

ROAD DEVELOPMENT AND ITS DISCOURSES: A CASE STUDY ON GHANDRUK AND CHOMRONG



Master Thesis
Master's in Tourism
Aalborg University, Copenhagen

Hand In date: 31/5/2022

Number of Keystroke with space : 106,585.

Supervisor: Martin Trandberg Jensen

Submitted by: Amit Poudyal

Ricky Gurung

Karma Tamang

Raj Kumar Maharjan

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First of all, we would like to thank our thesis supervisor Mr. Martin Trandberg Jensen, Associate professor of Culture and learning at the Aalborg University of Copenhagen for encouragement, support, and professional guidance throughout the research paper. We are gratefully bound by critical comments and good advice that propelled us to complete this study. This course has been a tremendous learning experience for us as it helped us to view tourism from a different perspective.

Additionally, we would like to thank all the respondents who helped and supported us to gain more detailed information regarding the study.

Lastly, we would like to thank each other for the bond and for being together in this whole course learning and sharing ideas. Being from the same country it has been easy for us to communicate and carry out the work in this study.

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to explore the conflicts and issues that arise due to the infrastructure development in Ghandruk and Chomrong. The construction of the road between the two most renowned and visited places for the trekking trails in Nepal has been affected due to the power and political hindrance. It also tries to examine how the infrastructure development in these areas has impacted the tourism industry by portraying the changes in socio-cultural beliefs and practices along with the economic condition of the community due to the political power dynamics.

As we know, Infrastructure development is essential for economic and poverty reduction in developing countries. It should be carried out planned and in a sustainably way without hampering the environment as well as the livelihood. This study also shows how the development can be fruitful to the people living in the same areas and completely opposite to others, Such as Inclusion and Exclusion issues in the construction of the road.

Keywords: Infrastructure development, Socio-cultural beliefs, Tourism industry, Political power dynamics, Sustainability, Inclusion, Exclusion.

ABBREVIATION

ACA: Annapurna Conservation Area

ACAP: Annapurna Conservation Area Project

TMC: Tourism Management Committee

ARM: Annapurna Rural Municipality

CMC: Chomrong Management Committee

NGO: Non- Governmental Organization

INGO: International Non-Governmental Organization

NTB: Nepal Tourism Board

UNDP: United Nation Development Programme

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1. INTRODUCTION

The trend of increasing the importance of the service sector over manufacturing, was a significant process, which has been escalating since the 1990s, with the increase in the demand for tourism and related amenities in rural and countryside areas, resulting in the more commodification of the rural areas (Lama and Job 2014). As per the increase in demand, the rural service sector has been encouraged to shape and reshape its rural landscape, spatial design, mobility patterns, and creation of a rural area that is increasingly looking metropolitan in character and refinement.

The Annapurna Conservation Area is the most popular trekking destination in Nepal, covering the 7629 square km area of high mountains and consisting of 300 km of trail networks that pass through high altitudes, deep gorges, rivers, nature, and colorful settlements. Due to the high potential of tourism in the region, the traditional economic base which used to be dependent upon the resources -incentive activities such as agriculture and forestry has been constantly converted into a service-oriented economy (Nepal 2007).

Ghandruk and Chomrong are the two major tourism hubs that lie in the Annapurna trekking trail, and the flow of tourists started in the village of Ghandruk in 1970 when a group of trekkers and mountain climbers used the route as an expedition for mountain climbing and the first lodge started in Ghandruk in 1976 with 10-bed capacity named as Annapurna lodge by Sankar Man Gurung, likewise, the formation of Chomrong village was also created as per the demand of tourism when trekkers began to show up in the Annapurna region since 1970, and people of Ghandruk started to move outward from the village in search of suitable settlements due to the population increment

in Ghandruk, teahouses were started at that time by the villagers to supply the food items and firewood to the trekkers and expedition teams (Shrestha 2014).

In the process of political, environmental, and economic changes created by the phenomena, increasing infrastructure development in these areas is likely to become a major sustainability challenge for the government and related stakeholders. For the conservation and sustainable tourism management of the area, the Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) was established by the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation in 1988 and recently renamed as National Trust For Nature Conservation with the objectives of educating and empowering the local communities of the Annapurna Area by participatory management approach so, that they can sustainably manage their land. This kind of innovative pro-poor and sustainable tourism management model has been recognized internationally in the tourism platforms and conservation field (Nyaupane, Morais, and Dowler 2006).

In the context of Nepal, the political instability, power shift, and political factionalism have a direct impact on the process of environmental governance, development, and political influence of the above-mentioned institution.

This study aims to investigate different social, political, economic, and environmental aspects of the road construction in the village of Ghandruk and Chomrong which lies in the protected area of Annapurna conservation area, where the tourism sector has been a major driving force behind the infrastructure and spatial development in the mentioned areas. In general, different theoretical concepts of Protected areas' sustainability, sustainable tourism development, conservation and

development, and governance discourses have been critically analyzed. This includes politics, policies, and collaboration along with the changes and effects in the components such as culture, authenticity, and tourism in the process of development and sustainability implications.

1.1 Problem Formulation

This chapter outlines the main grounds for initiating the research on motorable road construction in rural Nepal where trekking/hiking is the main tourist attraction. Therefore, the discussion of the main concern, i.e., sustainability in tourism, is also placed mainly in the context of infrastructure development, power and political roles within the society and people, and collaboration between governments and organizations involved.

Infrastructure development has always been an important segment of tourism, especially in developing countries like Nepal. Achieving economic, social, and environmental development is the main objective of the construction of roads in remote villages. Research on infrastructure development and its aspects is previously done by scholars and their findings have somehow been related only to the environmental issues. However, there are other aspects of road development that need to be explored and investigated. In developing countries like Nepal, with road development; along with environmental issues, there are challenges with power and politics. Needless to say, there has not been enough exploration and investigation related to road development in Nepal and its issues related to tourism.

Infrastructure development, especially road development in rural villages is taken as a positive step toward community development. These projects claim to uplift inadequate people of the village to better living standards. To understand in-depth whether this road development always serves as it claims to be, an in-depth qualitative study is required to investigate. Focusing on local's viewpoints and people who are involved in the road development project can help understand in-

depth and can help potentially raise future policy objectives in the department for the future researchers.

This study intends to explore and understand issues raised with the road development in Gandruk and Chomrong, and what effects it has on the trekking trails. Furthermore, the study attempts to investigate what initiatives have been taken into consideration for sustainability in tourism along with infrastructure development.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background presented above, a few questions emerge. Has the road construction been beneficial to the people of the village since the infrastructure development projects claim to uplift the living standard of the overall community? Is there a sense of exclusion of any group of people in the development project planning? Taking into consideration of community upliftment, has the road development project served as a vehicle for sustainable tourism development by contributing to social and economic growth? This has led to the formulation of the research question: how has the construction of roads justified the elements of overall sustainable development objectives in the rural village of Gandruk and Chomrong?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

As stated in the previous section on problem formulation, this study seeks to investigate issues raised with road construction in Ghandruk and Chomrong. Also, the study attempts to find out what effects it has on the trekking trails and what initiatives have been initiated for sustainability in tourism along with infrastructure development. To get a proper understanding of previous research done in this context and what things are yet to be done, the existing literature was reviewed. As a result, few major headings of literature have emerged.

2.1 Sustainability in Tourism: A review

Moore et. Al. (2017) writes that understanding sustainability is one of the significant challenges in its implementation. The lack of consistent definitions in the literature about sustainability is one of the big challenges in researching sustainability. Most implementation studies do not have a proper presentation of the definition of sustainability even when assessing sustainability. This is further supported by Zapata, Alfredo & Munoz (2019), that the lack of clarity about the concept of sustainability always becomes an obstacle to sustainability research. Where in the last few decades, the concept of sustainability has generated confusion about its diverse meanings and its large number of definitions in response to the context in which it is used.

“Sustainability” is a leading concept that was quickly introduced into tourism practice and research and acquired a respectable position in the field of tourism-related literature (Cohen, 2002). Sustainable tourism is defined as tourism that prioritizes long-term resource management to meet economic and social demands while preserving cultural integrity, critical natural processes,

biodiversity, and vital needs feedback systems (Sandra, Jean-Marie, 2004). As Sharpley (2000) remarks, the concept of sustainable tourism has become the focus of increasing attention amongst tourism theorists and practitioners with widespread acceptance as a desirable objective of tourism development policy and practice. Cohen (2002) further writes that sustainability in tourism was introduced to help conserve the environment and culture of the destination and provide the tourism industry with a more secure future.

When talking about the emerging phenomena of integrating the tourism industry with the notions of sustainable development, Driml (1996) uses the term 'sustainable activity.' However, it might be claimed that the evolution of the notion of "sustainable tourism" could be seen in the literature and the term "sustainable development" was employed officially. Rosenow and Pulsipher (1979) are one example of this who called for a "new tourism" that would help to protect towns, not overburden them, and improve the environmental and heritage values, as well as educate tourists. Although the idea contains areas of common concern with sustainable development, it has its own tourism-centric agenda, according to Butler (1993); Hunter (1995); and Wall (1997). As a result, many authors prefer to use the word sustainable development rather than sustainable tourism in the context of tourism to avoid the parochial assumption implied by the phrase.

2.2 Sustainable Development in Tourism

From the time of Adam Smith and Karl Marx to the present day, the concept of sustainable development has come a long way. The modern notion of sustainable development encompasses economic, environmental, and socio-cultural sustainability. (Nazeen et al, 2021). Achieving

sustainable development is a huge challenge and to meet this challenge, the United Nations (UN) has developed the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which has the primary goal of eradicating poverty, guaranteeing a prosperous and healthy life, and ensuring environmental sustainability (UN, 2015). According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), "Tourism" is the most important fast-increasing sector that contributes significantly to economic growth and sustainable development. According to all previous research and studies, sustainable tourism has the greatest potential for achieving sustainable development by balancing economic, environmental, and socio-cultural benefits. (Nazeen et al, 2021). Sustainable development, on the other hand, is a contradiction in that it refers to economic growth and development while also referring to environmental constraints. The philosophical and management ramifications of such practical uncertainty produced by a lack of definitional accuracy are discussed (Lama & Job, 2014).

2.3 Social, Economic, and Ecological dimensions of sustainability

Given the wide range of concerns raised about the idea of sustainable development, it's not unexpected that some people have sought to construct alternative words to express their concerns about the relationship between environmental and social issues (Gayane, 2019). While government and private sector organizations have preferred to use the phrase sustainable development, academic and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been more likely to use the term sustainability in similar settings. This is due in part to the more managerial and stepwise approach, which popularized the concept of sustainable development (John, 2004). According to John (2004), a more moderate strategy is more appealing to government and business than a more radical one. However, a more basic reason for this tendency to separate on terminological grounds

is that NGO and academic environmentalists are concerned that development is equated with growth, and hence that sustainable development entails enhancing, rather than confronting, continuous economic growth (John, 2004). He further writes that the ideal term, 'sustainability,' in this perspective, focuses attention where it should be focused: on people's ability to continue to live within environmental restrictions. However, sustainable development approaches should move beyond a technocratic, nature-centered view and explicitly address issues of power, the distribution of wealth, and the locally grounded experience of natural and human-made processes of production (Dietz & Rosa, 1994). Such arguments set new issues into environmental literature that had been heavily focused on problems about whether and how to maintain or protect natural regions. And, on the other hand, there were those alternative 'conservationist' perspectives that encouraged natural area protection as well, but it was primarily a type of enlightened self-interest, conserving land and resources for eventual human use, including resource extraction and what we now term eco-tourism (Dietz & Rosa, 1994). Hays (1987) explains that while the conservation/preservation discussion centered on wilderness preservation, renewable resource extraction, and natural area management in the second half of the twentieth century, a new set of concerns rose to prominence. Pollution, nonrenewable resource depletion, and population increase were among the challenges raised (Hays, 1987).

We have seen that differing perspectives on the meaning and value of sustainability are rooted in philosophical and moral beliefs about the proper way to think about humanity's relationship with nature (John, 2004). This indicates that achieving a sustainable society is not primarily a scientific or technical challenge. This has significant consequences for how we think about the roles of science, and indeed expertise in general, in resolving these issues (John, 2004). Of course, sound

scientific analysis is essential for solving sustainability issues. We need to draw on our most up-to-date knowledge of how complex ecological, social, and economic systems interact, as well as the anticipated consequences of particular actions (Robinson et al, 1990). In the end, however, sustainability is a matter of human behavior and negotiation over preferred futures in the face of extreme contingency and unpredictability. According to (Robinson and Tinker, 1997), the following are three conclusions. First, scientific analysis can help answer some of the fundamental concerns raised by the idea of sustainability, but it cannot address them. Second, the scientific analysis contains essential value judgments and social commitments that must be examined and debated. Finally, other types of knowledge (e.g., traditional environmental knowledge, various forms of lay risk understandings) have valuable contributions to make to the sustainability debate.

Sustainability requires the simultaneous reconciliation of three imperatives:

- The ecological imperative is to stay within the biophysical carrying capacity of the planet
- The economic imperative is to provide an adequate material standard of living for all
- The social imperative is to provide systems of governance that propagate the values that people want to live by (Robinson and Tinker, 1997).

Keeping in mind the above-mentioned issues with sustainable development projects management has complexity in the planning arena where issues of long-term sustainability occur during the lifecycle of the project. Past research on sustainable development projects such as infrastructure (transport) shows that challenges always emerge during the lifecycle of the project that are related to the quality of infrastructure which is aimed at achieving long-term sustainability. This could be accomplished by enhancing the inclusivity of infrastructure projects and seeking out new

collaborations (Wakeman, 1997) that go beyond the Triple Bottom Line's traditional economic, social, and ecological pillars of sustainability (Elkington, 1999). We look to consider the outlook on sustainable development concepts that integrate social-economy, ecology, and political dimensions of sustainability.

2.4 Human Dimension on Sustainability

John (2004) writes in “Squaring the Circle? Some Thoughts on the Idea of Sustainable Development”, about the need to develop processes of deliberation and decision making that actively include the relevant interests and communities in thinking through and deciding upon the kind of future they want to strive to build is one aspect of the human dimensions of sustainability that demands special attention. We've seen that there are many different perspectives on what sustainability is and entails. Leaving some of these topics open creates constructive ambiguity. The other side of this term is that systems must be developed that make use of that constructiveness, allowing diversity to be articulated without paralysis (John, 2004).

This is especially true when there are fundamentally opposing viewpoints on problems of value and meaning. We have seen that many of the discussions in the field of sustainability are rooted in fundamental concerns about the purpose and meaning of human life and its relationship to the natural world. These are profoundly moral and political issues that necessitate careful consideration and consensus. And, when it comes to those concerns, democratic ideals entail that every person has the same level of expertise (John, 2004). The most fundamental political concern addressed by debates in the realm of sustainability is the severity of the problems. Are challenges

of ecological or socioeconomic insufficiency minor stumbling blocks on the way to a better future for everybody, or do they signal the need for fundamental societal change? Is reform or revolution the goal? (John, 2004).

2.5 Sustainability and Infrastructure Development in Protected Areas

Infrastructure, such as road construction, is considered the essential backbone that will help rural areas thrive and alleviate poverty (Jacoby 2000; Walle 2002). According to the World Bank (2012), road construction in one of the world's least developed countries like Nepal is seen as one of the most significant parts of the sustainable development plan for achieving the sustainable development goals of poverty alleviation. However, Jayaram (2003); Laurance and Balmford (2013) argue that road-building initiatives in such countries create a variety of sustainability challenges. They say that the main concerns affected by the many issues linked with road construction are ecological and socio-economic considerations. The degrees of administration within areas designated as protected areas are another factor that is influenced by such projects (Annapurna Conservation Area in this case). The long history of Nepal's political rule and ongoing volatility complicates such sustainability challenges in protected areas (claims Lama & Job, 2014). One of the most significant difficulties affecting conservation and development programs in protected areas like the Annapurna Conservation Area is political instability and economic development tendencies.

2.6 Sustainability, Governance, and Development in Protected Areas

In terms of public policy and governance, sustainability has gotten a lot of attention around the world (Koensler and Papa 2013). Sustainability in protected areas is a never-ending topic with diverse conceptions, and these challenges not only define how to use and manage resources but also how to manage these protected places (Job et al 2003). Bajracharya et al. (2007) claim that governance approaches shifted from hierarchical to multilevel contexts that promoted inclusiveness and decentralization of decision-making in the first outcome, and it also implanted conservation policies within broader socio-political and economic changes for regional development in the second outcome, with the dual objectives of poverty alleviation and nature conservation (Thakali 2012). Protected spaces are sites where power is exercised and where interests and values are negotiated (Campbell 2005). In terms of development, the poverty alleviation policy and global sustainable development initiatives are essential frameworks for the changes in development policies that have occurred in Nepal. These modifications resulted in a system that is more interactive and inclusive (Khanal et al. 2005; Shrestha 2010). In 2007, political instability altered Nepal's political regime from an absolute monarchy to multi-party democracy and republican state, ushering in major power transitions and governance processes. (Berg et al., 2008). These events have had a significant impact on the route to sustainable development and its capabilities.

