

Cycle Tour Culture across Nepal Himalayas

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To Cite this article: Shrestha, T. L. (2025). Cycle tour culture across Nepal Himalayas. *International Research Journal of MMC*, 6(5), 117–127.
<https://doi.org/10.3126/irjmmc.v6i5.89070>

Submitted: 25 November 2025

Accepted: 15 December 2025

Published: 31 December 2025

Abstract

This study explores evolutionary process of cycle tour culture across Nepal Himalayas from the auto ethnographic microhistorical approach with reference to the lived experiences of the pioneer Nepali cycle tour guides collected from July 2024 to January 2025 from 24 participants in the first-ever cycle tour guide training organized by Nepal Mountain Academy commenced in Central Campus, Tribhuvan University. It also includes (hi) story the first-ever cycle tour guide license distribution ceremony commenced at Tourism Office, Kathmandu on 29 December 2025. This study first investigates how foundation of adventure cycling in Nepal evolved opening avenues of possibilities through literature review, observation, interviews and discussions. Secondly, it connects the historical background of adventure cycling with cycle tour guide culture that evolved from a small community. It also explores how an informally evolved community generates historical momentum beyond boundary. In total 24 trainees - cycle tour guides - were participated in the training. This study was concentrated on the first cycle tour guide trainees in particular exploring their histories and stories. Most of them were well-trained high-altitude cycle tour operators/guides. Finally, it presents strategies and insights to operate cycle tour guide highlighting the resilience amidst precarity and policrisis while cycling in the high altitudes in Nepal. The findings highlight how a small history of cycle tour community of Nepal addresses higher level of socio-cultural and economic question of the nation. The conclusion offers avenues of the possibilities of cycle tour guide across Nepal.

Keywords: autoethnography, microhistory, cycle tour guide, policrisis, resilience

1. Introduction

This paper employs microscopic observation to study how cycle tour culture, which is being overlooked for more than three decades, evolved in Nepal. The three generations of cycle tour guides were remained out license right for three decades. As emphasized by microhistorians, who put emphasis on hidden history of historical invisible actors' this study focuses on lived experiences searching meaning in individual actions to address this serious question. For microhistorians small event or community can connect broader politico-cultural historiography. Keeping this idea into consideration this study uses the context of the first cycling guide training organized by Nepal Mountain Academy (NMA) conducted in the

Central Department of Population Studies, Tribhuvan University (Tourism Mail [TM], 2025; Tourism Info Nepal [TIN], 2025). This researcher was engaged as a coordinator from the beginning to the end of the training.

The cycle tour guide training focused on developing both theoretical and practical skills apt to cycling at high altitudes. Emphasis was put on skill development to leading cycling groups and tours in and around the Himalayas. Exposure to the essential elements—cycling-related texts, classroom instructions, and outdoor activities — aimed to enable students to effectively manage teams, develop plans, and conduct multi-day cycling tours (NMA, 2024). The course covered cycling history in relation to tourism history as well including elements essential to tour guide professionalism in high altitude. The course covered cycling guide traditions, trends and standards; professional risk management techniques; fundamentals of MTB handling skills; mechanical skills; cycling tour leadership development; route diversity, planning, and navigation; safety, security, and emergency management. It also emphasized green tourism attitude, knowledge and practices (NMA, 2024). Out of 30 applicants, 24 participants were selected and trained on the basis of their skills, interest and ability in handling adventurous cycling tour in Nepal. Bagmati Province Minister for Culture and Tourism, Bimal Thakuri, concluded the training with certification (TIN, 2025). NMA initiated licensing process that did not actualize till 12 months, to date. The training was commenced in January 2025. The process of licensing was lingering to date, when this study completed in December 2025.

Most of the participants were skilled tour operators/guides working professionally in the Nepal Himalayas as mountain biker. They wanted recognition - official license from Nepal Government – so that they could carry on cycle tour guide profession more confidently contributing adventure tourism through cycling in the Himalayas. They knew adventure as one of the ‘fastest-growing categories of the global tourism’ (Adventure Travel Trade Association [ATTA], 2020). They were eager to tap the opportunity. Nepal as ‘an ideal destination for adventure tourism’ (Genc, 2021) also represents the most popular and versatile destinations for adventure tourism in Asia-Pacific region (Nepal, 2016). The preliminary microscopic observation of cycling tour cultural history of Nepal demands micro historical study on adventure cycling profession based on the lived experiences of Nepali cycle tour guides. Microhistory is a theoretical approach. It primarily applies the intensive historical investigation of a relatively well-defined smaller object, most often a single event, or a community or an individual (Ginzburg & Poni 1991, p. 3).

