

Research Article

Tourism and its Socio-economic Effects on Tourism Villages of Kaski, Nepal

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Abstract

Tourism is one of the rapidly growing, complicated and multidimensional business activities worldwide. Village tourism carries high level of potentiality in the county like Nepal which is full of large number of villages having divergent cultures, caste, ethnic groups, climates, religions, and language speaker scattering from the Tarai to the Himalayan territories. This research paper has aimed to explore the socio-economic effects of village tourism activities and the key barriers for the development of village tourism. It has adopted descriptive cum analytical research design and conducted a survey in three sampled villages to collect primary data from 75 respondents, 25 from each village including people directly involved in tourism activities and people not directly involved in tourism activities. The research result has revealed that village tourism activities have significant effects on education, lodging and food culture, government revenue, earnings capacity of the villagers and flow of domestic tourists without any adverse effect on religion and culture, youth of the villages and social undertakings. It has also revealed that there is statistically significant association across the sampled villages regarding socio-economic effects. Furthermore, tourism education, transportation facilities, and lack of skilled manpower have been identified as the key barriers for the sustainable development of village tourism.

Keywords: Economic effects, key barrier, socio-cultural effect, village tourism

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Introduction

Tourism is temporary movement of people to destinations out of their normal home and workplace. Tourism includes the activities undertaken during the stay and the facilities created to cater for tourist needs.

Tourism represents dynamic mobility of persons from one place to other places to know lifestyle, cultural and civility of the particular places of interest. It is a smokeless industry and plays significant roles in transforming lifestyle and cultures (Bishwakarma & Basnet, 2018). Someone who travels for pleasure is called tourist who brings multiple outcomes with him/her. The tourists practice several activities and residents of certain areas would observe and learn new activities and perceptions in the society. A circle represents a starting point, which ultimately returns to the same beginning point. Hence, like a circle, tour represents a kind of journey that is a round trip. It is the act of leaving and then returning to the original starting point and therefore, one who takes such a journey can be called a tourist (Theobald, 1997).

According to Negi (1990) tourism is the movement of the people from one place to another or one country to another at leisure for the purpose of pleasure, business, religion, health treatment or visiting friends and relatives. Tourism is also mentioned in Sanskrit, in ancient times. In Sanskrit literature, there are three terms for tourism, derived from the root 'atna', which means going or leaving home for some other place.

Bishwakarma & Basnet (2018) states that tourism is not only travelling to the certain places of interests but also promoting intimacy, exposing hidden cultures, sharing thoughts and understanding between the existing cultures. World tourism organization defined tourism as the activities of persons identified as visitors. A visitors is someone who is making a visit to a main destination outside his/her usual environment for less than a year for any main purpose including holidays, leisure and recreation, business, health, education or other purposes (UNWTO, 2010).

Nepal, a small country with an area of 147,181 square kilometers, has a population of 29.30 million (WB, 2017). Nepal is one of the richest countries in the world in terms of bio-diversity due to its geographical position (NTB, 2003). The elevation of the country ranges from 70 m

above sea level to the highest point on the earth, Mt. Everest at 8,848 m, all within a breadth of 150 km with climatic conditions ranging from subtropical to arctic. The wild variation fosters an incredible variety of ecosystems, the greatest mountain range on the earth, thick tropical jungles teeming with a wealth of wildlife, thundering rivers, forested hills and frozen valleys. Nepal's natural attractions are ranging from physical, historical, cultural monuments, temples, art treasures and festivals (DOT, 1972)

Nepal's diversity attracts tourists. Its physical uniqueness offers a wide scope of activities that range from jungle safaris to trekking in snow-capped mountains. Tourism is important to Nepal as a source of foreign currencies and a major employment generator. For country like Nepal, which lacks sufficient resources, the tourism sector is expected to continue to play an important role in the country's development, but not without negative consequences (Pandey, Chettri, Kunwar, & Ghimire, 1995)

Rural tourism or tourism in rural is a new form of activity that can bring economic and social benefits to the society. Rural tourism will bring people of different cultures, faiths, languages and life-styles close to one another and it will provide a broader outlook of life. It will not only generate employment for the people but it can also develop social, cultural and educational values. Rural tourism encompasses a wide range of attractions and activities that take place in agricultural or non-urban areas. Its essential characteristics include wide-open spaces, low levels of tourism development, and opportunities for visitors to directly experience agricultural and/or natural environments.

