are not engaging with the correct people to get them involved in the project handling. They engage and hire the people of their own choice. Mostly people in the village believe that the organization does not provide any information on its project plans and its implementation with anyone.”

Chandra Bahadur Basnet, local, Ghandruk

Talking about the work or role of the government, the perception of people related to governmental posts varies with each other. We can see debates in the governmental work that locals think it’s not doing the work as it should be but at the same time people in the governmental post admit that the government is doing its job in a needed developmental area considering its limitations.

“The political party governing Ghandruk is unsuitable as they work only to fulfill their own needs, we Dalits did not get any benefit from the previous budget which was passed by the Government, and for us our Government is not doing enough.”

Ramu B.K., local (Dalit), Ghandruk

“People who are working in governmental jobs are really corrupt. The incentives which are provided to the Dalits, old aged people and handicapped by the government through its budget release are being misused by government employees. They used to ask for the bribes in order to approve some paperwork in Ghandruk.”

Radhika Pandey, local, Ghandruk

However, Sunil Banmala and Tej Bahadur Gurung who are affianced in the governmental post have different points of views regarding the positive side of government in terms of Ghandruk village development.

“The locals have different opinions towards the Government, some are of the positive views and others think really negatively of the functioning of the government. However, we work really hard as it is not easy to change the whole system in one day, it is not about imaging and considering it done. We try our best to make Ghandruk village prosperous. The people should understand the working of the government and how it works for their betterment.”

Sunil Banmala, Engineer of Nepal Tourism Board

“The growth and development of the village is gradually improving with each passing day. It is not possible to ask for a huge amount of money to be allocated for only our village. We have used the money in a proper way and have worked for the welfare of the people. Recently we have discussed about the upcoming budget and we are planning to expand the road of Ghandruk but most of the local residents are against us for this expansion of the road as if it happens the people believe that they have to surrender their lands to the Government which they do not want to happen. There is certain fraction of government officials who do misuse of their posts and commit wrongdoings which makes people in believing that the whole government is corrupt.”

Tej Bahadur Gurung, Chairperson of VDC, Ghandruk

Sunil Banmala believes that only the Dalits are having more employment opportunities through the quota provided by the government.

“The Government offer more employment opportunities specifically to the Dalit community and women through the governmental quotas which can help them in coming out of poverty and discrimination. We cannot provide everyone with jobs but the deserving candidates from the Dalits are given priority. Still most of the people from the Dalit community criticize the government for doing nothing for them”.

Sunil Banmala, Engineer of Nepal Tourism Board in ABC route.

6.4.2 Involvement of Stakeholders in Economic Aspects:

In terms of economic aspects, the locals are really active in the role and involvement for the development of the village. Most of the people are conscious of generating money, being engaged and getting associated with numerous jobs and occupations along with tourism.

In the interview, the locals said that some of them were concerned about the society as they were working in cooperation with tourism and other organizations like regional hotel organizations and local chambers of commerce and industry.

“I am linked with the agriculture business as some years ago my son who is working for the travel agency introduced me to a foreign tourist named William Smith, he was kind enough to teach me different ideas and techniques regarding greenhouse and also poultry farming.

Purna Bahadur Gurung, local, Ghandruk

In the interview, some of the locals feel the necessity of involvement in community development by sharing various opinions and their experiences. Some of them feel that they need to focus on other areas ahead of tourism in order to make economic development in Ghandruk and it should be based on local empowerment.

“In the current times, we are too reliant on the tourism industry, in my view we should be more focused on creating open markets where people can buy and sell their local products and can make good money out of that. I do know that the products coming from Pokhara in my shops are too expensive but if we develop our local market then we can manage to buy and sell the things from our own village.”

Geeta Devi Gurung, local, Ghandruk

Geeta Devi Gurung being involved in the private sector emphasizes that they can provide reasonable and quality products and services to the locals. At the same time, she believes that the locals can earn their living by engaging in business which can result positively for the community economically.

In economical point of view, most of the stakeholders believe the tourists in cooperation to various travel agencies are supporting a lot in the development of the village.

“I have seen many tourists in my hotel who like Nepal a lot and travel to this place yearly. Many tourists are volunteering for health camps and educating programs. I often see tourists donating various funds for community development. We have to be thankful for travel agencies for that. We are also here for business but still we are active on donation for the village development work according to our capability. We are trying to contribute to the development of Ghandruk.”