This study in this context explores cycle tour guide history from microhistory approach embedded with auto-ethnographic narrative observing lived experiences of the pioneer cyclists. Cycle tour culture of Nepal aesthetically connects stories of particular place, people, and planet reflecting politico-cultural and economic aspects with potentialities as well as complexities.

2. The Methods

This study employed microhistory method assisted by autoethnographic narrative and lived experiences shared by pioneering tour guides of Nepal through story telling during and after 120 hours long the first cycle tour guide training commenced in Nepal in January 2025. The main objective is: how does an informally evolved cycle tour guide community in Nepal generate historical momentum beyond its local context? The researcher being engaged in subaltern studies in the native literary contexts and a cyclist, a bottom-up qualitative approach that reconstruct history through small-scale contextualizing stories of the cycle tour guides/operators of Nepal in the high altitude rather than concerning grand narratives has been applied on the first cycle tour guide training texts and contexts. The applied history of cycle tour guides in Nepal is a field of study waiting to be explored because this field is

informally evolved and remained overlooked for more than three decades. Insights about microhistory have been basically drowned from *What is Microhistory? Theory and Practice*, in which Magnusson & Szijarto (2013) write,

Microhistory is grounded, essentially, in the same principles as qualitative approach. It pursues the idea that a small unit (an individual, event or small community) can reflect a larger whole.... One of the cornerstones of microhistory is the concept of *normal exceptions*, highlighting the importance of focusing on individual units and demonstrating their significance in historical debate. (p. 388)

As micro historical approach accommodates personal narratives, hypothesis, doubts, uncertainties of the historically marginalized individual, community, or small unite of study in a broader context and produces effect as fictional narrative, this study included autobiographical narrative and lived experiences of the overlooked cycling community of Nepal in a small manageable size. The personal observation of 24 participants of the 120 hours long cycle tour guide training including class and field notes were key sources of the discussion and analysis. The essence of story telling of the pioneering cycle tour guides/operators during and after training, memoir, field diary, life-history interviews, informal conversations during theoretical and practical sessions including collective ride from Kirtipur Kathmandu to Chitlang Makawanpur with night stay, itinerates, snapshots, local knowledge, contextual historical documents have also used wherever apt to fill informational and analytical gaps. It also incorporates the context of offering the first-ever cycle tour guide license to 24 trainees on 29 December 2025 in Tourism Office, Kathmandu, where this researcher had given presentation covering the historical process of the training from the context to the date of licensing.

3. Cycle Tour Culture in Nepal: Micro historical Angle

The evolution of cycle tour guide community, the precarity and polycrisis the pioneer cycle tour guides/operators faced during cycling in high altitude, and the techniques they use to resilience expressed during cycle tour guide training through story telling reflect broader context of historiography of Nepali cycling culture. This section explores the text and context of cycle tour guide from micro historical angle.

3.1 Evolution of Cycle Tour Culture in Nepal

Since 1950s, after the end of 104 years long Rana regime, Nepal opened doors to global community. Foreigners began to visit Nepal. But they were mostly trekkers and mountain climbers. Mountain biking culture evolved since 1980s but it flourished in the West. It looks hard to trace the history about who formally initiated mountain biking culture in Nepal (Shrestha & Shrestha 2024). Giambone (1994) claims that since 1970s *gearwalla* modern cycling culture began in Nepal (p. 12). He narrates beginning history of mountain biking in and around Kathmandu:

When I first came to Kathmandu...when the traffic and crowd get too much it is easy to revive the sylvan valley of hidden gods and temples that charm by hopping on my bike and heading out of town. I've focused on travel by mountain bike because this is how the Kathmandu Valley's rich condensation of diverse terrain and cultural sites is best experienced.... As a trek leader and initiator of the bike club Gear Wallahs (one who rides a many-gear bike), I've introduced my favourite bike and hike routes to many over the years. (p. i)