Nepal has more than 125 ethnic groups and 123 spoken languages (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2012) and a rich variety of cultures, lifestyles, values and traditions. Although the law and constitution has provided equal rights to all ethnic and religious groups, Nepal is characterized by a highly stratified social system, resulting in the presence of many castes. In the context of Nepal, a village is a discrete economic political unit to which most individual's social relations are confined and people have strong emotional as well as structural ties to their villages (Kunwar, 1989). All these villages neither are tourist destinations nor are these attractive for the

tourists. There are various types of villages like single ethnic village, multi ethnic village, single clan village, multi clan village, caste based villages, homogeneous and heterogeneous villages.

Rural tourism is a kind of macro model tourism whereas village tourism is based on micro model. Village tourism denotes the tourists staying in or near village, often traditional villages in remote areas, and learning about the villager's way of life (Kunwar, 2006). Therefore, in the village tourism, tourists get to know the real culture and rich heritage of the nation. By creating jobs within villages, village tourism creates economic prosperity and reduces the need for young people to migrate to cities to seek employment. The money goes straight to the local community. Even those who do not take in guests earn money by selling handicrafts, working as guides and porters or taking part in cultural performances. The revenue also contributes for the betterment of the villages. In our country, the term village tourism has come up in recent years. To some people village tourism means any kind of tourism that has a village or rural area as destination. Some others feel that the involvement of the local community in this type of tourism, the economic benefits for the community and minimization of negative social, cultural and environmental impact should be included in the concept (Beun and Lamichhane, 1999).

Village tours should be carefully organized and controlled to minimize negative socio cultural impacts. Such tours should ensure that the economic benefits go to the villagers as well as the tour organizer. In some places, Model village should be established to show tourist about traditional village architecture and activities (Urry, 2002). Traditional villages and related ancient cultural patterns are often major attractions for tourists and can bring benefits to these local communities.

Village tourism can bring various economic and social benefits like increase in employment, generation of foreign currencies, increase in demand of goods and services, improvements in public services, increase in government revenue, improvement of education and health of the rural community, different cultural understanding through fairs and festivals, decrease in migration of rural people to urban areas, enhancement of market for agro products and handicrafts.

The village tourism also has some negative economic and social impact such as exploitation of rural people, overdependence on the urban entrepreneur, under payment for village people, creation of disharmony in development, bad effect on the traditional values and cultural practices, replacement of traditional products by modern products, decline in participation in rural traditional and cultural practices follows etc (Rathore, 2012). By nature, human being adopts new things or manners. Tourists not only bring money to village, they also carry with them a strong and visible life style. Tourism results cultivation of youth cultures consuming music, fashion, clothing, alcohol and drugs. This has led to the situation of stress and conflict (Macloed, 2006). There is gradual weakening of traditional culture popularly termed as the development of 'Coca-Cola' society or the process of cocacolisation within indigenous lifestyles. Depthless coca cola culture consisting of relatively unintegrated traits, people do not have the capacity of pick and choose what traits of coca cola culture they want (Lewellen, 2002). Therefore tourism can be termed as a good servant but bad master. Hence, tourism may have positive and negative socio – cultural and economic impact in the people living in the tourism village.

The main objective of this paper is to assess the socio-economic effects resulted from village tourism activities in rural Kaski. Therefore, this paper has attempted to investigate the socio-economic effect of village tourism in the people living in the sampled villages. Besides that the other specific purposes of this paper are to measure the association socio-economic effects across the sampled villages and to identify the key barriers for sustainable development for the village tourism.

Village tourism will emerged as an important instrument for sustainable human development including poverty alleviation, employment generation, environmental regeneration and development of rural areas and advancement of disadvantaged groups in the country. It can help inflow to resources from urban to the rural economy. It can prevent migration of rural people to urban. Tourism does not only create benefits but it brings along some negative effects which can be devastating if not managed properly and addressed in time. With the growth of tourism, the negative impacts include loss of cultural integrity, environmental and ecological damage.