Kiran Raj Paudel, owner of hotel, Ghandruk

There are many tourists who visit Ghandruk and according to the locals the travel agencies play a vital role in making tourists as volunteers for providing various skills, improving health and so on for the people of the village. During the conversation Roshan Thapa also claimed that the involvement is not enough for the growth of Ghandruk.

“There are various things linked with tourism such as fundraising and volunteering but still I believe that the residents of Ghandruk need to be proactive for the development of their local land rather than relying on grants and funds.”

Roshan Thapa, guide, Ghandruk

“There are many organizations like World Vision International Nepal giving attention on implementing various training programs through which the local can increase the living standard. The travel agencies along with tourists are active in these kinds of projects.”

Man Bahadur Gurung, local, Ghandruk

Most of the travel and tourism agencies are somehow contributing in the development of Ghandruk by collaborating with NGOs through fundraising, volunteering programs and training. They also believe that development of Ghandruk can happen in a systematic way even though it might take little more time.

Meanwhile most of the locals are not satisfied with the work of the government. Most of the people in the village believe that the government is really corrupt and is not functioning well.

“The people of Ghandruk are of the view that the ones who have power to function the local government are not utilizing the budget in the due sectors. They try to convince us that they are doing the work but we do feel that there is some kind of corruption being done on the budget behind the scene.”

Radhika Pandey, local, Ghandruk

According to the chairperson of village Tej Bahadur Gurung in year 2019 the area received an annual budget of 600000 which was used for the development of infrastructure of the area. Also, the tourism board which is part of the government is contributing to the village in several ways by organizing various cultural shows, such as Mela (cultural gathering of peoples) where people can acquire knowledge while interacting with the professionals. In this way, the government has really played an important role in enriching the culture of Ghandruk.

6.4.3 Involvement of Stakeholders in Environmental aspects:

During the interview, we came to know that the people are aware of the conservation of Annapurna region and they are active on various programs in order to preserve the environment. With the increase of more visitors every related stakeholder is getting active in conserving the environment as well as at the same time they are focusing on the management of sustainable tourism.

“We started our group with donations from the villagers. As a group, we save a small amount of money through various programs with the performance on various occasions. We have been professionally active in the last 5 years and we managed to raise 50k NRs. We are planning to use this money for the welfare of our community like installing trash bins in the village, building new public toilets and cleaning etc.”

Lali Maya Gurung, caretaker of Old Gurung Museum, Ghandruk

Tourists are also playing a crucial role in conserving the environment of the village. Many locals agreed on tourists providing knowledge in environment conservation.

“Recently we sent a group of tourists for trekking in ABC (Annapurna Base camp). Shannon Weaver a foreign tourist wanted to do something for the residents of the village so she decided to voluntarily train the people on homestay and also trained them on how they can recycle certain things and make them usable again.

Roshan Thapa, guide, Ghandruk

Talking about the environment conservation the Tej Bahadur Gurung told that the government is really active on conservation of Annapurna region through ACAP. There are many restrictions regarding hunting and construction in the region.

“In this year, we implemented strict rules and regulations for conservation of the forests and wildlife animals. The people will be fined and put in the prison if they are caught during hunting. Also, we talk with the committee of the forest about the utilization of firewood to the villagers from the forest so every year, with strict observation and supervision of rangers, people from the village will be able to utilize the wood from the forest. Also, we will organize a plantation program and give awareness like we did in the past”.

Tej Bahadur Gurung, Chairperson of the Ghandruk VDC, Ghandruk

Meanwhile, some locals believe that the development in Ghandruk is less effective and slow so they think the government should be active in the coming days.

“There is no doubt that tourism has done a lot in the development of the village but still the process is really slow. If the government implements plans and policies in developing the various infrastructures along with environment conservation and providing education to the village, it would go faster.”

Purna Bahadur Gurung, local, Ghandruk

However, there are many locals who don't accept the government as they think the people working under implementing plans and policies are corrupt and they are not active in the development of the village.

“We do not have any faith left in the politicians as they only come to us when they are in need of our votes. They make huge promises to us before the election time and once they get elected they forget everything. It is their duty and responsibility to perform and work for the development of the rural areas of villages through the different developmental programs.”

Kiran Paudel, owner of hotel, local, Ghandruk

Talking about the involvement based on environmental point of view the government still thinks they are doing a pretty job in preservation of the environment along with sustainable tourism development.