2.7 Social & Cultural Challenges on Infrastructure Development

The key socio-economic motivations for road construction, as well as the outcomes promised by governments, are poverty reduction through maximizing economic opportunity and growth for the

disadvantaged. Traditional economic theory, on the other hand, according to Rammel and Van den Bergh (2003), encourages unsustainable socio-economic institutions and development processes. Van de Walle (2002) further contends that road connectivity is only one of several restrictions and that the expected socio-economic advantages from road construction are dependent on a variety of issues, including equity, political economics, and social considerations. As a result, it may be argued that the current infrastructure development discussion should concentrate on the moral components of sustainable development, as well as the political, economic, and power dynamics at play (see Blaikie and Jeanrenaud 1997). Despite the government's and multilateral development organizations' concentrated efforts for sustainable development (Ashley and Maxwell 2001), poverty persists due to a lack of attention to these variables (Bostörm 2012), which perpetuates inequities and disparities in developing nations' rural areas (Van de Walle 2002). As a result, road development has social, political, and moral implications.

Further, in the literature, we examine how people's daily interactions with the local government reproduce or modify established cultural rules and political cultures. The articulation of governance projects with place-based social relations is the subject of this inquiry. Planning and development results are influenced by established social positionings and cultural meanings (Jeffrey 2010; Nightingale 2003; Rankin 2004). Simultaneously, we are intrigued by the potential that the conditions under which – new political ensembles can generate chances for weakening previous forms of authority and spawning new modes of political consciousness and public-sphere politics (Gibson-Graham 2006; Shneiderman 2009). Evoking cultural aspects indicate a desire to investigate the cultural practices and meanings linked with planning and development, as well as their role in replicating or opposing power-laden social relations. What are the formal and informal methods by which road-building decisions are made? What is the essence of conflict and struggle,

and how do these processes perpetuate prevailing notions of caste, gender, race, and class? What critical interpretations of social reality are being expressed that challenge mainstream ideologies and perspectives? What new social arrangements or decision-making processes are being shaped by these critical interpretations?

2.8 Collaboration of related stakeholders

The belief that it can lead to the assembling of knowledge, expertise, capital, and other resources, greater coordination of relevant policies, increased acceptance of the resulting policies, and more effective implementation is one of the reasons for the growing interest in inter-organizational collaboration (Pretty 1995). Destinations and groups of organizations could acquire a competitive advantage with this approach (Huxham 1996; Kotler, Haider, and Rein 1993). Furthermore, some critics argue that it is a moral imperative to include all impacted parties in conversations and choices concerning possible developments (Innes 1995; Tacconi and Tisdell 1992). Despite their potential benefits, collaborative planning models frequently face considerable challenges (Bramwell and Lane 2000). One potential stumbling block is that bringing together a broad group of people for regular meetings and decision-making is frequently complicated and time-consuming. Collaboration can be challenging because some groups refuse to work with others because it might lessen their own power or influence, or because they distrust other parties (Hall and Jenkins 1995). When stakeholders are working together, they may not be inclined to listen politely to and consider the opinions of others. There may be no tradition of many organizations collaborating in decision-making in some places. A participation technique created in and for

wealthy countries may fail in a less developed country's socio-economic, cultural, administrative, or political circumstances (Roberts and Simpson 1999; Timothy 1998, Tosun and Jenkins 1998).

External and internal constraints may make collaborative working in less developed nations difficult to overcome (Ashley and Roe 1998; Desai 1996; Few 2000). Local communities engaged in tourism policies in underdeveloped countries, for example, have a number of "formidable operational, institutional, and cultural limits," according to Tosun (1999), and these limitations are likely to affect local community participation. One administrative restraint encountered in many developing countries, according to Tosun (1999), is that power is often centralized in the national government, leaving little power in local government. Furthermore, in developing countries, complicated bureaucracies and related jealousies frequently divide the planning process and prevent coordinated decisions. According to Araujo (2002), there is also little experience of democracy in certain emerging nations, or democracy is mostly limited to business, governmental, or professional elites, or clientelist relationships exist where clients seek favors from strong patrons. Since they are busy with making ends meet or have a history of being excluded from decision making, impoverished social groups may be uninterested in participating in planning. Further thought should be given to how such challenges affect the potential, if any, for local communities and other interest groups to participate in tourism partnerships in less developed nations (Araujo, 2002).

2.9 Mass Tourism & Authenticity

Tourism is notorious for its ability to harm natural environments and local communities, according to (Cobbinah, Black, & Thwaites, 2013). Furthermore, the tourism business has a typical tendency to have severe environmental and socio-cultural consequences, such as water and air pollution,

cultural values erosion, and foreign cultural invasion. Loss of natural habitat for flora and fauna, contamination of air and water bodies, adulteration of local cultures, and unsustainable management of the natural environment are all examples of the environmental and socio-cultural effects of mass tourism (Cobbinah, Black, & Thwaites, 2013).

Tourism has an impact on traditional lifestyles, changes in job kinds, wealth inequalities, and local values when viewed from a sociocultural perspective. The impact of mass tourism on the economy is positive, and the tourism industry continues to generate numerous job possibilities for unskilled and marginalized employees. (Sayeda, 2017). The cultural interaction between the host and the visitor leads to a shift in traditional lifestyles, including clothes, language, and food, as well as a rising openness to mixing with and learning from the tourists.

The authenticity question sparks scholarly debates and is riddled with inconsistencies due to the lack of a set of standards for determining how 'genuine' a tourism location is. MacCannell (2008) asks about the authenticity arguments in tourism studies. The concept of a "real" travel experience is based on a genuine local tourist experience, which raises the question of what constitutes an authentic, original, and local encounter (Belhassen & Caton, 2006).

The concept of authenticity is hotly contested in the tourism literature, as is the related topic of whether modern tourists seek out real experiences or even identify them. Some researchers believe that modern tourists are uninterested in the authentic, while others believe that tourists are on a quest for the authentic, according to Redfoot (1984). These viewpoints have considerable popularity and complaints about tourism from both the right and left of the political spectrum sound strikingly similar. Boorstin (1964) and MacCannell (1973;1976) reduce tourism experiences to "pseudo" experiences, blaming capitalism's propensity to commoditize an experience into a

cheap product that can be sold. Tourism researchers have looked at the relationship between tourism and authenticity in general. Despite this work, there is still confusion regarding what authenticity entails. The term authenticity, according to Trilling (1972), originates in the context of museums and refers to objects that are exactly what they claim to be. Authenticity is derived from the object being conserved, according to Ashworth and Tunbridge (1990), who explains that an object might be regarded as authentic because of its "intrinsic aesthetic or historic traits." Authenticity is a highly vague notion, with people understanding it in a variety of ways, frequently at odds. As a result, it's critical to define the various ways in which authenticity and the visitor experience are linked. The term "authentic" is widely used in tourism literature to describe the nature of the tourist experience at tourist attractions and events, as well as visitor incentives. However, little attention has been made to exactly describing or defining this phrase in the context of tourism. Part of the issue could be that the definition of authenticity varies depending on the context. "The word authenticity comes so easily to the tongue these days and in so many connections," writes Trilling (1972), that it may very well resist efforts of definition.

The negative impact and influence of tourism were seen among Ghandruk's younger generation in terms of clothes, cuisine, language, music, and dances. Instead of wearing traditional Gurung garb, they dressed in trendy western garb to emulate foreign culture. Traditional songs and dances were becoming less popular, while English and Nepali contemporary music and dances were becoming increasingly popular. (Shrestha, 2014). To meet visitor demand, new lodges were built, affecting Ghandruk's architecture and transforming antique dwellings into modern houses (Shrestha, 2014).

2.10 How does Road Development Create Controversies?

Taking an example from Rankin et al (2018), “Roads of Change: Political Transition and State Formation in Nepal’s Agrarian Districts”; which explores the political field that has opened up the cultural-political developments that are emerging at the district scale to entrench or transform dominant cultural codes and sedimented histories of socio-economic inequality. Their Preliminary research identifies specific sectors of local governance that have emerged as significant sites of struggle over the shape and meaning of ‘democracy’, namely forest management and infrastructure development. The primary contribution of the paper lies in specifying an analytical approach to the study of ‘post-conflict’ governance at the local scale via three conceptual terrains of inquiry – governance and planning, political subjectivity, and cultural politics. Their ultimate objective is to develop a framework for assessing the conditions of possibility for a democratic restructuring of the economy and society to accompany the official political institutions of liberal democracy.

In this study, they found that the local party leaders have derived their power by getting things done and mobilizing numerous embedded cultural codes in the roughly 20 years since district elections were held. One of the most effective accomplishments is claiming responsibility for road construction. Building roads, on the other hand, necessitates having control over the labor process, which necessitates forming alliances with NGOs capable of forming and mobilizing voluntary users' groups, as well as the contractors hired to construct specific parts. Despite this, there was open bickering between the parties over who should have custody of certain contracts. Those looking for work or other perks cultivate favor with a party leader or contractor who may distribute such possibilities. Political culture in this country, which includes both marginalized people and

political elites, offers some promise in terms of bringing resource allocation to public scrutiny. For example, a well-known high-caste district-level leader is currently the district chair of one of the major political parties; he has founded an NGO that promotes awareness of social issues and development projects in the area, and his wife is a registered contractor. He hires young political cadres from his own party to work for the NGO, and he leverages his social and political capital to obtain road construction contracts that also allow him to reward party loyalty. Controlling construction contracts allows him to route the road through his own land and those with whom he has patronage relationships, allowing him to benefit from exorbitantly high compensation rates. Local business people try to win favor with him in order to reap the benefits of his considerable cultural and political clout, which in turn provides privileged access to the road's benefits for local businesses. Roads provide a forum for expanding the power and authority of people who already have them due to their social position as a result of such processes. A comparative approach helps to emphasize that these arrangements are not natural nor inevitable in any specific location. Depending on the particular constellation of social forces, roadbuilding is a disputed sector of local governance in which dominant cultural politics may flourish or face difficulties. Tracking the variations in these processes, whether in Nepal or elsewhere, is critical for determining the circumstances under which planning could benefit marginalized people (rather than dispossess them) and contribute to addressing structural inequities on the basis of violent conflict.

Inspired by the research that we have just discussed above on road development and its related issues, we intend to explore how road-building projects of Ghandruk illustrate sustainable mechanisms and acknowledge the complexity of infrastructure development both positive and negative. Few agendas that we would like to include are how road construction has helped the

village in its overall development and what has brought it of high importance to the society? Furthermore, we would like to explore the aforementioned literature and how it is relevant to our study on whether it supports or contradicts our findings. Also, by exploring a road construction controversy, we intend to experience what tourism development and tourism dynamics teach us and how it is of high importance to society.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Methodology

This fragment of the chapter provides a guide to the investigation objective, methodological consideration, and strategies that were utilized within the project. The logic and approaches were developed based on the suspicions made at the beginning of the endeavor to answer the queries in the research, likewise, the method and design of the study are explained, including what data was collected and how they are analyzed, and the validity, reliability, and the ethical implications are also discussed.

3.2 Research goal

Even though the main purpose of this study is outlined in the aforementioned sections, to reinforce it a bit more by the methodological part, the trend of infrastructure development, specifically the

construction of motorable roads in the rural parts of Nepal are the major changes seen in the development by which several touristic destination and hiking destination are also changing its pattern for example villages are changing into towns and hiking routes are disappearing or neglected (Coburn, 2020). So, the study aims to investigate the changes that have occurred in the process of transformation of villages into towns focusing on the touristic destinations of Ghandruk, analyzing the themes such as power and politics, social, cultural, environmental, and economic factors which challenges the sustainable development of the place.

To be more concrete in the investigation for the research sample the researchers have selected the Annapurna region of Nepal which is among the top trekking destinations in the world and to focus on the niche area we selected two sample villages Ghandruk and Chomrong where the researchers have conducted research. Both of the sample villages are the major tourist destination lies in the Annapurna base camp trekking route, among which Ghandruk has already been connected by the motorable road and the changes done by the infrastructure development both positively and negatively has already started to be observed. On the other hand, the village of Chomrong has not been touched by the motorable road so, the main aim of the research would be to gain a deeper knowledge of the socio-economic changes, cultural changes, environmental changes, power roles, and distribution of power in the development process along with the collaboration in the tourism development and management process of the both places.

Using this study, the researchers analyzed how people have perceived the development process of the areas and how the above-mentioned changes have directly or indirectly concerned their day-to-day life and the future of the areas. To reply to the research question, the hypothesis of

information has been adjusted and the understanding of the subject is seen by the analysts based on the groups of people who have knowledge and experience about the examined points within the zone and have diverse foundations and understanding of the reality.

3.3 Philosophy

An approach to constructing knowledge based on certain beliefs and assumptions is called research philosophy, knowledge is a human construction related to truth, beliefs, and justification, and epistemology examines the nature of knowledge and how it relates to the similar concepts like truth, beliefs, and justification, So, it also discussed how knowledge is produced as well as skepticism surrounding different forms of knowledge.

In this study, interpretivism is employed as a guiding approach to epistemology, which states that the precise, systematic, and theoretical tools cannot always solve the complex problems of human nature because every historical and cultural situation is unique and different from one another so, it requires a distinctly defined definition, as well as the conception of the social reality that an individual holds and interprets, is based on their ideological position that is why the main concept of interpretivism is to work with the already existing subjective meaning in the social world, acknowledging them, reconstructing, understanding and developing them, and using them as the building blocks in theory-building (Kankam, 2019).

The researchers have also used social constructivism which follows the interpretive position that is very essential to analyze the subjective meanings influencing the actions of social actors because

it views reality as socially constructed and it also helps the researcher to understand the actions (M. Saunders, 2016).

Likewise, a hermeneutic approach has been implemented which is also termed the philosophy of interpretation, which concerns the significance of translation — its essential nature, degree, and legitimacy, as well as its place inside and suggestions for human life; and it treats understanding with regards to key philosophical inquiries regarding being and knowing language and history, craftsmanship and tasteful experience, and viable life (George, 2021). So, the researchers' understanding of knowledge beyond the interview is relevant to their research, as is the way in which an interpretation of a situation is based on the historical perspective and reinterpretation.

In this study, the researchers have identified and selected different social actors as the research subjects for the interview according to their age, profession, experience, and position as stakeholders in the related field. The pattern of infrastructure development in Nepal such as building roadways connections affecting the walking trails as well as nature and building concrete housing diminishing the old, authentic, and local material used houses has become a major trend in the time horizon of 10 to 15 years. Specifically in the remote, rural, hilly, and mountainous regions, which also exist as the major tourist destination for trekking and mountain climbing (Sen, 2021).

As per preliminary observation and research, the pattern of infrastructure development all over Nepal is similar and haphazard which raises different investigation topics for the study such as sustainability development, mass tourism management, authenticity challenges, and powerful role in the development process. To tackle the challenges of gaining the rich empirical data related to

the concerning topics mentioned above, the researchers have interviewed different social actors and related stakeholders such as hoteliers, local people, personnel of TMC, ACAP, and tourism professionals, who have different social, cultural, and professional backgrounds which can naturally impact how they understand the process of development and challenges. Along with that, some of the actors and the communities they belong to had a long history of existence in the investigated area, so they had their own distinct culture, tradition, and values which instinctively influenced their answers.