After conducting the review and observation about the village tourism and its socio-economic impacts in the life of people living in the villages, various relevant variables have been identified concerning the research areas or topic which has been arranged as conceptual framework in the figure given below:

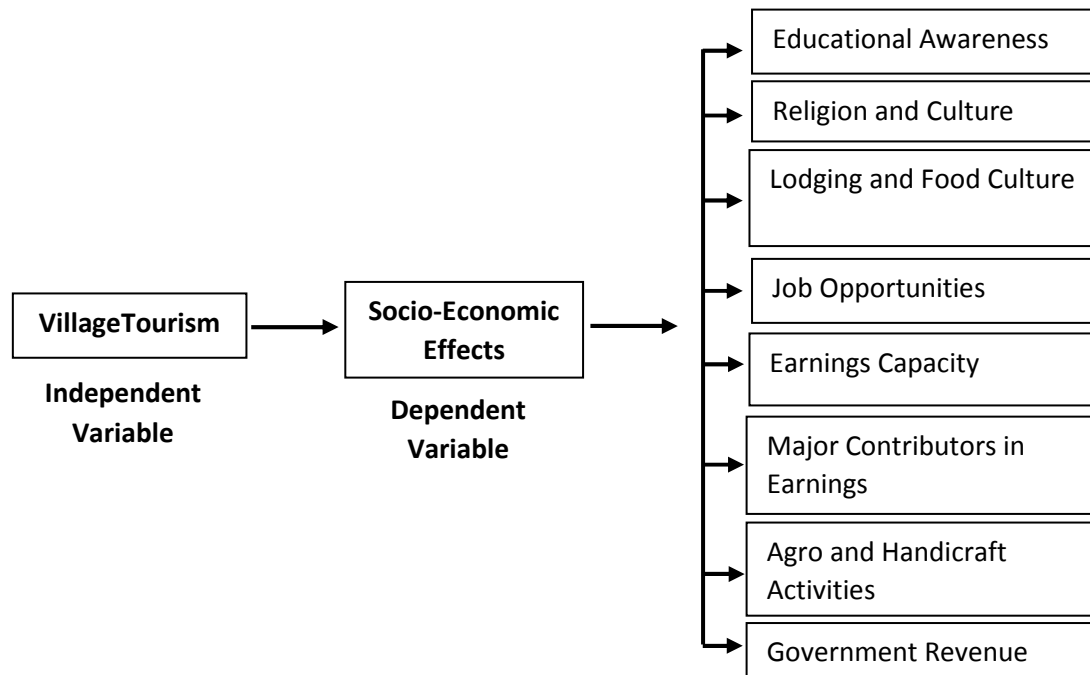


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Data and Methods

This study has been conducted in Sikles, Dhampus and Langdruk villages of Kaski district, Gandaki province, Nepal. These villages are popularly known as tourism villages of Kaski district located under the area of Annapurna Conservation Area. Sikles located under Madi Rural Municipality and Dhampus and Langdruk located under Machhapuchhre Rural Municipality of Kaski district. Sikles is a village lying in the lap of Lamjung Himal and Annapurna II that lies 42 kilometers north of Pokhara metropolitan. Whereas, Dhampus and Langdruk are lying in the lap of Machhapuchhre Himal that lies north east side about 26 km and 32 km respectively from Pokhara Metropolitan. The majority of people living in these villages are from ethnic group of

Gurung community. And the minority group of people are from Damai, Kami, Sarki, Kshetry and Bramin communities.

Since, the purpose of the study is to determine the socio-economic effects of the tourism activities in the sampled tourism villages with the help of descriptive tools, it has adopted descriptive research design and conducted a field survey in three sampled villages of Kaski district to collect primary data from 75 households, 25 from each villages including people directly involved in tourism activities and people not directly involved in tourism activities. The samples are selected on the basis of convenient and judgmental sampling technique. Quantitative nature of data has been collected through structured questionnaire and the questionnaire was personally administered with the respondents. For the reliability of questionnaire, a pilot survey was conducted among 20 respondents and improved the questionnaire and for its content validity theoretically and scholarly supported variables have been used through the review of literature concerned to the subject areas as well as for its external validity samples have been taken from those villages where the people directly or indirectly affected in term of socially and economically by the village tourism activities.

The data have been analyzed by using descriptive statistical tools such as mean, percentage and standard deviation. Five points Likert scale were used to measure the socio-economic effects of tourism activities in the sampled villages, where, 1 being highly disagree and 5 being highly agree. Besides this, due to the non-normality of data to measure the association of socio-economic effects across the sampled villages, independent samples Kruskal-Wallis H test and two independent sample Mann-Whitney U test has been conducted. The data have been processed and analyzed by using MS- Words, MS-Excel and Statistical Package of Social Science, version 20.