“The government is not only concerned about the environment of Ghandruk as it is active in protecting 7629-kilometer square in Annapurna region which is home to 1233 plant species, 488 species of birds, 102 species of mammals. We have implemented various rules and regulations for conservation”.

Sunil Banmala, Engineer of Nepal tourism Board

From the above discussion based on various aspects, the role each stakeholder plays varies from each other in the village. Most of the locals sense the importance of collaboration with stakeholders like government, civil society, NGOs, and tourists while reflecting their role as a local community. There are some locals who think that to create the changes in the development everybody should be active and involved in each and every work together.

“I do believe that everyone who is a resident of Ghandruk should work together. We should be actively concerned in the various programs initiated by the NGO's, Civil society and the tourism industry and should not entirely leave everything to the government for doing all the things for us. For solid development, everyone should be counted.”

Suntari Gurung, Ama Samuha, Ghandruk

Lastly, locals have various barriers like lack of time, lack of education, lack of opportunities and so on in order to play a significant role in development of Ghandruk.

Overall, there are some locals who agree with the statement of the Chairperson of VDC that the government is really doing a good job even though the ward gets a limited budget. The engineer Sunil Banmala also stated that the government has given priority in tourism sectors but still the village needs to be focused with other infrastructure like health, drinking water, toilets, communication, transportation etc. The Tourism board of Nepal and ACAP are also doing best for overcoming tourism issues in the village.

Furthermore, the people from the government would appreciate the youth and other committees if they can contribute with certain plans and policies for the development of the village. The sign of positive changes is noticed by some of the locals even though there are some locals who think the government is doing nothing. There are some barriers between the locals and the government so there should be taken some serious steps toward working with the community together for reaching the developmental goal.

CHAPTER 7

7. Discussion:

The main objectives of this research were to understand the significance of stakeholder's role in Community based Tourism and connect the common issues like social discrimination and poverty with Community Based Tourism through various literatures. Also, this project aims to examine the stakeholders' involvement and roles in tourism development of Ghandruk.

From the various literatures, we came to know that many researchers believe and practice CBT as a development vehicle in developing countries focusing on economic and social aspects with potential to reduce socio economic alleviation. At the same time, there is argumentation whether CBT can contribute in socio economic development of village as the terms discrimination and poverty are complex in nature. It is in fact difficult to get an appropriate example that the poor have advanced with the CBT development.

There are many researchers who don't agree with the perception that CBT can make a positive impact in overcoming poverty alleviation as some of the reports have demonstrated revenue leak before it reaches the poor creating a bigger gap economically and socially between the rich and poor as a barrier.

However, the role of CBT in community development is still accepted by these researchers as there is increasing significance on participation of community in various decisions making, identifying various problems at local level as well as accommodating local needs to sustain long term.

There are many challenges like unequal distribution of budget; less community involvement with lack of coordination etc. in order to overcome such challenges collaboration within various stakeholders will play a vital role in the success of CBT.

During the process of collaboration with various stakeholders, it is necessary to include the perspective of all stakeholders in order to identify the reason for conflict and coordinate along with the impact of tourism between themselves in the particular area.

Zhao & Ritchie ¹⁶⁴ have classified various kinds of stakeholders which include the vulnerable section of the community i.e. the poor people and the governing bodies like the government, private sectors, NGOs and the tourists. In the research of Ghandruk, the stakeholders like government, locals and private sectors are given more importance.

Even though, tourists are considered a major source of income in the tourism industry, their value in development of CBT is much underrated specially because they have distinctive nature and they are mostly taken only from a marketing viewpoint.

Locals are one of the stakeholders who play a significant role in the development of CBT. The locals provide their location for the visitors and do different activities in the case of CBT. Some researchers fear that the benefits are not equally distributed between the poor and rich people. In case of Ghandruk, there should be given lots of emphasis on community involvement and CBT participation for the success of CBT so that benefits can be equally distributed within the high caste people and Dalits.

Most of the interviewees have criticized it because of inadequate involvement of the government for development of the village. Even though, they are functioning according to the budget, however the main agenda for the government is poverty alleviation and caste discrimination. Various NGOs are working together with the government through training and awareness programs for empowering the people in the village in order to overcome socio-economic alleviation.

The people in the village are engaged in various private sectors with huge investment. With the investment on different businesses, the other people in the village have got more employment opportunities. The locals have really good ideas on what business will be successful, but still people try to copy the same business and adopt the same strategy if some business in the village gets successful. During the research, we sense a lack of study on private sector contributing in socio-economic alleviation, even though there has been a rise of various private sectors in development of community.