3.4 Abductive approach

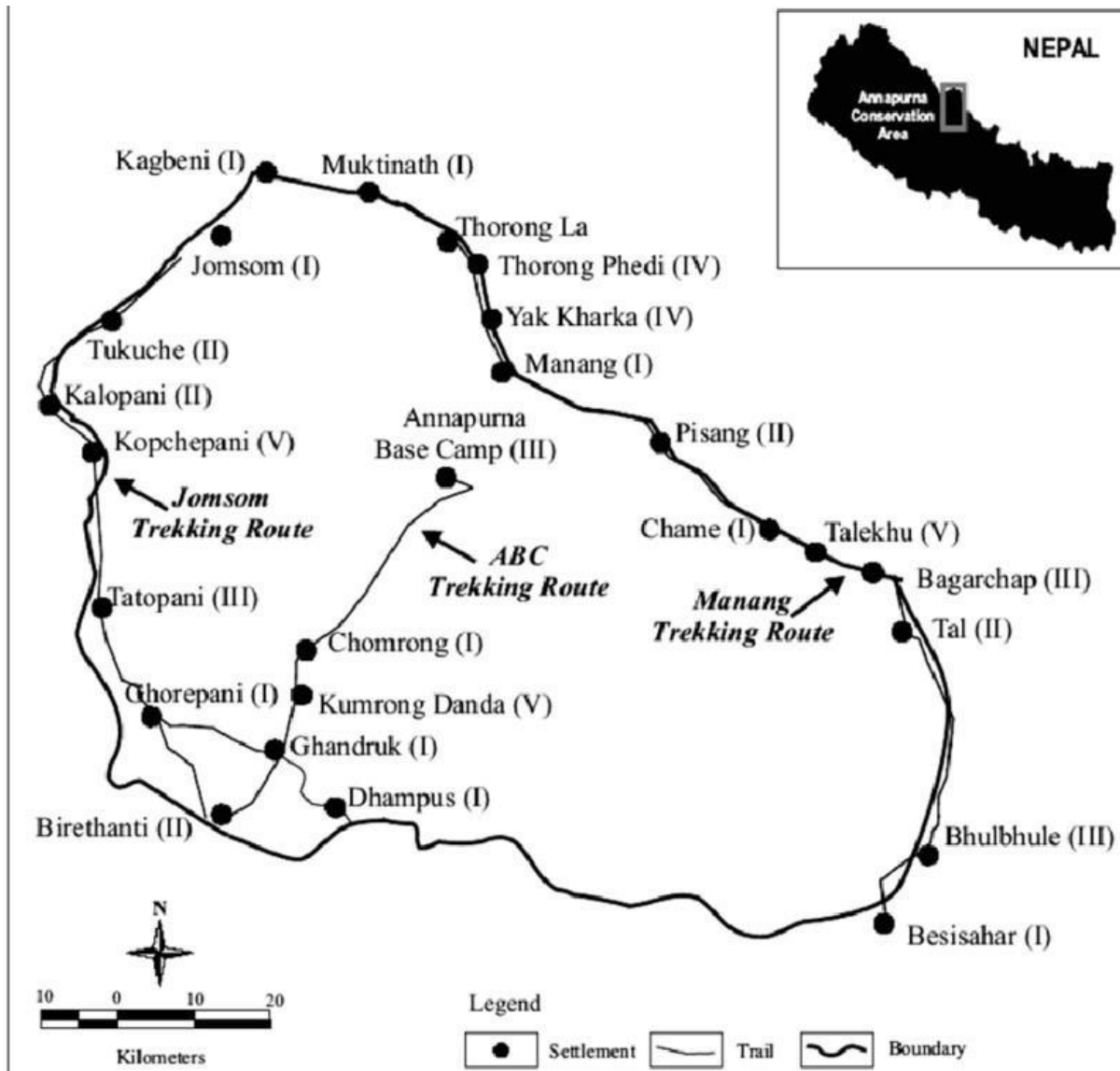
According to (Awuzie & Mcdermott, 2017), the research approach used determines the framework of a research design, and the choice of a research approach at the start of a research project should be based on the necessity to effectively answer the research question. That is why it is always a big challenge for the researcher to mix different research strategies as it is a concern to test an existing theory or develop a new one, creating an inherent polarization of the researcher along deductive and inductive poles as well as mixing of both approaches. So, it is resolved by the abductive approach because this theory gives the flexibility to the researcher in a back and forth movement between theory and data in a process of developing a new theory or modifying an existing one.

In the current study, the questionnaires were modified according to the data collected from the respondents because every time new inquiries or challenges appeared based on the social, professional, and cultural background of the respondents.

3.5 Methodological Choices

Interpretive paradigm studies try to grasp human behaviors and activities in an exploratory way, so, it is heavily dependent upon the methods such as interviews and observations, thus, the qualitative research approach is often associated with interpretivism, since it is concerned with words rather than numbers (Kankam, 2019). Therefore, the study involves the creation and construction of meanings by different human actors and their relationships based on socially constructed issues. So the qualitative research method is applied where researchers interview various related stakeholders. The researchers then analyzed different opinions, concepts, and experiences, which make sense to the subjective and socially constructed meanings espoused during the study phase.

3.6 Strategies: Case Study



Source:https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Major-Settlements-in-the-Annapurna-Region_fig2_22240105

A case study is a method for investigating a contemporary phenomenon by using multiple sources of evidence, based on an empirical investigation of its context in real life, to uncover the facets of

the phenomenon, it applies a variety of lenses to the investigation (Rashid, Rashid, Warraich, Sabir, & Waseem, 2019).

Ghandruk is a part of ACAP (Annapurna Conservation Area Project). The ACAP is Nepal's first and largest conservation area. Ghandruk is 55 kilometers to the north of Pokhara, a renowned tourist destination (Shrestha, 2014). Ghandruk covers a total area of 296.50 square kilometers and is rich in diversity. The region's natural and cultural traits have made it Nepal's most popular hiking destination (Shrestha, 2014). Ghandruk is flanked on one side by rhododendron-filled slopes and the other by stunning alpine scenery. Between Ghandruk and Ghorepani, there is a rhododendron forest. Ghandruk has a long and illustrious history and culture (Shrestha, 2014). This trail offers a spectacular view of three peaks above 8,000 meters. As a result, it has become one of the top trekking areas as well as a pleasant tourist destination (Shrestha, 2014). Furthermore, this is the most significant and popular path for those Annapurna trekkers and mountaineers that select this fascinating route as their goal (Shrestha, 2014). The route from Ghandruk is said to be the simplest and quickest method to reach Annapurna and Machhapuchhre base camps. The Annapurna and Machhapuchhre mountains may be viewed well from this settlement (Shrestha, 2014). The construction of a road to our community is a symbol of economic expansion that will result in a considerable improvement in the local standard of living and quality of life (Gurung, 2013). The hills and mountains that lead to Ghandruk, on the other hand, are mostly shaped by active erosion processes that are prone to landslides, floods, and earthquakes. Building roads on such high mountain slopes might create landslides by causing mass movement of unstable earth dirt (Gurung, 2013). All Ghandruks living in Nepal and abroad have been concerned about the road improvement project. It has prompted severe concerns about its long-term viability, safety, need,

and impact. The concerns raised by road development have now become a prominent issue of debate among Ghandruk (Gurung, 2013).

Chomrong is a small village located 45 kilometers northwest of Pokhara, within the Annapurna Conservation Area (Full Time Explore, 2022). It is a popular stop for trekkers in the region because it is located on the Annapurna Base Camp trekking route. Chomrong is only accessible on foot. Ghandruk or Jhinu Danda are the closest towns. Each of these destinations is a one-day walk away (Full Time Explore, 2022). It's a 1-2 hour trek straight upwards from Jhinu Danda and 5 hours to hike up and down the valleys from Ghandruk (Full Time Explore, 2022).

3.7 Data collection

Data was collected using both primary and secondary methodologies to fulfill the research question. The majority of the main data comes from interviews which include interviews with ACAP members, hotel operators, tourism professionals, and local people. The secondary data was obtained from papers and studies that had already been published.

3.8 Semi-structured interview

The researchers had a list of questions to cover in semi-structured interviews, although these varied from interview to interview (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2007). This suggests that if a specific organization is found regarding the research topic, the researchers chose to skip some questions in specific interviews (Saunders et al., 2007). Depending on the direction of the conversation, the sequence of the questions also changed. However, taking into account the nature of the situations, additional questions were asked to fully explore the research topic and aims (Saunders et al., 2007). Semi-structured interviews consist of a sequence of open-ended questions depending on the study issue areas (Mathers, Fox, & Hunn, 2002). The open-ended structure of the questions outlines the issue under examination while also allowing both the interviewer and the interviewee to go further into some of the themes. If the interviewee is having trouble answering a question or only gives quick response, the interviewer might utilize clues or prompts to urge the interviewee to think about the topic more deeply (Mathers et al., 2002). In a semi-structured interview, the interviewer has the option of questioning the interviewee to learn more about the original response or to pursue a field of the study suggested by the interviewee (Mathers et al., 2002). Because of the nature of the questions and the subsequent discussion, information was recorded by audio-recording the conversation and by note-taking (Saunders et al., 2007).

While interviewing the participants, open questions were asked to the participants which allowed them to define and explain a situation or incident. An open question encourages the interviewee to give a detailed and developed response. It can be used to uncover attitudes or gather information. It encourages the interviewee to respond in whichever way they choose.

Using an online medium to collect the primary data, the interview was conducted between March and April 2022 from Copenhagen to Nepal. Most of the respondents preferred Facebook messenger for the interview. With ACAP members, hotel operators, tourism professionals, and locals, a total of 11 semi-structured interviews of which 9 were male and 2 were female.

In the beginning, a few potential officials from Nepal Tourism Board and Tourism Management committee were selected for the interview. However, with the lack of response from them despite the researcher's effort, the researchers were unable to conduct interviews with their targeted number of officials.

All the interviews with ACAP members, hotel operators, tourism professionals, and locals were asked both closed-end and open-end questions. Each interview was held for around 30 minutes. Since a digital medium was used to conduct the interview, the time zone difference was taken into consideration and at the respondents' preferred time interview was held. It is worth mentioning that at the time of submission of the study at the university and library, it was not possible to submit the interview one by one due to some technical issues. Therefore, all the interviews have been merged into one and thus been submitted to the university and library as well.

As the research is based on an abductive approach, the researchers went back and forth between the response obtained and the literature, and the interview guidelines were set up accordingly. With the response from the participants, new ideas were generated which allowed the researchers to come up with follow-up questions. For instance, Lakshin Gurung was asked a question regarding the roadway to Ghandruk *"have you and the tourism concerned authorities been preparing some precautions on the trekking route with the construction of the roadway?"* Following this response,

the researchers were able to get deeply into other matters. For instance, Kishor Bohora was asked questions regarding the effect of roadway construction on local businesses, and the response of the local people like *“how has the local community/ authorities been dealing with the situation of roadway up to Ghandruk as the business and local people on the way are hampered?”*, *“ What kind of difference in terms of the flow of tourists has changed with the construction of a roadway to Ghandruk and having to trek to Chomrong who are determined with having the only trekking route to reach the place?”*

The primary data collected through interviews helped the researchers to look for relevant literature which is under the literature review section.

3.9 Sampling: Non-Probability, Volunteer, and Snowball

A non-probability sampling method was taken to choose respondents for the interviews. Non-probability sampling is a sampling method that does not provide any grounds for a probability assumption that variables in the universe will be included in the study sample (Etikan, 2017). At first, a maximum of 20 respondents were determined and contacted via social media, including Facebook, email, Viber, and WhatsApp. Following that, a total of 11 interviews with representatives from ACAP members, hotel operators, tourist professionals, and local people were conducted.

Volunteer sampling happens when potential participants express an interest in participating in the study. Typically, as researchers, we advertise our need for volunteers through relevant media or by requesting people to participate in the study (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). The participants were asked if they were interested in volunteering for the interview. Only after their

approval, did the interviews proceed. The participants were also asked for a referral for someone who would be interested in the researchers' study.

The researchers followed snowball sampling where participants in the study suggest individuals who have had comparable experiences or have similar features that the researcher is interested in (Seetharaman, 2016). Once we've interacted with and acquired data from an initial participant, she or he identifies a couple of new people in the same community who are willing to help us obtain access. As a result, more people are identified, and the sample grows. Participants are almost always more inclined to volunteer with other people who are similar to them, leading to a homogeneous sample (Saunders et al., 2012). For the study, the first participant for the interview was approached at the time by two of the researchers during their internship period in September 2021 where they had a general overview of the situation and the participant had agreed to give an interview. With the first interviewee referral, a few more participants' contacts were provided according to their preferred time. This process went on until the researchers felt the need for data to fulfill the study was enough.

The non-probability, volunteer, and snowball samples were used owing to a time constraint in conducting the study and a lack of physical touch with the participants since the researchers had to wait for the respondents' approval. As soon as the participants' responses were received, the interviews were performed consecutively.

3.10 Respondents Sample

Three hotel operators representing 2 from Ghandruk and 1 from Chomrong who is also a member of TMC were interviewed: all being male were reached out to conduct the interview. Of the two interviewees in Ghandruk, one of the hotel operators in Ghandruk had been settling in the United States for more than 8 years and recently returned to his hometown. It was not possible to have an interview with a female representative from both the places due to difficulty in reaching them as the male were more involved in the front line and the females were mostly seen in the kitchen area as per the participants. Interviews with ACAP members included three participants; two from Ghandruk and 1 from Chomrong. The interview with ACAP members in both the places included males as no females could be reached by the researchers. The interview with tourism professionals included 1 male because of the difficulty to find a referral for females. However, interviews with local people included two female members and 2 male members. The female member was reached out by the researchers by contact with a tea house runner who was in contact with the researchers.

3.11 Interview with ACAP members

The interview with the ACAP members was more formal. Following the semi-structured interview guidelines, a total of 3 interviewees were selected both from Ghandruk and Chomrong 2 officers from Ghandruk, and 1 from Chomrong each from both places. When conducting the interview, the officers from Ghandruk were hesitant and did not give consent to the researchers to record their responses. However, they did allow the researchers to take note of their responses. On the contrary, the officers from Chomrong gave their consent to record their responses.

Subjects relating to their role at both places were discussed, the inflow of tourists before and after the roadway construction, the environmental issues with the construction of motorways, and political issues that may be going on in the places were also focused on. Different views were discussed and with the discussion, the researchers followed up with more questions to better understand the situation. The interview guide and transcribe along with note-taking from Ghandruk with ACAP members can be seen in APPENDIX A.

3.12 Interview with Hotel Operators

The interview with hotel operators was formal as most of the hotel operators had an educational background in the hotel industry. One of the interviewees also mentioned staying in the United States of America (USA) for over 8 years and returning to Nepal and his place Ghandruk to operate the hotel industry. Interviewing him gave a clear idea of the measures they take to run the hotel, the inflow of tourists (either domestic or international) to Ghandruk, and the cultural aspects. Born in Ghandruk, he provided the information and reasons for what positive and negative changes have taken place there.

The hoteliers in both Ghandruk and Chomrong provided great information about the political situation in the infrastructures covering different aspects, collaboration, and the conflicts of the roadway construction which provided some critical thinking of both places. The interview guide and transcribed with hotel operators can be seen in APPENDIX B.

3.13 Interview Tourism Professional

The interview with the tourism professionals was more professional as the interviewee had extensive knowledge of both places. Interviewing the tourism professional provided general information about sustainability, the role of politics in infrastructure development, and the conflicts that can arise during the development process. The interview guide and transcribe with the tourism professional can be seen in APPENDIX C

3.14 Interview with Local People

The interview with the local people in both Ghandruk and Chomrong was informal as they lacked educational level but had an idea of the situation in both the study areas. The interview with the local people gave a clear view of their living situation, their livelihood, the impact of the roadway construction on Ghandruk, and how the collaboration is working in Ghandruk and Chomrong. The issue concerning social and cultural aspects was discussed in general.

The interview guide and transcribe with local people can be seen in APPENDIX D.

Respondents	Position
Laxin Gurung	Hotel owner (Ghandruk)
Mikas Gurung	Hotel owner (Chomrong) and TMC member
Kesav Sharma	Hotel Owner (Ghandruk)
Kishor Bohora	ACAP Officer-in-charge (Ghandruk)
Nanda Lal Pandey	Accountant ACAP (Ghandruk)
Netra Sharma	ACAP Officer in charge (Chomrong)
Chet Nath Kandel	Director (senior trainer/ planner/ HRD Expert) at National Development Center (NDC)
Biswas Gurung	Local Teacher/ road construction committee member
Krishna Thapa	Local tea House Runner
Chhaya Lama	Local (Housewife)
Sarita Khadka	Local

Figure: Sample of Interviewee

3.15 Secondary data

Secondary data are data gathered from a source that has previously been published in some way.

Any research study of literature is dependent on secondary data. Someone else is collecting it for

some other reason (Kabir, 2016). Secondary data can also aid in the planning of later primary research by providing a baseline against which the outcomes of acquired primary data can be evaluated. The fact that most of the underlying work has already been done is an obvious advantage of using secondary data (Kabir, 2016). Literature reviews and case studies, for example, may have been conducted; published texts and figures may have previously been used elsewhere, and media marketing and local connections may have also been employed (Kabir, 2016). Because of the extensive underlying research, secondary data has a predetermined level of validity and reliability that does not need to be re-examined by the researcher who is re-using it (Kabir, 2016).

Besides gathering the primary data, the researchers have gathered secondary data from academic articles and news. This was done to get a better understanding of what has already been researched on the topic, as well as to fill in any gaps in the research.