Giambrone documents his observation about the evolution of mountain biking in Kathmandu through his personal experience. Often, the early adventurers would end their trips and trade their bicycles for carpets, *thankas* (religious paintings) or a ticket home. The used bicycles of the early adventurers paved foundation to establishing a local stock of mountain bikes in Kathmandu. In his words, “Expatriates first picked up on this perfect means of locomotion in the Valley, to the wonder of local inhabitants who marvelled at the ‘pedalled motorcycles’ that could climb up mountains, jump curbs and ride the roughest streets in Kathmandu without bending a rim or getting a flat” (p. 12). He captures brief history of how mountain biking evolved with his personal reflection:

In the mid-1970s, a few adventurers rode old one-speed bicycle at breakneck speeds down fire trails on California’s Mount Tamalpais and gave birth to ‘mountain biking’ in America. Soon they started experimenting – adding gears, refining brakes and welding their own frames – and created prototypes of the mountain bike we use today, also known as the ATB or all-terrain bike. In 1983, the Himalayan Mountain Bike Expedition to Mount Everest initiated the sport in Nepal with a spectacular show. (p. 12)

According to Giambrone, Craig Moffet and Brad Grunewald arrived Nepal with the first production-made mountain bikes. They reached as far as Kala Patthar, 5,545m (18,192ft) where they recorded their feat. Few cyclists were tempted to test mountain bike against mighty Himalaya peak again. It was the call of the wide steppes of Tibet, with their opening in the mid-1980s that incited the real fervour of bike activity in Kathmandu. In his words, enthusiasts flew with their bicycles from Hong Kong into the Tibetan capital city Lhasa, toured the area, and then set out of the gruelling two-week journey over 5,181m (17,000ft) passes to Nepal...the challenges of pedalling down high passes into fierce headwinds and the great relief of reaching Nepal (pp. 12-13). He writes, “It was the recuperation and rides in the Kathmandu Valley that won most praise in the end” (p. 13).

Giambrone also documents how utility-based cyclists began to pay attention to mountain biking and adventure cycling. In his words, perhaps the hill to Patan was where mountain bikers captured the Nepalis’ attention most persuasively. Every evening, hundreds of bicycle commuters going home pushed their single-speed Chinese and Indian made bicycles uphill. When they saw foreigners sitting on their bikes and pedalling uphill with ease it was love at first sight. Soon, Nepalis started importing inexpensive versions of mountain bikes. Local mountain bike shops and rental services targeted to tourists evolved in Kathmandu. In the beginning two cycle rental shops opened exclusively renting ATBS. In autumn 1991, Himalayan Mountain Bikes, which was established in 1988 sponsored the first 3-day Fat Tire Festival culminating in an exciting 56km bicycle race across Kathmandu Valley rim with Kakani cycling itinerary (pp. 13-14). These sorts of cycling activities paved way from ATBS to MTB adventure tourism and cycle sports in the Himalayas of Nepal.

After three decades Giambrone published the first document on cycle tour guide *Kathmandu: Bikes and Hikes* (1994), Richard Williams published *The Road: A Guide to Crossing the Nepal Himalayas by Bike* (2024). Olympic medallist, four-time World Champion and five-time Cape Epic winner Christopher Sauser (2024) writes:

The rise of adventure cycling worldwide in recent years has been nothing short of remarkable. After decades of only two core dominant cycling disciplines – road cycling and mountain biking – two new forms of bicycle riding have recently emerged which are rapidly transforming the sport and allowing greater access for

riders to more adventurous environments – gravel biking and e-biking. (Sausser, 2024, p. 8)

Sausser (2024) clearly indicates further world of possibilities in adventure cycling shifting from traditional cyclist. The gravel bike and e-bike both can pave new possibilities along with mountain biking in Nepal. In Sausser's words e-bikes have changed "how we ride and our perception of that is possible on a bicycle" (p. 8). He claims, "These cutting-edge yet simple off-road machines have made mountain biking accessible to all ages and all levels of fitness with their seamless electrical assistance" (p. 8). He narrates his story while cycling in Nepal, which gives positive pictures of possibilities amidst precarity and polycrisis:

In late November 2023, I travelled to Nepal for the first time on my gravel bike, with Canadian professional mountain biker Cory Wallace.... I was blown away not only by the extraordinary riding, but by the warm hospitality we received everywhere we went, from the minute we landed until the moment we left. Whether cycling in the hustle and bustle of Kathmandu or riding in a remote village in the distant hills, the welcome was incredible and completely sincere. (Sausser, 2024, p. 9)