In the case study of Ghandruk, we have tried to analyze various theories in literature review and connected them with the viewpoint of 15 different stakeholders in the Ghandruk area.

¹⁶⁴ Weibing Zhao and JR Brent Ritchie, "Tourism and poverty alleviation: An integrative research framework," *Current Issues in Tourism* 10, no. 2-3 (2007): 119-143

7.1 The relationship between CBT development and Socio-economic alleviation:

During the interview, most of the stakeholders agreed that the village is developing as most of 'the project related to development' is slowly carried out by the government in Ghandruk. According to them, the civil war was the problem behind Ghandruk as an underdeveloped village. We discovered that most of the locals give credit to tourism for the development of the village in recent days. Because of the tourism, various public services have been held in the area with various facilities like health post, school, good supply of drinking water, electricity etc. through various NGOs and it has been implemented by local communities. Normally, everybody agrees on failure of the government in providing necessary facilities for the people. They said that the government is not being serious in reconstruction of roads and also the construction of high schools in the area is not being done on time showing a limited budget. In this situation, it is natural to see CBT development as a tool to develop the village; as the government is failing to provide the necessary facilities to its people.

In the interview, the locals also compared Ghandruk with other villages in Annapurna regions. They also agreed Ghandruk being more developed and prosperous in various ways like lifestyle, numbers of shops, drinking water facilities, electricity, schools, job opportunities etc. in comparison to other villages. Still being the residents of that area, we can sense the lower part of Ghandruk being prosperous and well facilitated but the upper part which is approximately two hours walk far from market are deprived of various basic needs like drinking water, health, and sanitation.

Simply, the concept of poverty is considered as not having enough money. Actually, everything like job opportunities, hygiene and sanitation, education and other basic needs plays a vital role in poverty. During the interview when asked about the situation of poverty in Ghandruk everybody agreed they are less poor in comparison to the past but still it doesn't mean all of them are rich enough. They shared their ideas based on changes they experienced from the past with recent time. The locals like Ramu BK, Goma Pariyar who are considered Dalits were deprived of getting education because of the caste structure of Nepal. In the present time, they are letting their children have education in the school. It also proves with the possibility of themselves not as poor as they used to be in the past.

Are Dalits as rich as high caste people in Ghandruk? Will they be able to be rich like high caste people? The answer will not be positive. There is no doubt that tourism has triggered the development of Ghandruk but still it will take a long time for Dalits like Ramu and Goma to get all the benefits like others in the community. To be able to send their children in school will not be able to overcome poverty.

There is always controversy regarding the utilization of funds and benefits in the community. There has been various support to less fortunate people through various projects but every time there is complaint from Dalit that they are deprived from getting all the benefits as there are also some high caste people who is also poor economically.

According to Roshan Thapa and Geeta devi Gurung, the caste system has nothing to do with opportunities to Dalits or poverty as so-called Dalits are themselves passive and waiting for someone to come and support them. To upgrade the Dalits now the government also provides lots of quota in various governmental posts so that they can change their life socially and economically.

Being raised in the village of Ghandruk we have sense regarding the people believing in fate which means anything that happens, will happen as it is destiny. The Dalits of the area have somehow accepted the fate of being untouchable. They have neither objected to being untouchable nor have they focused on changing their livelihood.

However, the change is undergoing slowly. The chairperson of the village also admitted that the youth are opening minded and treat everybody equally in comparison to the older generation. Goma who belongs to Dalit community also agrees on the statement of chairperson of village and state education might be the reason which results young generation believing on equality.

Similarly, upgrading lifestyle and more opportunities in the Ghandruk area have also impacted behaviors of the community. There have been many cases that the people in the community are coming together in order to solve common problems untidily. As an example, all the villages protested together against the government when it tried to extend the road in the trekking route of Ghandruk.

It can be concluded that the CBT can act as a tool for empowering the whole community through involvement by utilizing local resources and improving the living standard of peoples in rural communities of Ghandruk. Yet, it also can be concluded that community tourism development cannot diminish the socio-economic issue of Ghandruk although it subsidizes various direct benefits like employment and indirect benefits as opportunities in form of healthcare, sanitation, drinking water, education and so on. Lastly, the government should make certain acts or policies for the distribution of benefits to all level people in the community through development of tourism in Ghandruk.