3.16 Data Analysis

The primary data collected from the interview was taken in the Nepali language of all the participants. The interviews were recorded and transcribed into the English language at the same time as listening to the audio. All the records were transcribed and only the relevant data was used for the research purpose.

The transcribed data along with the secondary data was analyzed using a Thematic analysis which is an approach for methodically uncovering, structuring, and providing insight into patterns of meaning throughout a dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2012). By concentrating on the meaning of a

dataset, the researcher can use thematic analysis to recognize and understand common or shared meanings and experiences. The focus of thematic analysis is not on identifying unique meanings and experiences located just inside a particular data item (Braun & Clarke, 2012). This strategy, then, is a manner of understanding and making sense of what is similar to the way a topic is discussed or written about (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

The first step in this process was familiarizing the researchers with all the data sets. Making notes of the data, listening to the data as well as reading the transcripts is a part of this phase (Braun & Clarke, 2012). The process of transcribing the audio record was time-consuming however, it led the researchers to be familiar with the acquired data. The researchers listened to the audio recording at least one time and read and re-read the transcribed data multiple times to become familiar with the datasets. Researchers can begin taking notes on prospective data items of interest, questions, linkages between data items, and other preliminary thoughts after becoming familiar with the data. This is the first step in the coding process. This stage in the process produces codes rather than themes (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). As the researchers transition from codes to themes, the analysis begins to take shape. A theme "represents some level of structured response or meaning within the data set" and "captures something noteworthy about the data in connection to the research issue (Braun & Clarke, 2012)." In this phase, the researchers identified the data with similarities and other data that could generate different themes. The researchers in the next step reviewed the themes generated against the coded data and the dataset overall (Braun & Clarke, 2012). The researchers reviewed the potential theme, in which the extracts are coded and matched with the matching theme, and additional material is separated into different themes. In defining and naming themes, a unique and specific characteristic of the themes was considered by the researchers, and why the data in each theme provide clear insight into the study (Braun & Clarke, 2012; Kiger &

Varpio, 2020). In the final step, the themes are not only described but provided with interpretations of how the themes were generated to support the research question (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). For instance: an interviewee was asked a question regarding the role of politics in the area where the interviewee showed concern about the same person being the president for 10 years and misusing the power. Similar answers were obtained from other interviewees. This helped the researchers generate a final theme “collaboration, power, and politics (From above)”. Similarly, interviews with the participants talking about the culture and tourism helped the researchers to generate another theme “Struggles over-tourism, authenticity, and culture (From below)”

3.17 Ethical Consideration

The potential issue regarding ethics has been considered by the researchers during the research process. Firstly, the confidentiality of the participants to protect their identity from being identified by others was considered (KANG & HWANG, 2021). For researchers who use interviews for the collection of data, participants would be informed as much as possible about the nature and aim of the research. While the researchers were conducting the interview, before the interview began, the interviewees were made aware of the purpose of the study and were even asked for verbal consent if the researchers could record the interview or not.

3.18 Reliability and Validity

Validity and reliability are two criteria that any qualitative researcher should consider while planning a study, analyzing the data, and assessing the study's quality (Golafshani, 2015). reliability refers to the extent to which a research method consistently produces the same results

throughout several conducts of research (Brink, 1993). validity refers to the consistency and fairness of research results (Brink, 1993). To be more particular, the term "reliability" in qualitative research is modified with "dependability," which closely resembles the concept of "reliability" in quantitative research (Golafshani, 2015). Dependability refers to the consistency and reliability of research findings, as well as the extent to which research processes are documented, allowing someone outside the study to observe, audit, and evaluate it (Moon, Brewer, Januchowski-Hartley, Adams, & Blackman, 2016). The reader can examine the extent to which suitable research methods have been followed by looking at the methodology and methodologies used in detail. Researchers should take into account their study concept and execution, including the methodology and methods used, as well as the specifics of data collecting (Moon et al., 2016). Therefore, dependability in the methodology chapter was ensured by giving information about the research design, data collection methods, and ethical considerations.

Furthermore, to ensure validity, the triangulation method was used which refers to the use of many research methods in the investigation of the same topic (Honorene, 2017). Information gathered from many sources can be utilized to confirm, expand, or enlighten the study problem. It reduces personal and methodological biases and improves the generality of a study (Decrop, 1999). To examine the understanding of the issue, various methods of data collecting, as well as diverse sources of secondary data, were examined. Gender, race, and culture can also influence the bias in the qualitative analysis as explained by (Decrop, 1999). To ensure validation, interviews were conducted with a variety of personnel, including interviews with ACAP members, hotel operators, tourism professionals, and locals of different genders, races, and cultures.

3.19 Positionality Statement

Within a specific research study, positionality refers to the researcher's choice of viewpoint (Darwin Holmes, 2020). Some features of positionality, such as gender, ethnicity, skin color, and nationality, are culturally allocated or widely perceived as fixed (Darwin Holmes, 2020). In terms of positioning, the commonality is that the four of the researchers bear a Nepalese nationality but come together for the study from different cultural backgrounds. Positionality is a multistep process in which a researcher may be tightly positioned in certain areas while being distant from others. These differences can influence the research process, cause tension in the researcher-participant interaction, and change the study outcomes (Lusambili, Bhanbhro, & Muchanga, 2020). As the researchers are Nepalese, it was possible to get connected with the topic of the study. However, in the early stage of the study, the researchers had planned to study the difference between the two selected case areas concerning the motorway access in one of the study areas and the other one without it. However, moving forward, the researchers unfold it was more than the motorway access that included politics, power, and authenticity which has been going on in the place which resulted in changing the research question. To reduce the bias that could occur during the study, the researchers selected people with different backgrounds and different knowledge of the study topic.

4. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The outcome of the interviews with the ACAP members, hotel operators, tourism professionals, and local people are presented in the following section of the study. A thorough discussion of the findings by using relevant references from the literature and how it aligns with the problem formulation of the study is analyzed herein.

Throughout the interview, participants shared a range of viewpoints, and the study generated two major themes: Collaboration, power, and politics (from above) and Struggles with over-tourism, authenticity, and culture (from below).

4.1 Collaboration, power, and politics (From above)

This section highlights the findings from the study on how the infrastructure development (road construction project) in Ghandruk has been portrayed in the daily lives of the stakeholders, how the project plan has been affected due to the political debates and how political power dynamics have outscored the pace of socio-cultural and economic conditions of the village.

According to respondents, road construction and development should help rural areas to prosper in terms of their livelihood. If we consider (Jacoby 2000; Walle 2002), the road construction in Ghandruk has somehow helped hoteliers as an essential backbone with the increase in domestic tourists.

Member of TMC and president of Century Youth Club Mr. Mikash Gurung explains the reason behind the increase of domestic tourists in Ghandruk as compared to Chomrong.

“In the case of Gandruk, the construction of roads has been fruitful with the flow of incoming domestic tourists. Most Nepalese do not prefer weeks of trekking as it is not feasible for them due to the lack of long holidays. Therefore, they prefer coming on Friday and returning the next day on Saturday in Ghandruk. But we are not involved in these as we have been focused on trekking tourism in Chomrong. It is like a brand now that Chomrong has been known for trekking and we decided to continue as it is. Therefore, we did not agree to bring the roadway to Chomrong.”

An increase in domestic tourists has been one of the benefits for the village financially. Additionally, people have benefitted from the easy transportation to the cities, which has led to the availability of basic needs items at cheaper prices. Visiting health facilities to the locals has been fruitful during emergencies.

“Talking about the positive impacts, the locals of the Ghandruk have experienced in the transportation of sick people to the nearest city or hospitals due to the road facility which took many hours to reach to the nearest hospital or health facility in the past.” (Biswas Gurung)

He also added,

“Basic necessary items are cheaper than before. We used to pay 2200 Nepali Rupees for a bag of Rice but now we can get it for 600 to 700 Nepali Rupees.”

This suggests that the people have gained some benefits from the construction of the road. Income generation through domestic tourists, easy access to the nearby cities, availability of basic needs at cheaper prices, and reaching to hospitals during emergencies are some examples of the benefits that people enjoyed from the road development. This demonstrates that the primary objective of

infrastructure development i.e, to uplift the living standard of the community has lived up to the expectations. The overall growth of the community shows us that road construction has ensured mobility as well as economic growth.

However, claims by Balmford (2013) that road-building initiatives in the least developed countries face sustainability challenges have pretty much matched with Gandruk. It has been found that road construction has created a variety of sustainability challenges in the village. Annapurna Conservation Area (ACA) has many issues linked with road construction such as political instability being one of them. Another issue that is related to road construction is the inclusion of people in power or elites of the society and the exclusion of underprivileged, lower-class business owners in between the route.

“After the restructure of the constitution of Nepal, Ghandruk comes under Annapurna Rural Municipality which used to be a single entity as Ghandruk village development committee and there is local conservation office Ghandruk which comes under ACAP, so, both stakeholder is in the conflict in the internal matters such as revenue collection from the hotels, public, tourist and tourism business permit and renew. Moreover, the policies of ARM and ACAP are tangled, and a power struggle is going on between two parties claiming their territory's responsibility.”
(Biswas Gurung).

The responses from the ACAP member about the same issue also blames the structure of government and policies.

“The dilemma is that when the decision was made in 2072 B.S, all the infrastructures after that including merging 4-5 VDC to one VDC. Entering into these VDCs, we are unable to establish

a committee and sub-committee. On top of that, there was less or no effect of politics in the previous time, however, you know better how politics works at the present time in Nepal.” (Netra Sharma).

Lama & Job (2014) claimed that the history of Nepal’s political rule had complicated the sustainability challenges in ACA. Changes in Nepal’s political regime in 2007 from an absolute monarchy to multi-party democracy and republican state transformed the power transitions and governance processes (Berg et al, 2008). These events have had a significant impact on ACAP.

From the interviews, it is found that ACAP used to be the only responsible organization that looked after the area. But with changes in the political transitions, the government converted the Village Development Committee into Rural Municipality. This event saw ACAP and Rural Municipality becoming two different parties involved in the same village with both claiming they are the one who is responsible for the caretaking of the area. In short, the political dispute began to override and all other stakeholders were negatively affected.

Since there has been a division into rural municipality and ACAP, the respondents claim that rural municipality is strongly influenced by power and politics whereas ACAP's role in the area has grown lesser. An ACAP officer from Chomrong mentioned that the conflict between the rural municipality and ACAP started when the rural municipality took over the responsibility of the area.

“This is where the conflicts arise between us. We go through law and order, and they go against us and say this is not under the ACAP area. They even say we are the people’s representative, and we make the law. This is where now the conflicts have been growing. This is what I have been feeling as well as what the politicians might have been feeling. This is not how a country develops. A country that has a system and follows law prospers. The politicians might not

have understood the current situation. I say they have not understood. People are not revolting against the politicians for fun, but they are not satisfied with the way.” (Netra Sharma).

The rural municipality then went against ACAP saying the area now is not under ACAP. He even claims that with the political influence in the municipality, they do not follow the system or law which correlates with Campbell (2005), protected areas are places where power is exercised and where interests and values are negotiated. The respondent suggests that a country that has a proper system and follows the law will prosper and develop. Otherwise, with no understanding between these two parties, the development projects in the area will have consequences as mentioned by Job et al (2003) that sustainability in protected areas is a never-ending topic with distinct conceptions, and these challenges not only define how to use and manage resources but also how to manage these protected areas.

Poverty reduction through the maximization of economic opportunity and growth for the underprivileged is the primary socio-economic incentive for road construction, as well as the outcomes promised by governments. Traditional economic theory, on the other hand, fosters unsustainable socio-economic institutions and development processes, according to Rammel and Van den Bergh (2003). Van de Walle (2002) goes on to say that road connectivity is only one of several constraints, and that the predicted socio-economic benefits from road construction are contingent on a number of factors such as equality, political economics, and social concerns. As a result, it may be argued that the contemporary debate over infrastructure development should focus on the moral aspects of sustainable development, as well as the political, economic, and power dynamics at play (see Blaikie and Jeanrenaud 1997).

But the respondent complains that political influence, personal interests, and selfishness of people have created disparities despite the committee's efforts for sustainable development (Ashley and Maxwell, 2001).

“I myself was one of the members of the road construction committee, and in the process of development, everybody needs to be positive. as our early plan, the road development committee has planned to develop the project in a sustainable manner, considering the environmental and social challenges as well as engineering design and the main challenge is to convince the property owners whose property lies on the way to be built, consulting experts, involving the political groups and responsible stakeholders such as ACAP but political power, personal interest, and ego play more interest in the development of road and leadership fails in the process.” (Biswas Gurung)

He also added “Local political representatives are behind the marketing of their own political parties and ideologies discussing which political party is bigger and popular. In their view, road construction is the symbol of development and their political agenda for the election and people also cannot understand the meaning of sustainable development, they symbolize construction machinery such as excavators as the development of the area. People should understand the themes such as leadership, responsibility, and rights. They must know their responsibility and rights which they get from their nation, without hampering anyone.”

Furthermore, throughout the interview, the road not being built according to the plan and design came to light. Respondents claim that people started to see their personal benefits if the road comes through their land and people who have been leading the project misused their power in order to construct the road according to their will.

“There needs to be major planning with a specific route other than digging everywhere without proper planning.” (Mikas)

Lakshin Gurung also criticizes the construction of the road for not being constructed as per planned by the engineers.

“The road isn’t constructed as per the measurement the engineer has told us to do but we have done it in another way.”

Another way refers here to people who have constructed roads for their personal benefits. Or it can be said that it is chaotic.

“Construction of roadway connection is done in a haphazard manner.” (Kesav Kumar)

This is similar to the study conducted by Rankin et al (2018) where they found that people in higher ranks or political leaders derived their power and got things done for their personal benefits. From the contractors hired to construct the road, voluntary groups, labor, and NGOs formed alliances and took full control of road construction. Controlling construction contracts allowed political leaders to route the road through their own land and benefit from it. The findings from this research match the study by Rankin et al (2018) on roads of change.

The study on road construction pointed out that people with political power and social elites have misused their power for their personal benefits even though the project would have adverse effects on the overall sustainability of the area. This illustrates how negligible people are and they are even ready to jeopardize the whole development project for their own personal benefits.

On the other hand, issues raised from the construction of roads are exclusivity and inclusivity. Local businesses that fall in between the route of the road have been excluded as their business sales have been negatively impacted. Likewise, people who used their power to route the road through their own private landfall under inclusion as they benefited from the road construction.

When asked about the local businesses getting affected due to the road construction. Kesav Kumar responded

“There are local businesses in between walking trails, these days tourists do not stop in their shops. It is a tremendous loss for them. It should have been explored initially how to involve them in the planning process to create alternative occupations. Also, people who are capable have moved to other locations to continue or establish a business. It is difficult for individuals who have limited finances and are unable to establish themselves outside of that location or who are unable to leave their current location.”

Furthermore, we also got a response from another respondent which is similar to the previous respondent as he also talks about the people that are being excluded by the construction of the roads and how their lifestyle has changed with the infrastructure development. Local people with money and political support are getting more benefits from the road construction but the ones who don't have both of those have to leave the place or take shelter in other places.

“ Those who have limited resources and cannot establish themselves outside that place and do not have the situation to leave their place, it is hard for them. Those who have traditional tea houses, homestays where tourists and guests have stopped coming, the government and concerned authorities should deeply be concerned and facilitate them with alternative job/employment wherever they can be suited and fit, they have to be involved.” (Chet Nath Kanel).

“There is no unity in the village, therefore the workers who come to build the road do whatever they want wherever they wish to take the road. Another main thing is that the local people who have power and money can easily bribe contractors so that the landowner can take the road near his land and house.” (Laksin Gurung)

The aforementioned discussion topics were mainly related to infrastructure development and how power and politics have played their part in the village. From the gathered responses from the interviews, another important topic that has been talked a lot about is stakeholder collaboration. It is found that ACAP has played a key role in the formation of groups and committees that handles the management of tourism in the area.

“First, ACAP is the one that played an important role in bringing tourism. It decentralized, and started a hotel’s association. Others are Mother’s group and youth club. These three have been preserving tourism in this place. TMC controls all the aspects of tourism and manages it.” (Mikash Gurung).

“Firstly, as per the rule, a different committee has been formed. A conservation management committee is there, there is a voting poll whereby the representative is elected. We have 9 wards, and a representative is chosen from the 9 wards and 5 representatives from the concerned authorities, people involved in social work, and the head officer chooses them. Under the conservation management committee, there is a sub-body under TMC, there are different parts like forest conservation.”