Results and Discussion

Economic Effect of Village Tourism

The Likert scale mean values calculated to assess the economic effect of village tourism in Kaski over different economic variables. All mean values lies above Likert scale 3; indicating that the

villagers are agreed over various economic effects. The highest mean value 4.57 out of all indicates that the respondents have higher level of agreement on increase in local level government income due to village tourism activities followed by 4.36 regarding increase in earnings capacity of the villagers and 4.04 regarding Nepalese tourists are the main source of income from village tourism activities. Similarly, the lowest mean value 3.40 out of all indicates that the respondents have lowest level of agreement regarding foreign tourists are main source of income from village tourism activities followed by 3.76 regarding promote agro and handicraft business in villages and 3.80 regarding increase job opportunities in the villages. The level of agreement from higher level to lower level over various economic effect have been presented in the table 1.

Table 1

Economic Effect of Village Tourism

Statement	HA	A	N	D	HD	Mean	SD
Contributing in government revenue	57.3%	42.7%	0%	0%	0%	4.57	0.50
Contributing to increase earning capacity	36.0%	64.0%	0%	0%	0%	4.36	0.48
Nepalese tourists are the main source of earnings	34.7%	44.0%	12.0%	9.3%	0%	4.04	0.92
Increasing the job opportunities	20.0%	60.0%	0%	20.0%	0%	3.80	0.99
Promote agro and handicraft business	28.0%	48.0%	0%	20.0%	4.0%	3.76	1.18
Foreign tourists are the main source of earnings	22.7%	40.0%	0%	29.3%	8.0%	3.40	1.34

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Note: HA = Highly Agree, A= Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree, HD = Highly Disagree. 5 points Likert scale analysis have been used where 1 being highly disagree and 5 being highly agree.

The lower standard deviation 0.50 on highly agreed economic statements to higher standard deviation 1.34 on the lowest level of agreement on economic statements revealed that respondents have high level of consistency regarding the economic effects in which they have high level of agreement but a bit more variability regarding the economic effects in which they have lower level of agreement.

Socio-Cultural Effect of Village Tourism

Table 2

Socio-Cultural Effect of Village Tourism

Statement	HA	A	N	D	HD	Mean	SD
Increase awareness towards education	56.0%	36.0%	4%	4%	0%	4.44	0.76
Change in lodging and food culture	52.0%	36.0%	0%	12.0%	0%	4.28	0.97
Leading to change the traditional occupation	36.0%	41.3%	8.0%	14.7%	0%	3.99	1.02
Change the traditional life style	17.3%	34.7%	4.0%	29.3%	14.7%	3.11	1.39
Increase pollution in the village	16.0%	37.3%	0%	34.7%	12.0%	3.11	1.36
Negative effect on the religion and culture	20.0%	17.3%	14.7%	41.3%	6.7%	3.03	1.29
Negative effect on the youth	0%	8.0%	12.0%	50.7%	29.3%	1.99	0.86
Increase social evil in village	4.0%	14.7%	0%	38.7%	42.7%	1.99	1.18

Source: *Field Survey, 2018*

Note: HA = Highly Agree, A= Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree, HD = Highly Disagree and SD = Standard Deviation. 5 points Likert scale analysis has been used where 1 being highly agree and 5 being highly disagree.

The Likert scale mean value presented on table 2 indicates the level of agreement and disagreement over the socio-cultural effect resulted from the village tourism activities. The value of standard deviation of each socio-cultural statements indicate the variability in the responses of the respondents.

As the data revealed, the mean value of 4.44, 4.28, 3.99, 3.11, and 3.11 indicate that majority of respondents have higher level of agreement to lower level of agreement towards “increase in awareness towards education”, “change in lodging and food culture”, “change in traditional occupation”, “change in traditional life style”, and “increase pollution in the villages” due to village tourism activities. Likewise, the mean value of Likert scale 1.99 revealed that the villagers are disagree towards increase in social evils and negative effect to youth of villages respectively. But mean value of 3.03 portrayed that almost neutral towards negative effect on religion and culture.

As the measure of standard deviation for each socio-cultural statement, the low level of standard deviation 0.76 indicates that there is low level of variation among the respondents regarding the increase in the awareness towards education due to village tourism activities followed by 0.86 on “negative effect on the youth”, 0.97 on “change in lodging and food culture” and 1.02 on “leading to change traditional culture”. However, the high level of standard deviation 1.39 regarding change the traditional life style in the village indicates that there is a high level of variation in agreement and disagreement among the respondents.