7.2 Stakeholders' involvement and their role in Development of Ghandruk:

In the research, we interviewed 15 locals who are connected with the Ghandruk village. While analyzing all the conversation, we came to know the role of community connects with each other but in terms of involvement in Ghandruk development there is fluctuation from being Dalits to high caste people, from owner to guides, teachers or other according to their status.

The roles and responsibilities are advancing with the pace of time. Everybody is at least concerned with their role and responsibilities in comparison to the past. The example is Ramu and Goma as being Dalits now they can speak in front of all people and also can express their opinion as they are active in Dalit Committee instead of waiting for other to come and help them for the livelihood.

The story of Purna Bahadur Gurung is one of the examples in Ghandruk area that people are also benefited directly with entrepreneurship essence along with employment. He received help from the tourists and he acquired that various knowledge on greenhouse farming from tourists which was really fruitful for his livelihood. Also, the women in the village are forming a mother group is another example that people are advancing on the role for the development of the community. They are engaged in various developmental work of the village for the welfare of the local, especially the women.

There are still barriers in people for not getting involved in community effort even though they realize that it can be beneficial for the community. Sundari Gurung is the example for most of the women in Ghandruk village who would like to join the mother group. As Ghandruk being male dominated society, there are issues like affordability for the monthly fee and permission from the family, especially husbands are creating limitations in creative women of the village.

Being a Dalit, there are many peoples in the village like Goma Pariyar who don't feel that they have right to be involved in the development of Ghandruk and she will be dominated from high caste people because of Caste system. However, the young generations have a good sense of humor in the caste system as they are more visionary and positive in developmental activities.

There are still people like Geeta Devi Gurung who want the village to concentrate on other private sectors besides tourism only.

In the concept of community development and participation, the locals are positive. The chairperson of the village believed that there have been lots of changes in the locals and furthermore, he added the locals have started to take their responsibility toward the village. Sunil Banmala also expressed that people are not depending on various organizations or tourists like in the past and the people in the area are capable enough to provide service or handle different projects for the development of Ghandruk. Also, we can see various private sectors playing an important role in connecting stakeholders like tourists, locals and government as well.

From the above discussion, we can determine that the stakeholders of Ghandruk are distinct but still they are interdependent. The role of Community Based Tourism development will be crucial in connecting together for a common goal through empowering the whole community in various decisions-making. In case of Ghandruk Dalits are able to express their views and outlook, participate in decision making and even locals are getting more professional and reliable.

It can be concluded that CBT somehow has the potential to create collaboration and partnership by connecting them altogether. The process of CBT will be fruitful only if all the various stakeholders will be responsible and play their role towards the development as required.

CHAPTER 8

8. Conclusion and Recommendations:

As a team, we investigated the perspectives of different stakeholders in Community-Based Tourism development with regards to socio-economic alleviation following their role on it. In the research, we focused on various literatures by approaching role of tourism practically on various issues like poverty and discrimination from the perceptive of stakeholders. It is also really important for us to know various success factors of CBT like collaboration and participation thus; we also specifically explore the role and involvement of stakeholder in relation CBT development.

The research framework for research on tourism and poverty alleviation proposed by Zhao & Ritchie was used as a roadmap for data collection and analysis. The research analyses use lots of literature in order to make a concrete base for analysis of data in the study of Ghandruk in relation to various stakeholders. Also, we have included the development of tourism in the context of Nepal so that we can have a good understanding on certain nature of stakeholders. Having said that, the village named Ghandruk is still not able to get participation altogether and the benefits are not distributed equally.

Thus, all locals need to have an equal role in developmental work in relation to CBT no matter their class, gender and caste or social status. The central government has top down approach in order to look development as they view development in numerals like GDP while local government have bottom approach for looking development and they view development on education, various infrastructure, clean drinking water, sanitation etc. the local government need to break the chain of barriers between the locals and central government being the mediators and inter link between them.

In recent days in Ghandruk, tourism is growing as the main source of livelihood after agriculture. The people of the village are making a career in the tourism and hospitality sector being involved in various jobs of hotels, homestay, along with travels and tours companies. For the research, we have selected 15 interviewees which consist of locals, one travel agent, and one stakeholder working for the Government to find out the stakeholder's viewpoint on development of Community Based Tourism and understanding of their role in such development in the context of Ghandruk.