However, while traditional cycling in Nepal had been around for decades, local adventure cyclist Sonam Gurung introduced the first mountain bikes without suspension in 1987. He took his first mountain bike all the way to Everest Base Camp and back to his hometown of Manang, which opened people's eyes to the potential to cycling tour in Nepal. Two years later, the first front suspension mountain bikes arrived in Nepal (Williams, 2024, p. 25). In 1990, after an American lady Francis Higgins formed first mountain biking company named Himalayan Mountain Bike, which James Giambrone took over it, the first mountain bike guides Lokesh Chandra Sharma, Jeet Bahadur Tamang, Sonam Gurung, Chhimi Gurung initiated cycle tour culture in Nepal. Nepal's cycle tour culture has marked history of more than three decades. The rise of female participants has broken down various boundaries and stereotypes. The first lady mountain biker was Nirjala Tamrakar, the 'mountain queen', who inspired the next wave of talented riders like Laxmi Magar including more recently Usha Khanal, Nishma Shrestha and others (Williams, 2024, p. 27). Still female cycle tour guides remain far less than males in Nepal. However, as Williams (2024) writes,

Today, mountain biking is not only a growing source of income for the Nepali tourism industry, it also provides many jobs to young Nepali's who work as guides, mechanics, shop workers and drivers. Exploration of new riding areas continues at pace by the huge scene of riders who see the opportunity to make Nepal a mecca for mountain biking.... The future for Nepali mountain biking looks bright. (pp. 26-27)

Williams in his book *The Road* presents guideline for biking enthusiasts looking for a once-in-a lifetime adventure through the Himalayan Mountains of Nepal – across the mid-hill highway – attracting mountain bikers, gravel bikers as well as intrepid e-bikers. He welcomes world bicycle communities "to experience the charm of rural Nepali life, savor local cuisine and connect with welcoming communities along the journey" (p. 306). He affirms,

Despite blisters and sore muscles, the joy of reaching remote Himalayan villages and the breathtaking natural beauty of the landscape make it a unique adventure through the heart of landscape make it a unique adventure through the heart of one of planet Earth's most spectacular natural arenas. (p. 306)

Cycle tour guide history of Nepal, though hidden till date, takes us into deeper level of politico-cultural history. It evolved witnessing phases of political transitions. Adventure cycling began in Nepal after the establishment of democratic system since 1990s. Kathmandu valley accommodated diverse internal and international tourists. Himalayan Mountain Bike initiated by American lady Francis Higgins and taken over three year later of its establishment in 1990 played role to expand adventure cycling activities including short tours and sessional sports. Nagarkot began to attract tourists for sunrise and sunset views. Since 1992 overnight mountain bike trip began from Thamel to Nagarkot. Kakani became next popular route for trip and race mostly in single track. Since 1995 Nepal Sports Council recognized mountain bike with the establishment of Nepal Mountain Bike Association formed with the link to international cycling organization UCI and Asian Cycling Confederation (Williams, 2024, pp. 25-26). After four years NMBA was transformed into Nepal Cycling Association (NCA) focusing its core area on cycle sports. In 2008, NCA organized the 14 Asian MTB championships in Chobhar, Kathmandu (Shrestha, 2025, p. 69; Williams, 2024, p. 26). The race significantly helped to expose the potentiality of adventure cycling in Nepal. More interestingly, the cycle athletes dominated the cycle tour guide in high altitude.

Using microscope instead of a telescope, micro historians investigate historical facts aligned with cultural history making intensive historical study on the specific subject. The impacts shape different picture of the past stretching over long time period within threefold unity of place, time and action (Magnusson & Szijarto, 2013, p. 23). Unlike case study, it seeks answers for 'great historical questions, soon to be defined, when studying to large questions in small places putting stress on agency. For micro historians, any individual or event should be regarded as active individuals, conscious actors...interconnected (Magnusson & Szijarto, 2013, p. 24). As Brad S. Gregory argues, it is great historical question that legitimates the microanalysis on the micro-level that the agency of the ordinary people can be preserved (Gregory 1999, 101; qtd. in Magnusson & Szijarto, 2013, p. 24). With this collective consciousness of collectivism and interconnectedness, this study highlights cycle tour guide training through microscopic angle.