“There is a “Mother’s group” which is strongly rooted and started at the time of ACAP establishment. There are youth clubs as well. Moreover, there is a group called the green force club in the school. This is under our ACAP conservation.” (Netra Sharma).

With a collaborative approach to the destination management, like how the ACAP has been doing with other organizations, according to (Huxham 1996; Kotler, Haider, and Reinn 1993) can have a competitive advantage by fitting together all the knowledge, expertise, capital, greater coordination of relevant policies, increased acceptance of the resulting policies, and more effective implementation which have helped form inter-organizational collaboration in the village. This is relevant to the claims made by Pretty (1995).

All the respondents agree that ACAP is the key initiator for the tourism development in the Annapurna area and they are in support of ACAP for the management of issues related to the area. According to the ACAP officer, there are different groups that are involved in the betterment of the area. To name them, Mother's group- which was established at the same time as ACAP, Century Youth Club- a group of youths that works as a helping hand in the area, Green Force Club- a school club from the area, Tourism Management Committee (TMC)- who handles the management of tourism sector in the area. The president of Century Youth Club also supported the response from the ACAP officer about the formation of these groups and he added there is another group- the hotel's association. All these groups and committees were under the supervision of ACAP. According to a local stakeholder, ACAP did a good job managing tourism in Ghandruk, and leadership was efficient. This supports the approach claimed by (Huxham 1996; Kotler, Haider, and Reinn 1993) that assembling stakeholders and their expertise can have a competitive advantage in the destinations.

"At that time Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP), build their base here in the village and really contributed to managing the tourism in the village by building the toilets in the area, giving training to the villagers about cooking, baking, local guide training, and waste management, explored new trails in the area, build signboards in the trekking routes, and forming

the tourism stakeholders such as mother's group and tourism management committee. In the initial phase, ACAP did a good job managing the tourism here in Ghandruk and the leadership was also very efficient at that time."(Biswas)

However, when the road development project came along, it was found that there was a lack of coordination among the stakeholders. A tourism expert on the issues related to the construction of the road has a viewpoint that the project has done more damage than it should have had benefits. Having said that, he also mentions that the construction of a motorable route damaging a trekking route is a huge setback to tourism.

"When constructing the roadway, the local stakeholders should have decided from the participatory approach. The mechanism to support the effect that can be seen should have been developed at the early stage. Without doing this, constructing the motorable route damages the trekking route, in between people and their business where people do not stop by, this is huge damage to them."(Chet Nath Kanel)

This indicates that with all the potential benefits which could be achieved from road development, there are always considerable challenges in collaborative planning models (Bramwell and Lane 2000). Bringing a large group of people together for regular meetings and decision-making is sometimes difficult and time-consuming. Collaboration can be difficult because some groups refuse to collaborate with others because they believe it will weaken their own authority or influence, or because they fear other parties (Hall and Jenkins 1995). Conflict among the villagers has demonstrated how challenging it is to bring all the organizations on the same side.

It is necessary to understand the opportunities and challenges of road development in tourism, which eventually helps to identify in what ways the stakeholders are benefitted, how they have

made the most out of the opportunities, and what challenges or drawbacks they face with road development projects. Having seen the issues raised in the village, though he supports the construction of the road, he criticized the planning saying that it should have developed in the early stage of the project with a participatory approach among the local stakeholders.

If we bring all the responses together under the same umbrella, it is found that the conflict between the rural municipality and ACAP is the main reason as they are tangled with their territory debates. The ACAP officer claims that there was no political influence in the past but when rural municipalities came into existence, there had been rising conflict between the two.

When stakeholders are working together, they may not be inclined to listen politely to and consider the opinions of others. There may be no tradition of many organizations collaborating in decision-making in some places. A participation technique created in and for wealthy countries may fail in a less developed country's socio-economic, cultural, administrative, or political circumstances (Roberts and Simpson 1999; Timothy 1998, Tosun and Jenkins 1998). This is a somewhat similar case with Gandruk as the conflict between the ACAP and ARM. They do not listen to each other and their decision-making does not involve agreement from both parties.

As we found the issues due to lack of collaboration between ACAP and ARM in Ghandruk, it is totally different in Chomrong. The respondents from Chomrong claim that they have been doing all the tourism development works in a collaborative way. It is found that the people of Chomrong believe that tourism is the primary source of income. They do understand the importance of roads, but they are only focused on tourism, especially trekking. Therefore, they did not agree to construct a road in Chomrong.

“Our chomrong tourism management committee is the one who is active from Chomrong to Annapurna Base Camp. Among others, this committee has 55 different hotels where TMC makes the rules and regulations under the supervision of ACAP, and Mother’s group looks after the roads, when there is not any other local government, they take care of the maintenance of the roads And youth club provides security like a police force does in the village. If there is any incident, we immediately go there to help. Accidents and landslides happen sometimes, we help them as a rescuer” (Mikash Gurung)

Local communities engaged in tourism policies in underdeveloped countries, for example, have a number of "formidable operational, institutional, and cultural limits," according to Tosun (1999), and these limitations are likely to affect local community participation. However, people in Chomrong have made decisions with a collaborative approach not to bring motorways into the village.

About the inquiry about connecting the road to the Chomrong village, Mikash Gurung clearly says,

“Chommmrong did not agree on a vehicle way because Tourism is the primary source of income. For agricultural purposes, roads are necessary but, for tourism businesses with trekking as their primary business, it is not. Foreign tourists do not come to Nepal to just visit Pokhara and Kathmandu. Foreign tourists especially come to visit the places with hills, and mountains. Therefore, if there is no trekking route, how would tourism in Nepal survive?”

All the respondents from Chomrong agree that the decision not to bring the roadway to Chomrong was done with the collaboration of all the stakeholders. They stuck with only a trekking route to Annapurna so that tourists can take a trekking route rather than motor vehicles. However, one of the tourism experts questions how long the people of Chomrong can resist not having a motorable

road in their village. He makes a bold claim that people going against the road construction are compromising the development of the village. According to Araujo (2002), there is also little experience of democracy in certain emerging nations, or democracy is mostly limited to business, governmental, or professional elites, or clientelist relationships exist where clients seek favors from strong patrons.

4.2 Struggles over-tourism, authenticity, and culture ('from below')

According to the respondents, when there is an arrival of lots of tourists, it would ultimately cause some changes in the aspects of living in the host society. The way that the society had been living changed with the inflow of tourism activities. Considering (Shrestha, 2014) claims that the negative impact and influence of tourism were apparent among Ghandruk's younger generation in terms of clothes, food, language, music, and dances. Instead of wearing traditional Gurung clothing, they dressed in trendy western attires to impersonate foreign culture. Traditional songs and dances were becoming less popular, while English and Nepali modern music and dances were becoming increasingly popular (Shrestha, 2014). The cultural interaction between the host and the tourist leads to a shift in traditional lifestyles, including clothes, language, and food, as well as a rising openness to blending with and learning from the tourists (Sayeda, 2017). Loss of natural habitat for flora and fauna, contamination of air and water bodies, adulteration of local cultures, and unsustainable management of the natural environment are all examples of mass tourism's environmental and socio-cultural effects (Cobbinah, Black, & Thwaites, 2013). This claim

(Shrestha, 2014) (Sayeda, 2017), and (Cobbinah et al., 2013) could be seen as working together as respondents were found to say.

“The local music, songs, and so on start to get replaced by western songs and western flavor. This would ultimately have side effects” (Chet Nath Kandel)

He continued by saying

“With the number of arrivals increasing, the crowdedness increases itself which leads to the decrease in the naturalness of the place.”

“As per the development of mass tourism or increasing number of tourists arrive, the fact in the beauty of trekking, local culture, environmental degradation, there are questions that have been raised due to the roadways connection.”

Sarita Khadka also explained the cultural effect that could bring about the emergence of this scene.

“When there is development in a village, the ones who directly experience the development start losing their own culture and try to follow the one which they are learning. They focus on learning the outside things, and how to get an impact from the outside things. The cultural sensitivity gets very low at that place. The dominance of Westernized culture could be seen in most parts.” (Sarita Khadka)

She further added the effect that can be seen in the destination with the arrival of a large number of tourists as

“When there is mass tourism, the cultural essence of the destination is hampered indeed. This is because when there is the arrival of a limited number of tourists, the charm that the destination gets and feels gets low with the increase in the number of tourists.”

The flow of tourists has been ok in the places but the challenges are also equally increased as per Biswas Gurung

“After the flow of international tourists they started to explore and like the natural beauty of our village, mountains, architecture, cultural and heritage of Gurung tribe, with the increasing number of tourists in the area, management challenges also increased.” (Biswas Gurung)

All these statements and claims could mean that the cultural essence of a place can be compromised once development starts and the social lives of people can also change along with the changes which can be seen in the study.

With the inflow of tourists, the demand for the tourists also varies which means there is a possibility that the host society could be willing or forced to make changes in the way that they have been working as per the demand. As per the respondents they seem to be concerned over the structure of the houses that have replaced their authentic house structures. Furthermore, the acknowledgment of the pattern of houses that solve the issues running in the place could be minimized. As (Shrestha, 2014) in his study on Ghandruk found that to meet tourist demand, new hotels were built, influencing the architecture of Ghandruk and converting old buildings into

contemporary ones. This claim (Shrestha, 2014) similarities to the claim of the respondents who shows their concern over their authentic houses being replaced by the concrete ones:

Tourists visiting after a long period of time complaining about the buildings and the roads and the pollution of Ghandruk. Our village is renowned as a stone-paved village because the house, wall, and surrounding trails are layered with the stone but as soon as the road is constructed everybody used a cement block to build the replace tin with slate stone in the roof, so it automatically we will lose the authenticity.” (Laksin Gurung).

“Although this is positive, making a housing give a local flavor to the architecture would have been very nice. A modern house with traditional looks and construction would be a great combination.” (Kishor Bohora)

On the other hand, interviewees also expressed their concern over losing the authentic homes with the accessibility of road connections. However one of the interviewees avered that the modern buildings are constructed in such a way after the earthquake hit Nepal in 2015.

“with the earthquake, there was destruction all over Nepal including the buildings as well, the government has introduced to dethrone the construction of the traditional house. At the same time, the modern houses are strongly made as with small rector scale of the earthquake, the houses cannot be damaged.” (Kishor Bohora).

Along with this, he also continued his acknowledgment of losing the authentic house as he stated the following:

“Although this is positive, making a housing give a local flavor to the architecture would have been very nice. A modern house with traditional looks and construction would be a great combination.” (Kishor Bohora)

It is to be noted that the traditional houses called “GOL GHAR” is gradually being replaced with a concrete building which has raised questions about the authenticity of the place. For instance, interviewees were found stating the following:

“In Ghandruk, there was a tradition of GOL GHAR, which is hardly seen at the moment.” (Nanda Lal Pandey).

He also continued stating continuing the traditional GOL GHAR with a modern house would be preferable but there comes the matter of economy.

“they could build a house as GOL Ghar tradition with the modern house which would be very nice to see. This question is to be raised by everyone but also with this the cost level and the knowledge of the builders plays a role.”

Linking these statements with Ashworth and Tunbridge (1990) who state that an object can be considered authentic because of its "intrinsic historical or aesthetic features". The historical houses are called “Gol Ghar”. As the infrastructure development is elevating in rural areas and availability of the modern and cheap materials. The settlement's houses are being replaced by the western-styled houses which have affected the traditional houses of Ghandruk. Due to this domestic as well as international tourists are visiting for a short period of time.

Furthermore, Lakshin Gurung also showed a similar concern about tourism where tourists come for a picnic and return it is very accessible and easy to reach the place by a vehicle which has led to losing their identity.

“Village has to look like village people coming from Pokhara, Kathmandu is living in big buildings so the main motive of visitors is to experience the village lifestyle. Now the purpose of the tourists is to come for a night mostly enjoy for Friday night and picnic with family because of the road which is accessible within 2 hours due to this we are losing our existence.” (Laksin Gurung).

5. DISCUSSION

This section includes a discussion of the overall findings on how road construction projects are more than just an infrastructure development in a rural area where tourism is considered a primary engine. Furthermore, a thorough discussion on how the road development projects influence culture, and sociality, and how these projects come in relation to sustainability principles are the topics of discussion.

The analysis of the material collected from the interviews revealed that infrastructure development like road construction projects helps in the overall development of rural areas with the opportunity for mobility and economic growth of the community. However, it is found that sustainability challenges come along with road construction projects. Generally, road constructions are often linked with environmental degradation and their negative impacts on wildlife. The current study generated an outcome that the infrastructure development not only brings positive results but also pointed out the challenges with political and power dynamics that persuade the whole development project and its planning.

The findings from the study raised several concerns about the governance of the area. From the study conducted, it is figured out that the political instability in Nepal has played a key role in the overall dismantling of the prominent organization i.e., ACAP. With the establishment of Annapurna Rural Municipality (ARM), it was discovered that the governing power of ARM grew stronger as compared to ACAP. Since then, it is noticed that the dispute between ACAP and ARM began and the consequences were faced by other stakeholders. The study found out that ARM is strongly influenced by power and politics as they disobey the law when making decisions. This illustrates how the formation of ARM was the beginning of vanquishing good governance.

Findings from the study reveal that the road construction project, at first, had a well-thought-out plan of sustainability and even the design plans were socially and environmentally friendly. But the interview with a member of the road construction committee had a significant disclosure of the planning process being altered by the people who are politically backed and had the route discoursed in favor of their personal advantage. This highlights how the elites of the society enjoy their competence over the underprivileged. When the authority itself is corrupt, there is undermining of development goals, economic loss, and inefficiency and when there are rigged economic and political systems, there are failures in infrastructure development.

6. CONCLUSION

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the road development project in Annapurna Conservation Area considering how infrastructure development is often taken as a positive and beneficial notion toward overall community development. This study has tried to unfold the hidden aspects that behold the infrastructure development, especially in rural Nepal.

As the studies on the current topic of infrastructure development in rural Nepal are limited, this study proves to be relevant as it raises questions on the competencies of government and road construction projects. This study has covered different aspects of infrastructure development like sustainability implications, road development projects and their impacts on tourism, and the hidden truth of power and political dynamics involved in road construction.

It was found that the road construction has to some extent fulfilled its objective of upliftment of the living standard of the community through mobility and overall economic growth. However, there are sustainability challenges in terms of environment, culture, and society. On top of that, the study focused on the predominant power and political figures in the authority limiting the potential of the infrastructure development to fully exhibit its prospects. This type of scenario emphasizes the instability in the governance as development projects could not be successfully accomplished. Some of the interviewees showed their frustration towards the governance of the authority who did just the opposite of what they promised. The political power at the local level is

enjoyed by the political leaders, and community leaders, who have a social connection with the decision-makers and the rich members of the community who have taken the advantage of the road construction project.

It has been found that having two different authorities with different approaches and interests while planning and constructing the road in the village has jeopardized the whole development project. Their lack of collaboration, cooperation, and communication is the key deficient factor that is found in the study which has tumbled down the road construction project.

Considering everything, previous studies have mostly investigated this matter from the point of environmental issues. However, this study has to some extent extended its research on other aspects including how power and political dynamics have been embezzled in relation to road development projects in rural Nepal.

7. RECOMMENDATION TO THE FUTURE RESEARCHERS

With the findings from the research, several limitations are put forward to further research on the topic. This study has pointed out a few issues or challenges in relation to infrastructure development and how road construction projects create conflicts. The viewpoints of the related stakeholders regarding development in the rural village have been discussed. However, the study on the issues with road development does not just limit the sustainability boundaries. There is always room for the related aspects to be investigated thoroughly.

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9. APPENDICES

1.1 APPENDIX A

(Netra sharma) (ACAP Chomrong officer)

We are asking for the consent and permission from you regarding the recording of the interview.

Yes, it is absolutely fine. For the purpose of privacy, would you prefer your name to be anonymous?

It is fine to use my name.

1. what is your name, and your related field of work?

- My name is Netra sharma chaulagai. I prefer sharma mostly, I donot use chaulagai often. My hometown is Jhapa district, Arjun rana VDC ward no.8. I was born on 2024/04/10 (B.S). I started my official work as of 2052 B.S. when I started my work firstly, I started working at the only zoo in the Nepal in Lalitpur. Then after, in 2064 shuklaphata conservation area, I worked for 4months. Then I started working here. Here I work at chomrong as a checkpoint incharge.

- Talking about my work, I am in charge of checking the permit of international tourists, then after showing the permit, tourists could travel to ABC and upon returning back have to keep the record. Not only international tourists, but we also keep records of domestic tourists as well.