In the Ghandruk, we can see most of the public services are provided by NGOs being associated with local committees. There are many NGOs like ACAP who are significantly active in the development of the Annapurna region including Ghandruk. The government is also trying its best but it has not fulfilled the expectation as being based on a limited budget. But still the implementation of some rules and policies for Dalit is helping the upgrade the living standard of the peoples in the village. Also, there are some more committees that have been formed locally like Mothers group and youths group which are concerned for the welfare of the community.

During the interview, the locals clarify the role of tourism in development of Ghandruk. They think CBT will give more benefits to all the people including Dalits through different opportunities, education, health and other basic things in equivalent ways in certain time.

The study also revealed that the village of Ghandruk is more developed and advanced while comparing the other villages situated in Annapurna region. In the present context, the locals believed that the infrastructure of developments in Ghandruk is satisfactory even though there are still some areas in the village which lacked all the basic facilities.

The stakeholders themselves agreed on the changes of the village in terms of development. The construction of various schools, health posts, transportation, communication and market can easily prove that the village is on the right track of development.

One of us being the resident of Ghandruk, we can see the division of caste system in the people where so-called Dalits have lots of restrictions and have to follow the job based on caste. Dalits were not doing the job which pays better as matter of fact Dalit were overpowered by high caste people. But with the change of time people are changing as the younger generations disbelieve in fatalism but still there are some people who believe the division of caste system as their destiny. In the past, there was a concept that the son should follow the father's job like the son of a butcher should be a butcher but now everybody is allowed to choose their way of living in the present. The people so called Dalits can choose the way of living but still they need to work really hard for changing their life by overcoming the socio-economic issues. It can be seen from the research that CBT has helped the local women to be self-independent. We still cab believe that CBT can surely empower them by raising the voice against caste discrimination and help them to overcome socio economic alleviation.

The best way to overcome poverty alleviation and discrimination is recommended to be collaborating stakeholders together. As many locals are conscious of their role in development of the community and are also active we can feel the lack of proper vision of the government on leadership related to community development. The community should also choose a right person who can represent the village at governmental level with proper responsibility.

Lastly, CBT can act as a driver for the development in case of Ghandruk but still the impacts on socio economic issues should be reevaluated among all the stakeholders. There is a good scope of CBT in development of Ghandruk if the government can implement sustainable development goals related plans and policies to provide equal opportunities and benefits for long term development instead of owning taxes and income from tourism activities from the area. Also from the analysis we can say the various stakeholders have various interests and goals so it is necessary to collaborate as a unit for fruitful results. The collaboration can generate win-win situations for every related stakeholder as it can lead more local participation with needed exposure to the Dalits and they can tackle the negative impacts which they are recently facing in the process.

8.1 Implication for Future Research

The study based on development of tourism and its role in socio-economic alleviation is really complex. While doing the research, various locals including Dalits revealed that there is not equal distribution of benefits from tourism among the Dalits and high caste people. The presence of caste discrimination and inequality between the people of Ghandruk has created unevenness for all the locals regarding the participation in CBT and lead specially Dalits to be more skeptic toward CBT. At the same time, it is still recommended by the local stakeholders that such development is really necessary and is identified as a driver for overall development.

Due to the unfamiliar environment caused by Corona Virus (Covid-19), only few stakeholders could be contracted for the data collection in our research and we were really unable to do field visits and do observation on the activities of development in relation to stakeholders. It might be certain that the findings we did might not be universal or accurate in comparison to other community developmental situations as the research was carried out in a very short period with few stakeholders. This study delivers adequate perception about stakeholders' understanding of different subjects such as poverty, caste discrimination and also development of Ghandruk in relation to its stakeholders. Also, the research gives basic ideas on how development theory together with CBT needs more tuning in the context of South East Asia. This study also further clarifies on how CBT can help poorest of poor so called Dalit socially and economically in the society.

Furthermore, it indicates that the communities are changing their role in terms of community development and are really active and concerned in participation in the development of the village. However, longitudinal and cross-sectional study could be implemented in the future so that we can better examine and understand the developmental growth of Ghandruk in the coming years.

Finally, this case study will also play quite a significant role in informing various perceptions of stakeholders on development of tourism and poverty alleviation focusing on collaborating and partnership between the stakeholders. This could ultimately result in improvisation of socio-economic issues of the community with connection to CBT development. Much research is required to be done about the development of locals regarding CBT development to overview the genuine development of the modern-day phase and receive a frequency trend of development in the future.

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