3.2 Dynamics of Cycle Tour Guide Training in Nepal

Being an instructor of the university, I was keen to initiate cycling education in Nepal. Academics and cycle activists both overlooked the value of cycle education. The two groups along with stakeholders could initiate cycle tour guide training, too. As an English Literature instructor, cycle tour guide training was out of my area. However, I involved in cycle tour guide training program from the concept formulation via syllabus making to execution and post-event activities collectively. The story begins from Bhaktapur and come to Kirtipur via Kathmandu.

One Saturday morning (in Ashad 2081) I reached Bhaktapur from Kirtipur pedaling with my family. Our son of 13 also pedaled with us. It was hot summer day; we were tired after 20 km ride. We met Binu Thapa (instructor of Dhulikhel Hospital), Basant Rijal (associated to Nepal Football Association) and Alok Khatiwada (accountant in Nepal Mountain Academy). Also, a ski instructor Alok looked keenly interested to involve in cycling culture movement. It was not big news. People would join our volunteer-based cycle culture community and go out of touch. But, Alok bought a bicycle immediately after accidental meeting and began to ride regularly. More surprisingly, he invited me to Nepal Mountain Academy. I visited NMA office first time with a dozen of cycle friends. NMA recognized the meeting as formal kick start gathering to initiate cycle tour guide training. NMA executive director, the principal, coordinator, and key instructors present in the meeting wanted to initiate cycle tour guide training but they had no idea about cycling. They

wanted to run cycle tour guide training immediately. They were running Bachelor and Master's level academic courses on tourism and mountaineering including trekking or tour (ist) guide trainings. They wanted to add cycling tour guide training.

The key issue was whether to initiate basic level, intermediate or advance level syllabus? Nepal had not initiated cycling tour guide training and licensing education. But there were dozens of cycle tour guides working professionally in high altitude amidst precarity and polycrisis. They had already developed skills handling cycling tours in high altitude. They needed advance level training, not the basic one. As I found, there were already three generations of cycle tour guides working across Nepal's Himalayas without license. Cycle tour guiding is distinct from trekking or another tourist guiding. However, anyone who could handle cycling switched to cycle guide to grab opportunity. Unskilled cycle tour guide could harm the future of emerging adventure cycling field of Nepal. The first generation of cycle tour guides – namely Sonam Gurung, Lokesh Chandra Sharma, Jit Bahadur Tamang, Chhimi Guru, Ranjan Rajbhandari evolved from the foundation formed by Francis Higgins and James Giambrone (Williams, 2024, p. 25) – were retired from cycle tour guide without license. Second generation tour guides – namely Mandil Pradhan, Dhanjit (Shantosh) Rai, Jagan BK, Ajaya Narsingh Rana, Laxmi Magar, Harka Lama, Ajaya Pandit Chhetri, Usha Khanal, Akash Shrestha, and many others excluding third generation cycle tour guides – were already well experienced and handling cycling groups in the Himalayas for decades without license.

We finalized the course to advance level cycle tour guide in the first phase. The plan was first to run advance level than go to basic and intermediate level. The first trained cycle tour guides could instruct the basic and intermediate level classes. NMA wanted to run the class as soon as possible. There were complexities related to prerequisites to get admitted and licensed. Some of the cycle tour guides were highly skilled with track records, but no education certificate. Few of them had university or college degree but less or on technical skill of cycle tour in high altitude. We naturalized the course apt to Nepali context. We naturalized the prerequisites, too.

The history of first cycle tour guide training commenced at Tribhuvan University. We needed open spaces, diverse terrains, too. NMA being a government institution formally inaugurated cycle tour guide training. Participants from Bhaktapur, Pokhara, and all around the country joined training – completed assigned theoretical and practical sessions. After series of collective meetings among cycle tour guides and stakeholders, 24 participants completed convocation ceremony, which was commenced at Nepal Academy Devkota Hall with the presence of responsible stakeholders including Tourism minister of Bagmati Province. The trained tour guides kept on running cycle tours, without license, pushing stakeholders to lobby for license (Shrestha, 2025, pp. 300-304).