Association of Socio-economic Effects across Sampled Villages

In order to examine whether there is any significant differences or similarities exist regarding the economic and socio-cultural effect of village tourism in the sampled villages, independent samples Kruskal-Wallis H test has been conducted.

Table 3

Association of Economic Effects across Sampled Villages

Economic effect	χ^2_{cal}	D.F.(v)	P- value
Increasing the government revenue	49.799	2	0.00
Contributing in increasing the earnings capacity	12.676	2	0.00

Nepalese tourists are main source of earnings	33.878	2	0.00
Increasing the job opportunities	9.669	2	0.01
Promoting the agro and handicraft business	23.245	2	0.00
Foreign tourist are main source of earnings	60.689	2	0.00
<i>Association of Economic Effects across Sampled Villages</i>	15.486	2	0.00

The independent samples Kruskal Wallis H test conducted at a significance level of 0.05 revealed that $p < 0.05$ in all cases of economic effects. This indicates the rejection of null hypothesis and acceptance of alternative hypothesis. This indicates there is statistically significant difference among the sampled villages regarding the economic effect resulted from village tourism activities in the villages.

Table 4

Association of Socio-cultural Effects across Sampled Villages

Socio-cultural effect	χ^2_{cal}	D.F.(v)	P-value
Increase awareness towards education	20.577	2	0.00
Change in lodging and food culture	3.780	2	0.15
Leading to change the traditional occupation	17.101	2	0.00
Change in traditional life style	31.827	2	0.00
Increase pollution in the village	11.059	2	0.00
Negative effect on the religion and culture	6.642	2	0.04
Negative effect on the youth	14.057	2	0.00

Increase social evil in the village	4.358	2	0.11
<i>Association of Socio-cultural Effects across Sampled Villages</i>	13.728	2	0.00

The p value less than 0.05 of Kruska-Wallis H test analysis regarding increase awareness toward education, leading to change in traditional occupations, changed the traditional life style, increase in pollution in the village, negative effect on the religion and culture, and negative effect on the youth; represented the acceptance of alternative hypothesis indicating that the sampled respondents have difference understanding regarding these socio-cultural effects. However, the p value more than 0.05 in case of changed in lodging and food culture, and increase in social evil in the villages revealed the acceptance of null hypothesis. This indicated that the people of sampled villages have similar type of understanding regarding these two socio-cultural effect resulted from the villages tourism activities.

Association between sampled villages regarding socio-economic effects

Two independent sample test has been conducted using Mann-Whitney U test to measure whether there is any association between any two sampled villages regarding economic and socio-cultural effect resulted from the village tourism activities. The statistical result have been presented in table 5.

Table 5

Measurement of Association between two Sampled Villages

Effect	Two independent samples villages	Mann-Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
	Sikles and Langdruk	118.000	.00
Economic effect	Sikles and Dhampus	181.500	.010
	Langdruk and Dhampus	241.500	.163
Socio-cultural	Sikles and Langdruk	160.000	.003

Sikles and Dhampus	280.000	.525
Langdruk and Dhampus	140.500	.001

As the statistical test data presented in the table 5 indicates that there is statistically significant difference between Sikles and Langdruk, and Sikles and Dhampus regarding economic effects and statistically not significant difference between Langdruk and Dhampus since the $p > 0.05$. Similarly, in case of socio-cultural effect the test result revealed that there is statistically significant different between Sikles and Langdruk, and Langdruk and Dhampus villages but statistically not significant difference between Sikles and Dhampus.

Key Barrier for Village Tourism Development

Table 6

Key Barriers for Village Tourism Development

Key Barrier	Responses	Percentage
Transportation	42	31.8
Weak lodging facility	2	1.5
Weak safety and security	0	0.0
Lack of skilled manpower	14	10.6
Lack of foods and vegetable	0	0.0
Society or community	3	2.3
Lack of tourism education	54	40.9
Lack of trained tourist guide	8	6.1
Weak support from government	9	6.8
Total	132	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018

The multiple choice questionnaire for the study about the barriers for the development of village tourism revealed that lack of tourism education, transportation facility and the lack of skilled manpower are the key barriers for the development of village tourism and other are less

significant. Out the three barriers, lack of tourism education found to be main barrier (40.9%) followed by transportation facility or connectivity to the villages (31.8%) and lack of skilled manpower stands as the third main barriers which occupies 10.6 percent responses as a main barrier. This study portrayed that safety and security and availability of foods and vegetables are not the problems or barriers for village tourism development.