2. Has the record keeping been ordered from the senior authority or VDC ?

- When people come to visit ABC, through motorways until Ghandruk, it is not possible to keep the record at Birethati. However, when tourists pass through Chomrong, we keep the record of them. Nepal government has set Rs. 100 fee which is approved by them. There was conflict at a

point regarding the fee which has led to suspension from the head office at the very moment. This has to be sorted out soon and the way it had been implemented before, it has to be implemented now

3. As you have been involved in tourism field for a long time, when you came here , what committee has you seen as active as an ACAP officer ?

- Firstly, as per the rule, the different committee has been formed. Conservation management committee is there, there is a voting poll whereby the representative is elected. We have 9 wards, and a representative is chosen from the 9 wards and 5 representatives from the concerned authorities, people involved in social work, the head officer chooses them. Under the conservation management committee, there is a sub body under TMC , there are different parts like forest conservation.

There is “**mothers group**” which is strongly rooted and started at the time of ACAP establishment. There are youth clubs as well. Moreover, there is a group called green force club in the school. This is under our ACAP conservation. There is a book which focuses on the green environment like protection and conservation of forest, natural resources which are taught in the classes of 6,7 and 8 in the school. For this, there is a class running every 2 times a week in the school. And the salary for concerned teacher is paid by our ACAP. We have a special designation for women development who is a female herself. As a Ranger who is Bhim prasad upadhayay is concerned with the forest department, Nanda lal pandey who sees the accountant part. In case someone is unable to attend their work due to some reasons like sickness, I get the information and do it myself.

4. When we interviewed in Ghandruk, we found that the departments are not collaborating which we get through the interview. How is it with chomrong according to your work...

- The dilemma is that when the decision in 2072 B.S, all the infrastructures after that including merging 4-5 VDC to one VDC. Entering into this VDCs, we are unable to establish a committee and sub-committee. On top of that, there was less or no effect of politics in the previous time , however you know better the politics how it work at the present time in Nepal. Under **CMC**, there was **TMC**. But now, they are disagreeing to register on ACAP and want to register by themselves. This is how it has been working now. Although the registration and extension works differently now, the vision and work is same with both of us. I would not say it a conflict, maybe we are unable to make things clear to them or they are not listening to us, it is in the gods hand.

No collaboration in ghandruk and differently here.

- It is like this, some aid now comes from the government also and from us as well. According to me, the collaboration is not seen because in the early time the budget came to rural municipality, and when the budget comes it already surpasses the month of **POUSH**. When there was meeting held, there was no budget at all. And when it came and the concerned people when discussing about where to invest the budget the monthe of **MAGH** would cross. Our works starts from the first quarter only, therefore making a basket fund with them and work was difficult for us. At the moment also, the same situation prevails. At the moment, lots of money has inflowed to the rural municipality, that our fund seems like throwing a stone in an ocean. Before, VDC would see the fund but now the fund is directly given to the rural

municipality. With this there is some kind of confusion. We feel like the rural municipality are having less interest in working with ACAP with this situation.

The other thing is that after the 2062 B.S., the constitution has changed a lot. With the constitution, there has been a lot of changes in the law and order but the way of development according to the laws has not been seen. There are still lots of things that need to be changed. The laws and orders do not apply to the politicians but we general people who barely can survive for food everyday has to follow everything.

For e.g. there are lots of hotels in these area which has a lot of natural beauties. But unplanned and unmanaged establishment of hotel people are thinking just about how to take advantage. This is wrong and should have been stopped by the government who is running the country at present. Seeing this unplanned and unmanaged development of hotel industry in the country and this area, it is a matter of concern because in the near future, it would be hard to find a piece of public land if this rate goes as it has been going on now. This is where the conflicts rise between us. We go through law and order and they go against us and say this is not under ACAP area. They even say we are the people representative and we make law. This is where now the conflicts have been growing. This is what I have been feeling as well as the politicians might have been feeling. This is not how a country develops. The country which has a system and follows law prospers. The politicians might not have understood the current situation. I say they have not understood. People are not revolting the politicians for fun but they are not satisfied with the way.

In my office also, I am not satisfied with the work done by the higher authorities, I am not. The only thing that is prevailing is how to side kick the work from themselves.

5. Two ways in ghandruk. There is political influence which did not require 2 ways to ghandruk. How do you review it?

- The thing is they need tourists also and also run the hotels as well to sustain their livelihood and also roadways. What we said was ok you could build the road, but do not damage the trail and construct. Because of many people involvement and ties with politicians, some of the places have constructed many ways. They say, **you have converted the heavenly place to hell.** Because of this, although there are tourists flow, they are so dishearted and show their pain. At least you could have saved the walking trail and made the road way. The tourists now do not choose ghandruk as a place to visit as they have been before. Ghandruk has been placed as a option when they return from somewhere to stay just overnight.

6. Effect on tourism. prediction of future.

- The main aim of tourists coming is to reach Annapurna Base Camp. We have to see from two ways. One our country is a place of agriculture and agriculture dependent country. If we do not want the motor way, we have to make sure we give facility to them. For e.g. during the time of sickness an alternative method has to be discussed. The only way of benefit of the road way comes when the trekking trail is not touched and damaged. The motor way along the trekking route does not sound good at all. Tourists firstly do not want to see the vehicles in the natural sites at all. They have a lot of complain. A lot of tourists are covered with dust and mud because of this. The walking trail has been damaged. A lot of tourists from china when returning from ABC come through the vehicle as well.

Nanda lal Pandey and Kishor Bohora notes

(Political influence)

(Registration process (Tax payment))

(Shareholder) Way (Pin 60)

Political issue (Power use)

Authenticity (OSI 10)

Use of state power

No. self of donor (?)

Policy note (Policy Definition)

(Tax payment)

No. regulation for tax off

Characteristics

OSI \rightarrow OSI 10 \rightarrow OSI 11 \rightarrow OSI 12

(OSI 10) \leftrightarrow (OSI 11)

function

NO, CERI have a investment by (UNDP)

not a domestic market on a basis for

Forum: Only

(No cultural or Heritage Tourism)

Acap \rightarrow Tourist involvement dependent

(Monitoring)

Part \rightarrow Acap \rightarrow source source

(Sleeping system)

Waste management (Bottle disposal)

long policy (she)
for 10 years
(Transport & Reliability)
(Take tourist trail)
for local people Development
→ Completed future (forecast)
due to road access
(Rigids budget for past by (people)
(future)
no fee for Drought, - invest
in date (no protection for Drought - threat)

1.2 APPENDIX B

Mikas Gurung (member of TMC and President of Century Youth Club)

1. Please state your name, occupation, and are you in any way linked with any social organization in this village? If yes, which organization and which post?

My name is Mikash Gurung, I run a business in Chomrong which is a family run business. I am an active member of Tourism Management Committee (TMC). And I am a president of Century Youth Club of this place.

2. In your knowledge, which organizations directly or indirectly are working for the welfare of this village and Annapurna Trekking Trails or for the management of this place?

First, ACAP is the one that played important role in bringing tourism. It decentralized, started hotel's association. Others are Mother's group and youth club. These three have been preserving tourism in this place. TMC controls all the aspects of tourism and manages it. There are two seasons spring season and autumn season where there is a meeting before every season. Hotel's association have one meeting where they discuss what programs will be held this seasons and what things are happening. They work on the things like if there are any negative issues then they make changes and comply rules. Every two years, the committee works on menus. Our chomrong tourism management committee is the one who is active from Chomrong to Annapurna Base Camp. Among others, this committee has 55 different hotels where TMC makes the rules and regulations under the supervision of ACAP and Mother's group looks after the roads, when there is not any other local government, they take care of maintenance of the roads. They collect funds

from tourists who visit Chomrong, they organize cultural programs in the evening for the tourists and it has helped bring electricity to the area. “Kaduri” an institution who donated for the electricity got additional budget from Mother’s group. They collected from donors from abroad, organized cultural programs for British Armies and collected some funds which they utilized to bring electricity by making a small micro hydro generation in this place. From this onward started to light the whole village. And youth club provides securities like a police force do in the village. If there is any incident, we immediately go there to help. Accidents, landslide happen sometimes, we help them as a rescuer. Further, during the festival of Gurungs “Losar”, we organize programs. In the past, chief guests were not invited, only used to enjoy ourselves, but after the arrival of local body government, during programs we have special guests for the inauguration by high profile politicians. Last time we invited, minister Prithvi Subba who inaugurated Jhulunge Pool (Suspension Bridge) and the road which connects Gandruk is also being done with his efforts. All these three organizations work under ACAP and help in the development of this place.

3. In the past, as you said that the financial fundings were done by yourself. Now, after the arrival of the local level government the fundings are raised through rural municipality.

How do you have the transparency of the fundings?

I forgot to add one thing previously. TMC brought a program “daal vaat” during the 10-year war between the government and the Maoist. “Daal Vaat” means that those who worked for trekking did not have to pay for the food. But later, we started to collect some amount from them. From that amount, 50% went to Hoteliers, 50% went to committee by which would help them to survive. That collected amount to the committee were used for the development programs like maintenance

of the roads. The road to Annapurna Base Camp is total of 23 km. That's a challenge for to make such a long walking trail. We receive small fund from ACAP and central government, which is not enough. Transportation of deliver of the goods are expensive, we need to cross the river sometimes. For that, small and weak bridge is not strong enough. Every year, we must work on maintenance. For this TMC work on the same "Daal Vaat" programs to collect some funds. These funds have transparency, we organize an annual program with the involvement of locals, hoteliers. In that program we let them know all the investments and information are shared. We all have the information about the plans. If anybody have any doubts on the transparency, they can raise a question during the same program. The annual program is held on the month of "Jestha" where every transaction and the investments are released to all the people. During the same time, new plans are discussed, and decisions are made. In this annual event, Mother's group, ACAP, Youth Club, Forest committee all are present.

4. While you work collaboratively, is there any issues raised? If so, how do you solve these issues?

Yes. Sometimes issues come. This is a huge area with 23 km to Annapurna. For example, the fund collected from "daal vaat" comes from Chomrong as well as Base Camp. Sometimes, there is a landslide in Chomrong only, in that time the fund and plannings are made in that area only. This is criticized by the people from the base camp and issues come about the utilization of the funds. In that time, our committee try to explain to them that the funds are utilized wherever is necessary. Sometimes its in Chomrong and sometimes its in base camp. We help to both areas. We try to solve by saying when you need help, we help you and when we need help, you help us. Its both win-win here. And sometimes people do not agree with the new rules and regulation because of lack of education. For example, pricing of the menu. We try to do a step-by-step pricing. Suppose

Chomrong has got 200, further ahead its 230 in Sinoya, and 250 in Bamboo. This is because while pricing, sometimes its high and sometimes its low. But tell them that we are a same organization and decision are made for the welfare of all and then we come to a conclusion. Elderly people also help in decision making as they are experienced and experts in these matters.

5. Since past 5 years, in this Annapurna walking trail, the motorway has been constructed. How do you see this and how has it affected the tourism sector?

It has played its role in its own way. On one hand, there used to be road only to Naya Pul that connects highway Pokhara to Baglung, just one pitched road. And trekking way was from Naya Pul to Gandruk, Chomrong to Annapurna base camp. Some people in between this 23 km walking trail were in favor of vehicle way and some were against it. Tourism related businesses like trekking business are mostly affected and tourists who prefer not to use vehicles walk through the walking trail with masks on due to the dust and pollution. This has to be taken care by the Nepal government with a new vision and planning. Since the road work started, they have been digging everywhere and the issue of landslide has increased. I suggest that they prioritize which way needs to be constructed first. So that other people who do business and the local do not get affected by the road construction. There needs to be a major planning with a specific route other than digging everywhere without a proper planning. First start road construction in a short distance, finish it completely with proper structure and management with drainage system. But they dig here and there with a political pressure. What I personally think is that the workers are not well educated enough, and they are not aware about the proper planning. This is totally wrong, Chomrong is 2100m above sea level and Gandruk is 1700m above sea level. There are other rural villages as well. If we wanted, Chomrong would have seen a vehicle. Gandruk has already done that. Chomrong did not agree on vehicle way it's because Tourism is the primary source of income. For

agricultural purposes, road is necessary but, for tourism business with trekking as their primary business it is not. Foreign tourists do not come Nepal to just visit Pokhara and Kathmandu. Foreign tourists specially come to visit the places with hills, mountains therefore, if there is no trekking route, how would tourism in Nepal survive? So, keeping that in consideration, there were people who came with the project of hydro. They wanted to build hydroelectricity project in the upper Himalayas, but we did not let them because if they were allowed to do so, there would have been a new road construction, with it they would destroy the wildlife and their habitat. There are other suitable places for hydro projects in Nepal. We understand the importance of electricity to Nepal and can be benefitted by selling electricity, but we did not allow them to start their project here. For these reasons, trekking route should remain as it is.

6. As you mentioned, tourism business is completely dependent upon trekking route. We can see that the upper road construction has affected in the lower walking trail. Do you have any planning for this business to sustain?

In the past, there was no motor vehicle road when you visited Gandruk. But now the walking trail has been affected. Next year, with the budget from rural municipality, we plan to start the trail again and everybody has agreed upon that. So, tourists who comes by vehicles would use the upper road and the tourists who prefer walking would use the Nayapul route. But we would like them to walk in a naturally sound environment road rather than the road full of dust by covering their mouth.

7. Are there any issues in tourism related field? Like the one with the Helicopter issue or any other which you have faced?

Main problems related to tourism is the one with helicopter. Helicopter sightseeing came 2-3 years ago. Before Covid, we started to get the complaints of noise and vibration due to the helicopter sightseeing in Annapurna 360 mountain view. These complains were from the tourists and it needed to be solved. For that purpose, TMC and youth club both wrote an application to municipality and through that it went to the tourism ministry. Later, it was shut down with the help of Central Development Office. It has now been shut for 2 years during the Covid. This year, from the month of “Ashoj” tourism started therefore, businesspeople from Chomrong to base camp were vaccinated against Covid-19. Since the trekking route restarted again, the helicopter sightseeing started without the permission. Other air companies were not active but, “Prabhu Helicopter” was carelessly running the service with 10-12 flights per day. There were no international tourists, but domestic tourists were there who started to complain. Therefore, I started to gather some people and started the awareness. So, Nepal government got involved and we shut down the service with the collaboration of Century youth club and TMC. Now there is peace and tourists can enjoy wildlife. This issue has been now resolved by us.

8. So, you sealed the whole village due to Covid-19. People who were capable managed to survive but what about incapable people? How did they survive in the lockdown?

We asked for plannings from the rural municipality. In that time, the president of the municipality belonged to the same place. We managed some budget for some areas. These areas included drinking water, road, tourism workers, and there were some funds from central

government as well. We all got involved in development works like building portal shelter, drinking water projects. This helped us sustain during the hard period. Additionally, unused land fields were taken into consideration, and we planted millet and sold them to the municipality. This helped us balance our livelihood. By this way we survived for 2 years during the pandemic.

9. Since the construction of the road, what differences did you find in the flow of tourism in Gandruk and Chomrong?

In case of Gandruk, the construction of road has been fruitful with the flow on incoming domestic tourists. Most Nepalese do not prefer weeks of trekking as it not feasible for them due to the lack of long holidays. Therefore, they prefer coming on Friday and returning next day on Saturday in Gandruk. But we are not involved in these as we have been focused on trekking tourism in Chomrong. It is like a brand now that Chomrong has been known for trekking and we decided to continue as it is. Therefore, we did not agree to bring roadway to Chomrong. But the road has come near to Chomrong which has helped the locals and hoteliers for the transportation of goods. Locals have benefitted from it as well. They get to Pokhara central easily. But the road construction has not been able to bring the development works as expected. It has helped people only to travel to Pokhara. With roads constructions, there should be more development in the village, isn't it? I expected it would come one day but late. People might plan on settling to the lower part of the village where there are road facilities. It would decrease the number of people in the upper village. That would not help people as it should with the road construction. There should be more development works along with the road construction. Hospital, quality education should also

come. There should be quality educators even in the government schools. Related organizations should manage and take care of these things.

10. When we interviewed in Gandruk, we could not find any collaboration according to ACAP's answer. But, here in Chomrong, all the decisions are made with collaboration. What things have you done in the past and being done to maintain collaboration among the people?

If we talk about the collaboration? ACAP has got 3-4 organizations under it. If there are any issues for example the road, we solve it collaboratively. Suppose if we want to build road from Jhino to Chomrong then there would be a meeting where we discuss on how to build it, where to build it and build so that it does not affect others. These things are discussed among the organizations and later share with ACAP. After that ACAP even agrees to provide extra funds if there is lack of funds. We solved the case of the helicopter issue with collaboration with ACAP. Sometimes there are things that are legal/illegal, we might have some disagreement as there are 3-4 organizations along with ACAP. We manage to get into conclusive decision with collaboration. We co-ordinate on each and every topic for example like budgeting, plannings in Chomrong, menu pricing, etc.