We had commitment through NMA that all the trainees get license as soon as possible despite legal hassles but it took eleven months to offer them license. I was in rush as a coordinator to organize Cycling for Cancer Survival Support historic fundraiser Life to Ride journey from Sikkim India-Panchthar Nepal border Chewabhanjyang to Baitadi Jhulaghat (1800-kilometer Mid-hill High-way mass cycle tour led by cancer survivors Harka Lama and Kabita Chitrakar). NMA invited me to give micro historical presentation about the first advance level cycle tour guide training in the license distribution program on 29 December 2025 (Sambahak, 2025). I observed a sweet sense of satisfaction expressed by organizers, stakeholders and beneficiaries. The cycle tour guide license holders (the first 24 cycle tour guides community composed of late teens to early sixties) had sense of security to run cycle tour guides across Nepal Himalayas. It was a tiny event but for me it was addressing big question of the national adventure tourism and cycle culture of Nepal.

3.3 Avenues of Cycle Tour Culture in Nepal

Cycle tour culture in Nepal looks a sub-sector of adventure tourism when we observe it from the top down angle. If we observe it from the margin with a micro historical angle, it is seen a multi-dimensional domain. This tiny-looking sub-sector connects politico-cultural spectrum beyond the boundary as micro historians put emphasis to search deeper level of meaning or answer from small unit of study. The small cycle tour guide community of Nepal, as micro historians refer, reflects wider layers of politico-cultural conflicts as well. The concept of *microstoria* (microhistory) came into being from the tension between social historical and cultural historical discourses in the 1970s, which was invented by Italian Scholar with a Marxist background (Muir 1991, p. xv). It was the decade when different historical approaches, i.e. cultural history, subaltern historiography, postcolonial studies came at the core of discourse.

As microhistory is close to cultural history and subaltern studies putting stress on lived experiences of common persons or peoples, and the representations that the actors themselves form to interpret their own experiences with distinct hermeneutical character, cycle tour guides/operators/stakeholders used their lived experiences through storytelling during cycle tour guide training. Capturing lived experiences of the cycle tour guides/operators in the training sessions (during both theoretical as well as practical classes) was unique model of using collective consciousness in teaching-learning as claimed to be a distinct feature of microhistory (Brown 2004, p. 13). Microhistorical approach brings social and cultural history together by explaining social history and grasping the meanings of cultural history within a single very circumscribed investigation (Magnusson & Szijarto, 2013, p. 29). As microhistorians try to show the historical actors' experiences, we tried to show the pioneering cycle tour guides/operators' hidden history as teaching material. We tried to expose how they saw themselves and their lives and which meanings they attributed to things that had happened to them as microhistorians also try to point to deep historical structures, long-lived ways of thinking and global processes using a retrospective analysis – factors that were absent from the actors' own horizons of interpretation. All this can only be brought together, without running the risk of over-simplifying the past, when historians investigate a narrowly defined subject (Magnusson & Szijarto, 2013, p. 30).

As one of the special features of microhistory is the central importance attributed to the text of the historian: his narration (Magnusson & Szijarto, 2013, p. 72), we gave central emphasis to the pioneering cycle tour actors and their narration to generate strategies and insights to handle cycling groups in the high altitude. There were participants who had experience of running cycle tour in the Himalayas for more than 30 years. One of them was a person, Mangal Lama, who had completed his cycling across the mythical great Himalayan trails, that nobody else could do it. Some of them had experience of Mt. Everest climbing, too. The newcomer enthusiasts learnt big lessons through their lived stories. Even the instructors enriched their skills through their lived storytelling. As Gianni Pomata claims that E.P. Thompson or Ginzburg can produce the same effect on readers as novelists (Magnusson & Szijarto, 2013, p. 73), we tried to make cycle tour guide class (both theory and practical) more memorable despite the fact that we had no certified cycle tour guide instructors available to handle the advance level cycle tour guide training commenced first time in Nepal. Ginzburg wrote in his *The Cheese and the Worms* 'the hypotheses, the doubts, the uncertainties became part of the narration' (Ginzburg 1976), we used personal narratives of the pioneer cycle tour guides/operators who were present as participants/students expressed their hope and hopelessness – victories and vulnerabilities as collective consciousness. Microhistorians place the small unit of study in a broader context because without this microhistorical studies are deemed to have little meaning – they are dismissed as insignificant in scholarship (Magnusson & Szijarto, 2013, p. 387). In the similar manner, we placed the