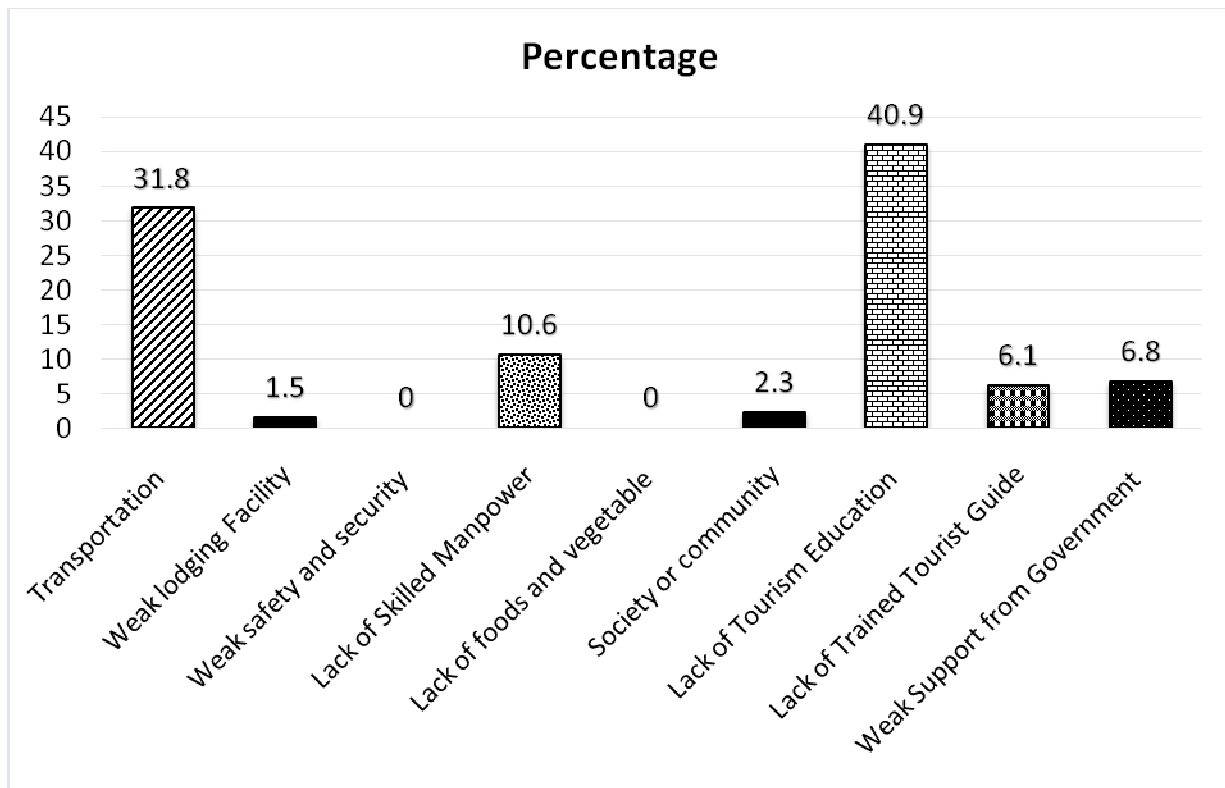


Figure 2: Key barriers for village tourism development

Conclusion

Despite statistically significant difference across the sampled villages regarding the economic and socio-cultural effects resulted from the village tourism activities as tested by Kruskal- Wallis H test and Mann- Whitney U test, village tourism activities have revealed significant effects on increase in earnings capacity, government revenue, agro and handicraft business, job opportunities, educational awareness, lodging and food culture, traditional life style, and flow of

domestic tourists. The survey result also reveals that there are no adverse effect on social undertakings, religion and culture, and the youth of the villages. Lack of tourism education, transportation facilities or connectivity and skilled manpower have been recognized as the key barriers for sustainable development of village tourism.

However, the high level of consensus on change in lodging and food culture, traditional occupation and life style may not be taken as positive effects of village tourism. This may lead to damage the indigenous identity which is more essential for sustainable development of village tourism.

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