11. When we interviewed in Gandruk, we saw political issues. What about Chomrong? How much political influence is there?

No, we do everything in a gathering. We have a unity and this unity among us helps in the development of the village. No matter which political party comes, we discuss first and work for the welfare of the village and its development.

12. In Gandruk, there is no entry fee for domestic tourists, but some money is collected with international tourists. And they do not keep the records of the tourists. Here in Chomrong, it is exactly opposite to that of Gandruk. Why is that and how do you utilize the money collected from tourists?

In Gandruk, ACAP collects fees from international tourists. They give it to Nepal government or to the trusts. But they do not collect from domestic tourists. There was a disagreement between Gandruk and Birethanti on the topic of collection of fees. ACAP's check post was shut down due to the disrupt. But in Chomrong, I think the fees collected from domestic tourists can be utilize for the betterment of the village. After the disrupt, ACAP started to keep the records of tourists. There was a landslide in round Annapurna where there were few Nepalese casualties. But they did not have any records of them. It would have been useful if there were any records of the people that lost their lives. While travelling to Annapurna, 3 students from Pokhara met with an accident that took a life of one of them. They were enjoying on a dangerous ice mass and had an accident. The other two had the records in ACAP which was helpful to find out the information about them. There were international tourists who visited the place and their records with kept. This helped keep the records of domestic tourists as well. Who would have kept the records if only there were domestic tourists? No one would keep a check post and record the data of tourists. It also needs to survive and to run these check posts, fees are collected. There is no guarantee that foreign tourists would come and visit in future. Domestic tourists and international tourists may exceed the capacity of the place and that would be a huge challenge. Therefore, border pricing would help manage and keeping data would be helpful.

Kesav Kumar (Hotel Operator)

Namaste My name is Keshav Kumar. I am local resident of Ghandruk and as a profession, I am a farmer. I am 48 years old and still working in the fields.

Ghandruk has changed a lot in the case of development and I think it is because of the road construction from Ghandruk to Chomrong. This is my birthplace so I don't want to only say positive things but will also mention some negative issues which I have seen as the development of the road. I have seen a huge transformation, which is very good for the village because when ghandruk was isolated from the outer world people were only involved in agriculture and few with education had done small business but the scenario in Ghandruk has changed a lot along with the construction of the Road. I am happy about the positive change in my hometown and feel proud to showcase it to outsiders but according to the change we are not being able to manage it in a sustainable way. We used to see many tourists coming to our village walking the small trails to stay in our village. The tourists have increased in numbers but the trails are not used often, they prefer road instead.

There are many positive impacts that have been achieved by the locals of ghandruk such as Improved accessibility, especially for physically unable people and old age people, exchange of positive foreign cultural values employment opportunities, increased trade, improved welfare, and landscaping.

As well as other negative impacts on the Movement of human settlements, business, customers, income, noise, anxiety,, traffic and accident disruptions. Personally, the land that I used to farm has been overtaken by the road. I didnt get the compensation for my land. I am fighting legally but due to the politicians involved in the construction of the road my case has been neglected. Like me, there are many locals as well as few outsiders who were running some businesses has been displaced. People who have small cafes and tea shops are being displaced by the construction of the road. They should be given alternative jobs so that they can sustain their livelihood. Such as giving training to those and getting them involved as a tour guide, drivers, poultry farming many other options. It can be done easily but due to some policymakers it has been difficult in this village.

Yes, the development is good for the individual, community, and for the country as well but when it is done in a planned manner, giving priority to those who have lost their land in use of road expansion or construction As per the development of mass tourism or increasing the number of tourists arrival this is ok but the fact in the beauty of trekking, local culture, environmental degradation, there are questions that have arisen due to the roadways connection. Due to the negligence of engineers and the workers, most of the roads are left as it is which might lead to landslide when there is heavy rain.

Previously, we used to build our houses with stone blocks, mud, and slate roof, even our road trials were constructed with stone slates but now locals are more into the concrete cement to build the houses. We have somehow lost our values, culture, and authenticity with the easy access to the goods. Many people used to get employment opportunities but now just a few people are engaged in building an old-style house. The same is case with the agriculture also, locals don't want to get involved in the farms these days. All the farms are left barren and land near to road is given on lease to other people. Vegetables were all cultivated on our farms but now we are consuming the vegetables being grown outside the valley.

In my point of view, The local representative, municipality officer, Engineer, and PoliticianS who are involved in these kinds of infrastructure development should be strictly supervised by the community so that the work is completed in a planned manner. There are many issues in the community such as Local people who has a direct link with the policymakers, they tend to take the road where they have their land and house so that they can have easy access. And justice should be given to those who have lost their land and business.

Laksin Gurung

My name is lakshin Gurung. I live in ghandruk. I am running a hotel business.

Q.no 1. How many formal or informal Hotels are registered in ghandruk and how they are being managed and who is responsible for the management?

Overall in ghandruk there are more than 60 hotels and homestays and around 30 hotel businesses are registered and the rest are not registered. Most homestays aren't registered because the guests are coming as paying guests. Most of the homestays want to register but they are not able to register because they have to go through the process of PAN and pay tax. Moreover, there are half and half are Registered and not registered.

Qno.2 You are seen as an initiator of the community in this project. Can you provide some details regarding the road whether it is a funded project or a collaboration with the government?

The road is built by collecting the funds from locals, we have not taken a single penny from the government that's why the edges and the width of the road are not sufficient. But now we are pushing and requesting the government for the blacktopping of the road. We also have included the road in the red book which means the government has to invest in the road in any case. We are planning to blacktop the road within 2 years from ghandruk, birekhati to udi.

Q no.3 As you are involved in this tourism sector are there any fundraising, voluntary programs, and training being organized by the INGO, NTB, government, UNDP for sustainable tourism development?

There is not such kind of initiative done in this area by the organization or the government. If the programs are organized then it is done by the individual so that he/she can grab the opportunity to promote his/her tourism business. People who run the business here are selfish they don't try to give information about other hotel business. Even if you try to ask the name of my hotel they won't answer you.

Q.NO.4 After completion of this road, from your personal view or the committee is there any pros and cons that you have experienced till now and what are the future pros and cons being expected from this road.

Road is essential for everyone, due to the road there has been development, previously when there was not road there was kind of whim nowadays when 1000 nepali tourist come to visit then there will be only 2 foreigners because there is no trekking trail which we have destroyed in the name of making road and we are fully responsible for it. We were excited about road because people with disability, oldage people will be benifited. There is like 50/50 advantage and disadvantage of the road. The disadvantage is the flood in many places, due to the heavy rainfall in the monsoon there is more floods which sweeps away the houses of locals.

Construction of road in ghandruk has benefited the local ghandruk people but the people who are operating the small hotel business between ghandruk and chomrong are highly affected so is there any kind of deal or solution that has been going with local community and concerned authority regarding this situation.

There is not such thing in this. First of all, the road isnt constructed as per the measurement. The engineer has told to us to do but we have done it in another way because the one who can lead can take the road near to his land and house. The government hasnt done any kind work in it all the work is carried out by the local people. If the road is damaged due to landslide then the government

gets opportunity to earn money rather than that the village development committee, TMC, INGO has done nothing for the road.

Q.NO 5 In your point of view, Don't you think due to the road the authentic trekking route has been hampered and degraded. Do you have any precaution for it.

In this case, we tried our best to save this trekking trail but we failed to do so because of the government policy, Mayor authority, municipality head authority. We young people tried our best to raise voice but we cannot fight with the government

Q.NO.6 Is there any kind of order from the top level to dismantle the trekking trail?

I think it is due to the fault of local people themselves because there is no unity in the village therefore the workers who come to build the road do whatever they want wherever they wish to take the road. Other main thing is that local people who have power and money can easily bribe contractor so that the land owner can take the road near to his land and house.

Q.NO.7 How you have visualized the Ghandruk and the surrounding in terms of road connection with the tourism inflow?

After the road being constructed, the number of tourist are low, may be because of the covid 19 also. Not even 10% people have visited ghandruk. Previously we used to walk through naya pool where there were teashops and and small cafes we enjoyed at that time. Tourists also take rest in the spot have breakfast and lunch but now due to the road every thing is messed up. In case of chomrong there is no road being constructed so there are number of tourist for trekking .

Q.NO.8 Due to the construction of the road,there is more inflow of the vehicles and the business in the middle of the road has been hampered so in the process of construction of the road was there any conflict and consequences being faced today? Was there any locals who were protesting against it?

Dhamle is more being affected by the road, there was conflict for not construting the road and support for construction. We have 2 road to come to ghandruk is very steep and another is dhamle, the best way ewas to build straight but Due to the political issue it has hampered the construction. Local living in steep constructed near through their houses and people living in plain constructed in their will. Actually It was meant to be in the middle if so it would have been blacktopped soon, faster route, equal to all . Due to the political issue and the lack of co-ordination the road has splitted into 2 roads.

Q.NO.9 There is much talk about the sustainability in nepal, More inflow of the vehicles in ghandruk as roads are not completely constructed dont you think the environment is getting hampered and ghandruk is going more in commercial way so there might be question raised by the visitors regarding authenticity of ghandruk by the visitors.?

Our village is renown as stone paved village because the house, wall and and surrounding trials are layered by the stone but as soon as the road constructed everybody used cement block to build the houses, replace tin with slate stone in the roof, so automatically we will lose the authenticity, thankfully we have set the strict rule not to sale the land to outsiders. If there was sale of land then there will be inflow of kathmandu Newars to buy the land. Even today many people come to ask to buy land in ghandruk area but we kindly tell them that land is not for sale.

Q.NO 10 Is this decision made by the committe?

Yes, it is made by the committee.may be it will remain strict until we are here. There are many community builds being built which was not needed but some of the superiors of the village have made the decision so you can see many community buildings as you pass by. It is not good because village has to look like village people coming from pokhara, kathmandu are living in big buildings so main motive of visitors is to experience the village lifestyle

Q.NO.11How the response of the tourists as they see the buildings?

They get shocked to see the village . now the purpose of the tourists is to come for a night mostly enjoy for friday night and picnic with family because of the road which is accessible within 2 hours due to this we are losing our existence. Now its time to think about this issue otherwise we will be in a disaster within 5 years of time. This is my personal analysis moreover we dont have enough electricity and water supplies and proper drains. These things are meant to be taken care by the government rather than the people . The political parties in the community blame each other for problems. There is no collaboration between them

Q.NO.12 Do you need to register you hotel business to the nepal tourism board and pay tax to the government?

Yes, i have reregistered my business in PAN not in VAT and i pay tax. At first we register in community office and pay yearly tax it same like system of pokhara. I sell branded liquor and local made liquors for that also i pay taxes

Q.NO.13 As you said that there is equal numbers of registered and not registered business, how the unregistered has affected the business of the registered?

We have an association which handles all of this issues but the association itself hasnot renewed the liscense how can they pass the information to the unregistered hotel operators to register and pay the taxes. There will be conflict and question will be raised against the association.

Q.NO.14 As I have interviewed earlier with a local people of pokhara he told that unregistered business are operating in low prices how is the condition in ghandruk?

There are not such pricing in the ghandruk as per in pokhara for hotel rooms they tend to eat and sleep in free of cost which is completely wrong and i am raising voice against it and trying to take

it to next level so that the vehicle and visitors all are required to pay some sort of amounts because there is no place in the where you can stay for free. If we give the service in free of charge then the other business will get impact and there will be loss every business in Ghandruk. Instead of charging high in food and giving room for free let's make reasonable price in both room rate and price of food so that Tourist won't be shocked seeing the price of the food. Tourist are given free room and charged 600 for breakfast which includes egg, tea and bread that's why sometimes we can see in some newspaper that Ghandruk is expensive.

1.3 APPENDIX C

MR. Chet Nath Kanel

1. In most of Nepal, trekking routes are being replaced with the motorway to reach the destination. What sectors do you see are being affected by this replacement?
2. Urbanization could be seen in most parts of Nepal e.g. Ghandruk village where concrete buildings are being set up. With this, in what way the Sustainable tourism development is being affected, and how do you see the future of Ghandruk?
3. When visiting Ghandruk, politics and power could be seen. Is it similar all over Nepal? What effects do these two things have on tourism?
4. With the roadway built to Ghandruk, the local business in between has been affected hugely. How do you think the local government, and authority can minimize the damage they are facing?

5. With that, Chomrong is opposing the motorways in their trekking route. They want to keep the trekking route as it is. Do you think the collaboration and culture preservation in Chomrong is more deeply rooted than that of Ghandruk? How?

Transcribe interview

1- To say it, in context of Nepal, tourism is considered mostly as mountaineering, trekking. These destinations are mostly in the remote areas, and mountain areas where mostly people were not active. Therefore, only special interest people were involved in the trekking and with limited number. This is in Nepal for the last 3-4 decades, in most parts of Nepal, there has been a tradition of increasing the motorways connection. This has led to rural or mountain tourism destination the practice of leading the roadways connection. As per the development of mass tourism or increasing the number of tourists arrival this is ok but the fact in the beauty of trekking, local culture, environmental degradation, there are questions that have arisen due to the roadways connection.

The next is when there is a mass tourism, the cultural essence of the destination is hampered in deed. This is because when there is arrival of limited number of tourists, the charm that the destination gets and feels gets low with the increase in number of tourists.

Two aspects, one with the increase in the number of tourists, the natural charm of the place declines and the second is with the haphazard construction of roadway connections, there are environmental effects which can be seen. The concept of green road which has to be implemented while constructing the road, sustainable road construction approach which is not considered has

led to soil erosion, landslides, are seen in different parts. These are the things that I have experienced and felt myself.

Effect of motorways of culture.

- There is not direct link of motorways to culture but like I said earlier first, as people accessibility increases, the number of arrivals increases. With the number of arrivals increasing, the crowdedness increases itself which leads to the decrease in the naturalness of the place. The other thing is urbanization gets increased. Urbanization in the context of Nepal means, increase in westernization. The local music, songs and so on starts to get replaced by western songs and western flavor. This would ultimately have side effects. When there is development in a village, the ones who directly experience the development starts losing their own culture and try to follow the one which they are learning. They focus on learning the outside things, how to get impact from the outside things. The cultural sensitiveness gets very low at that place. The dominance of westernize culture could be seen in most parts.

- 2- Ghandruk is just a case here. In general, at rural destinations, where road accessibility is found, this effect can be seen. This is because in the earlier days, to take iron rods, cement, it was very costly as well as it was very difficult carrying those things on the back and reach the place. That is why the local stones, roofs were in practice during the earlier period. But now concrete building or ccr building are gradually increasing. The next is with increase in the income generation of people, they prefer to go for ccr building whether they live in any remote areas or anywhere. This

is ok. In 2015, with the earthquake, there was destruction all over Nepal including the buildings as well, the government was introduced to dethrone the construction of traditional houses. At the same time, the modern houses are strongly made as with small rector scale of earthquake, the houses cannot be damaged.

Although this is positive, making a housing giving a local flavor in the architecture would have been very nice. In Bhaktapur, there was haphazard construction of buildings few years back with the awareness from local government and local community, special facilities were given and the look of the buildings were made giving a traditional flavour. Modern house with traditional looks construction would be a great combination. The sensitivity has not arisen still because at the moment, there is an aggressive **development phase** going on. Lets hope there is awareness in the coming days leading to modern house with traditional look.

In ghandruk , there was a tradition of **GOL GHAR, which** are hardly seen at the moment. But also, they could built house as GOL ghar tradition with modern house which would be very nice to see. This question is to be raised by everyone but also with this the cost level and the knowledge of the builders plays a role. Nowadays, many people complain about the beauty of Ghandruk which used to be in the past has decreased. This has been a problem with most of the tourist places here. To be specific, where there is road connectivity, this issue has been seen. Houses has to be constructed soon within the contract time so to make a balance is somewhat challenging but not impossible. For this, cultural sensitiveness and supporting system development has to be increased for this to happen.

Where there is sensitivity, building roofs with a traditional look, same style building, same use of color can also be seen in some.

3- There are two aspects. If there is politics we cannot take it negatively at all. The ultimate aim of people is politics, leadership. Whether you earn a lot or you have a high range of education, people have the tendency to have the role of leadership or decision making position. Tourism is an economic sector, there are agriculture sector, community forestry there is a tendency to form local group , developing leadership. We call it **“tourism for empowerment”** which is social empowerment, economic empowerment, cultural empowerment, political empowerment also. If there is **“politics for tourism” or “politics for development”** this would be very good fruitful but practicing politics not for this is not good. This practice has to be changed and **“politics for tourism” or “politics for development”** has to be considered for development in tourism. in Nepal, the good use of democratic practice has not been utilized because where there is the need of the use it has not been implemented but only with the aim of political competition politics has been used. Without the leadership, the work cannot be carried out, which is a politics but its use in the development practice would make a positive change. For this joint force , consensus making has to be developed. The facilitation organisation has to be active and help for this to happen which could lead to the generation of common voices in the development issues.

4- For this, at the early stage, from naya pul to birethati up until one reach Ghandruk, when constructing the roadway, the local stakeholders should have decided from the participatory approach. The mechanism to support the effect that can be seen should have been developed at the early stage. Without doing this, constructing the motorable route damaging the trekking route, the in between people and their business where people donot stopby, this is a huge damage to them. Concerning this, first how to engage them in the

planning phase to provide alternative jobs should have been discussed. Also, those capable or have move to some other places to continue the same business or start a new one. But those who have limited resources and cannot establish themselves outside that place and do not have the situation to leave their place, it is hard for them. Those who have traditional tea house, homestay where tourists and guests have stopped coming, the government and concerned authorities should deeply be concerned and facilitate them with alternative job/ employment wherever they can be suited and fit, they have to be involved. The stoppage of road construction in the development process is quite not possible. At the initial stage, the alternative should be thought about. For e.g. tea houses when there is mass tourism first if one donot have the condition to move/ transfer, then product development alternatives like poultry farming, agriculture involvement, honey extraction, can enagage themselves. And where there is mass tourism as Ghandruk for instance can be taken as a small place for mass tourism because usually 100s of people from Pokhara go to Ghandruk to stay. There is an opportunity for this development of poultry farming, agriculture. So engaging those exclusive people in this activity can be beneficial to them. As such guiding, driving can also be an alternative to them for sustaining.new opportunities get evolved everyday, it is only a matter of a deliberate planning to engage the affected people.

When talked to the people, ghandruk has been commercialised . with this has it not lost its authentic taste?

- Yes, yes. Definitely. In a tourism development cycle, you might have studied about buttler. There are certain phase.the second is exploration which is about something might or might not happen. Then with discussion with the local levels, the involvement stage. The third being the development phase, when slowly establishing hotels,

homestay alongwith the incoming of guests/ tourists, developing the nearby routes, opening museums. After this, the consolidation stage where desire to setup new things arises. The demand from tourists comes. To meet te demand, according the supply happens and this leads to the shining in tourism. This phase remains steady for certain time and the consolation continues for some time. new things comes to effects and more things gets added and developing the tourism as well whereby in the fifth stage tourists gets bored and starts thinking about going to new place rather that visiting the same place again and again. This is stagnation. Sauraha has also come to this stagnation stage according to different people as well as Dharan. Bandipur which had been doomed has rejuvenated. Either there is decline as well but there is a rare case of declining and we have not seen such case. This is because first, they get involve in **activity diversification** and get themselves to engage themselves and tourists in new activity. For instance, in Pokhara from zip lining to different sports adventure activity, Pokhara has revitalise themselves. With competition from different places, Pokhara has rejuvenate themselves. Ghandruk has to also rejuvenate themselves. First, at first, from cultural point and trekking route, ghandruk could be beneficial for one night or two night stay.but now, people visiting Pokhara taking Ghandruk as a hill station point, many people around 400 could go there and stay a night or two and return back. This might happen soon. But the charm of Gurung culture, its natural charm in the near village of Ghandruk, ghandruk can be a medium for it. there is polar theory in tourism where at a pole only one station gets developed and the nearby remains on shade. So ghandruk can be a medium for their nearby villages which has remained on shade to come into recognition. Ghandruk could be a reference where they could refer places

near 30 minutes down have more authentic culture which you can experience more than Ghandruk. They could refer those place although tourists could make Ghandruk as a main station. Ghandruk could be a **majorhub** for the area. There are benefits if the roadways is there although there are environmental effects that could be maintained. This could lead to a mass tourism from being limited tourists which can be seen in Muktinath at this time. These days 4000-5000 tourists could be seen visiting the place. Before with only 100-200 visitors, they were able to sustain from that but now with around 5000 tourists arrival they are able to supply. There is a development of mass tourism but there comes a thing of what people are interested in now. They can make the access to reach further places also up until lomangthang which could develop lomangthang. These alternative development starts to move slowly and steadily. In context of trekking in Nepal, this has to be done because in major routes, the roadway has already reached but the villages at distance from the roadway has to be considered as a tourism point which can happen in the next 10-15 years if everything is done right. It is good in one way the road has reached to ghandruk but also its naturalness has been lost, but its economy has been uplifted massively. And as I said, Ghandruk would be a hill station.

- 5- In Ghandruk, the development activities has increased rapidly because of accessibility, development of new businesses. Chomrong is relatively new with this. The next thing I would like to say on this is if the local people of Chomrong decide collectively not to make the road access and stay on their word of having only trekking route to reach the destination, and compromise with the development, if we and tourists have to walk we

walk, bring the goods and supplies carrying themselves but no motorways can come this could be a unique case in terms of Nepal. This is because such kind of decision making village/ place is rarely found in Nepal. When tourism comes in village, everybody doesnot get the benefit and who does not get the benefit, they revolt against the tourism. sometimes there is protest against development and sometimes of tourism. This is a paradox in the development. This can be an exemplary case in Nepal. Lets see how long they can stay without having the road. How they can preserve their traditional architect, traditional customs, food. If they can do so, this would be the best case in Nepal, if only they can. We as a tourism promoter have the same saying, never let outsiders come and take over your place and make you shift the place. You have to get benefitted from tourism. however, saying that the constitution, human rights doesnot say outsiders cannot come and do so. But to a certain level like 50houses could say we do not want modern house or donot want westernization take control over our norms. We are not going to change the tradition, culture and religion and we root ourself to our tradition. We grow organic food, prepare organic food, serve organic food but not use chemical fertilizers. These things are to be considered. Like I said compromising certain things in development like staying rooted to traditional style of house, organic food production, these can be done. while making roads, without deforestation one can make a small road letting small vehicles only to pass by could be done. there should be a planning on how much capacity does the land can bear and accordingly the road should be constructed. There should be understanding between the related stakeholders.

1.4 APPENDIX D

Interview with Biswas Gurung (Local teacher)-

1. Starting with the interview, can you give us your introduction and short brief, if you are engaged or was engaged in any kind of governmental, social or non-governmental institution, in Annapurna area?

Ghandruk ward no 10 and I am engaging in a small scale restaurant business in Ghandruk focusing the tourists along with that I am also working as a Gurung language teacher in Shree Meshrom Baraha Secondary School in Ghandruk.

2. After the construction of a motorable road in Ghandruk, what are the positive and negative impacts you have experienced as a local residing in the area, specifically in tourism?

The main challenge is the sustainable management of the area, and talking about the negative impacts seen primarily, after the construction of road was seen in the trekking trails and alternative trekking trails from Birethanti to Ghandruk, where, small scale restaurants, tea shops, souvenir shops were directly hampered that lies between so, they couldn't run the business in loss then they are force to displaced or closed while, talking about the positive impacts, the locals of the Ghandruk have experienced is in the mobility of the sick peoples to the nearest city or hospitals due to the road facility, ambulance and vehicles can transport the sick to the nearest city which was not the case before, people had to carry sick people in Dhoko (Local made carrying bag made of bamboo) or in stretcher carry by people which took many hours to reach to the nearest hospital or health facility as well as due to transport facility mainly rations and basic necessary items are cheaper than before we used to pay 2200 Nepali Rupees for a bag of Rice but now we can get it in 600

to 700 Nepali Rupees. All in all, motorable roads are built through the trekking trails so, alternative trekking trails should be built, but it is ignored, and the main challenge is to sustainably manage the motorable road and trekking trails.

3. As we have observed and learned that due to the increasing flow of tourists and opportunity created by the tourism in Ghandruk, many youngsters as well as migrated people from Ghandruk to cities and foreign countries are coming back to the village. How do you feel about the trend?

- Land of opportunity is equal for all locals of Ghandruk, but still a lot of people are still migrating for the opportunities and even my friends are returning and doing good business related to tourism. Maoist insurgency, creating civil war in Nepal from 1996 to 2006 was the main reason of migration in Ghandruk, at that time me myself also migrated to Pokhara and applied for visa for different foreign countries but I wasn't success in getting the visa, so, after the end of insurgency, I saw opportunity in tourism, returned and started my own business. Returning to the village based on adopting tourism related business are on moderate level in which youngsters are seen more as well as domestic tourism is flourishing in Ghandruk due to motorable road construction.

4. According to the locals and different studies published, agriculture was the main occupation of people in Ghandruk. Is that occupation converting into tourism related businesses such as hotels, restaurants, homestay and souvenir shops?

- Yes, before animal husbandry and agriculture was the main occupation of the people of Ghandruk, after the flow of international tourist they started to explore and like our natural beauty of our village, mountains, architect, cultural and heritages of Gurung tribe, with the

increasing number of tourist in the area, management challenges also increased, on that time Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP), build their base here in the village and really contributed to manage the tourism in the village by building the toilets in the area, giving training to the villagers about cooking, baking, local guide training and waste management, explored new trails in the area, build sign boards in the trekking routes, and forming the tourism stakeholders such as mother's group and tourism management committee. In the initial phase, ACAP did a good job managing the tourism here in Ghandruk and the leadership was also very efficient at that time.

5. As per your sayings, ACAP used to be a pioneer, positive and very active in management of tourism in the area but now, as per our observation and interviewee done with the ACAP member of the area, they said they are not active as they used to be and blamed the TMC and other related stakeholders for their inefficiency, what is your opinion about this matter?
 - Leadership is the key factor for all these problems, after the restructure of constitution of Nepal, Ghandruk comes under Annapurna Rural Municipality which used to be a single entity as Ghandruk village development committee and there is local conservation office Ghandruk which comes under ACAP, so, both stakeholder is in conflict in the internal matters such as, revenue collection from the hotels, public, tourist and tourism business permit and renew. Moreover, the policies of ARM and ACAP are tangled, and power struggle is going on between two parties claiming their territories responsibility for example, all the hotels and restaurant build on the way to Annapurna base camp lies in the territory of conservation area of ACAP and ACAP claims to manage that area, but ARM have their own claims on the territory which is directed by the new constitution of Nepal.

6. Ghandruk is linked up by two different motorable roads from Birethanti, so why does one destination need two different roads?
- I myself was one of the member of the road construction committee, and on the process of development everybody have to be positive, as our early plan, road development committee has planned to develop the project in sustainable manner, considering the environmental and social challenges as well as engineering design and main challenge is to convince the property owners whose property lies on the way to be build, consulting experts, involving the political groups and responsible stakeholders such as ACAP but political power, personal interest and ego plays more interest in the development of road and leadership fails in the process.
7. As per different experts in tourism in Nepal, Ghandruk is converted into a hill station from a village so, sustainable development of Ghandruk is the main challenge seen, in this case how responsible stakeholders are coping up with this problem?
- It is easier to point out the fault of others but the main challenge is to work in the relative field and sort out the problem, coming here in Ghandruk and working here as a responsible stakeholder is very difficult, talking about conservation of culture, heritage and authenticity of Ghandruk, is the main challenge, if any world heritage sites such as Muktinath temple, Bhaktapur durbar square and others are in the process of reconstruction then, government can directly interfere and build according to their ethics but constructing a private area or conserving an old authentic village where the tourism demand is very high, direct interference cannot be implement. And the demand also plays an important role in construction as seen in Ghandruk. Most international tourists can adjust in the old authentic environment, demanding less facilities but the demand of domestic tourists is very high

such as they want attached toilet and bathrooms, comfortable rooms, Wi-Fi and western toilets. Moreover, the hotel business is becoming very competitive and demanding in Ghandruk.

8. In this case, what is the role of the tourism management committee and other responsible stakeholders for the sustainable tourism development of the area?
 - In present, TMC of Ghandruk is very inactive, rough in decision making and not good as well as the local representatives of government are also not efficient, they have solved the problem of water by building the taps in different places, but the water drainage system is not built so they lack of sustainable planning which is just an example, another problem is the waste management system they should bring different training and awareness programs about this problem.

It is easier to say that Ghandruk is converting into a town or hill station by sitting in capital city but the main challenges is to sustainable development of Ghandruk, after the new constitution, our village is merged into rural municipality which have large area to look after, ward is also divided into two parts 9 and 10, and TMC is inactive in this situation also local political representative are behind marketing of their own political parties and ideologies discussing which political party is bigger and popular. In their view, road construction is the symbol of development and their political agenda for the election and people also cannot understand the true meaning of sustainable development, they symbolize construction machinery such as excavators as development of the area.

9. What we found new in Ghandruk is that local tribal Language ‘Gurung Bhasa’ is included in the curriculum of school level education, so, what are the mission, reason and vision for the conservation of local language, culture, tradition and music in Ghandruk?

- Gurung Language is the traditional language of Gurung tribes, and it doesn't have its own written script so, the risk of disappearance of Gurung language is very high if it is not spoken, and it already is in the process of severely endangering in many places of Nepal, in this case for the conservation of the language local people who migrated to foreign countries such as UK, Hongkong and different Gurung scholars are contributing from their sides. Before it was not included in the school curriculum but now with efforts of above-mentioned persons and local government it is included.

Western influence is majorly seen in the Ghandruk as gazing, in clothing, language and music, people who speak English, dressed up westernize and sing English and Nepali songs are termed as cool and educated, comparing if someone sings in local Gurung language then terms as villager and rural so, the youngsters are more influenced to western culture.

10. At last, what we want to do through this thesis is to portray the subjective changes such as culture, social, traditional, politics and power driven by the objective changes such as building roads, building and rural development projects, which is practicing heavily in the rural part of Nepal so, what is your last word about the topic?

- People should understand the themes such as leadership, responsibility and rights. They must know their responsibility and rights which they get from their nation, without hampering anyone. Leadership should be responsible, transparent and liable to the position and people. Policies should be active and transparent. For example Ghandruk was good when it was a village development committee but now we are part of a bigger municipality and their policies and planning cannot manage all the area so, the government should do investigation, consult public interest and research before implementing any policies.

1.5 APPENDIX D

Sarita Khadka

1. In most of Nepal, trekking routes are being replaced with motorways to reach the destination.

What sectors do you see are being affected by this replacement?

- Two aspects one with the increase in number of tourists, the natural charm of the place declines and the second is with the haphazard construction of roadway connection, there are environmental effects which can be seen when there is a mass tourism, the cultural essence of the destination is hampered in deed. This is because when there is arrival of limited number of tourists, the charm that the destination gets and feels gets low with the increase in number of tourists.

2. Urbanization could be seen in most parts of Nepal e.g. Ghandruk village where concrete buildings are being set up. With this, in what way the Sustainable tourism development being affected, and how do you see the future of Ghandruk?

-when there is development in a village, the ones who directly experience the development start losing their own culture and try to follow the one which they are learning. They focus on learning the outside things, and how to get an impact from the outside things. The cultural sensitiveness gets very low at that place. The dominance of Westernized culture could be seen in most parts

3. When visiting Ghandruk, politics and power could be seen. Is it similar all over Nepal? What effects do these two things have on tourism?

- People's ultimate goal is politics and leadership. Whether you make a lot of money or have a lot of education, individuals tend to want to be in positions of leadership or decision-making. There

is a trend to organize local groups and build leadership in the tourism industry, as well as in agriculture. The task cannot be done without leadership, which is a political issue, but its application in development practice would be beneficial. Consensus-building skills must be developed for this united force. The facilitation organization must be active and assist in this process, which may result in the emergence of shared voices on development concerns.

4. With the roadway built to Ghandruk, the local business in between has been affected hugely. How do you think the local government, and authority can minimize the damage they are facing?

-The method to produce the observed impact should have been established much earlier. Construction of a motorable road that damages the trekking path, the area between individuals and their businesses where people do not stop, is a tremendous loss for them. It should have been explored initially how to involve them in the planning process to create alternative occupations. Also, people who are capable or have moved to other locations to continue or establish a business. It is difficult for individuals who have limited finances and are unable to establish themselves outside of that location or who are unable to leave their current location.

5. With that, Chomrong is opposing the motorways in their trekking route. They want to keep the trekking route as it is. Do you think the collaboration and culture preservation in chomrong is more deeply rooted than that of Ghandruk? How?

- if the local people of Chomrong decide collectively not to make the road access and stay on their word of having only trekking route to reach the destination, and compromise with the development if we and tourists have to walk we walk, bring the goods and supplies carrying themselves but no motorways can come this could be a unique case in terms of Nepal. This is because such a kind of decision-making village/ place is rarely found in Nepal.