lived stories of pioneer cyclists during the cycle tour guide training and brought insights and strategies to handle cycle tour groups in the high-altitude Himalayas in Nepal. More interestingly, individual's insights and strategies transformed into collective consciousness after they shared to each other. Compartmentalization of individuals and groups to handle issues in high altitude intermingled ideas and strategies to collective intervention. Situations were dramatized in the class and in the field as well as if real problem occurred and the participants handled the cases. At the end all the participants prepared tour guide plan reports that covered various potentialities and complexities of cycle tour guide practices of Nepal.

Similar to microhistorians, who pursue the idea that a small unit (an individual, event or small community) to reflect a larger whole...*normal exceptions*, highlighting the importance of sub-sets to demonstrate its significance in historical debate (Magnusson & Szijarto, 2013, p. 388), cycle tour guide training as manageable size was used to explore diverse responses (Magnusson & Szijarto, 2013, p. 399). The small unit as 'hidden from history' appeared the source of collective self-discovery and space for collective recognition. At the same time it does not undermine the value of universality- the essence of all history as a scholarly and intellectual discipline, but it seeks co-existence. The small cycle tour guide community of Nepal reflects a larger whole.

During cycle tour guide training, the best cycle athletes, commissars and coaches cum enthusiast new cyclists came together for 120 hours for the first time in the history of cycling culture in Nepal. It was actually a foundation to trace cycle culture history in Nepal through microhistorical ground. One of the most impressive features to me of microhistory is the emphasis on the common individuals' narration – the lived stories of small group. For the first time, they spent such a long period of time together completely engaged on cycling tour history, present and future possibilities being accumulated in the academic space in Nepal. They storytelling based on their lived experiences reflected avenues of cycling culture of Nepal. One would narrate history, another explains risks, safety and security issues; some of them would support instructors through story telling wherever apt during the training; one of them narrated his mythical great Himalayan trail cycling completed in 88 days. As microhistorians claims, 'microhistorical narratives produce impact on readers as novelists do; the participants narrated their lived stories of operating cycle tour in the Himalayas of Nepal without support from the government and responsible stakeholders- their precarity and polycrisis as well as adventurous performances for decades – in such ways that through their the lived stories they presented significant strategies and insights of resilience to high-altitude tourism workers (Shrestha, 2025, p. 300-304). The small cycle tour guide community exposed to me to the new area of study linked to a broader context apt to serious activism to develop cycling profession aligned with academic world. It influenced me exposing essence of politico-cultural history that could connect a scholarly and intellectual discipline (ibid. p. 303). Being a student of subaltern studies in Nepali context, this microscopic angle appeared to me more impressively than telescopic approach. Involving from the concept generation to the first ever-since cycle tour guide training, team building, syllabus making, training execution as a coordinator and trainer, and giving autoethnographic microhistorical presentation in the license distribution ceremony was a big historical momentum to me for the sake of adventure tourism and cycle culture development in Nepal. NMA took flexible way to organize the historic first cycle tour guide training in Central Campus, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur. More interestingly, NMA organized closing ceremony in Nepal Academy. After eleven months Tourism Office, Kahtmandu organized cycle tour guide license distribution. As a cyclist, it was a historic moment to me as well as to my cycling community.

4. Conclusion

This study based on autoethnographic microhistorical approach supplemented by lived (hi)stories of the participant cyclists in cycle tour guide training exposes preliminary hidden history of the emerging cycle tour culture of Nepal that incorporates precarity, polycrisis and resilience the pioneer tour guides/operators face during cycling in the high altitudes. Cycle tour guide training organized first time by Nepal Mountain Academy commenced at Central Department of Population Studies, Tribhuvan University was used as the primary text and context to this study that exposed potentialities and complexities persisting for decades. Concentrating on 120 hours long training and observing 24 participants, their precarity, polycrisis, and resilience expressed during story telling and informal talks, this study also explored how cycle tour culture evolved in Nepal. The hidden history of a small event, cycle tour guide training of Nepal reflected transnational and geopolitical context aligns with broad politico-cultural debates. Leading Nepali cycle tour actors offered strategies and insights to the resilience amidst precarity and polycrisis while operating cycle tours in the high altitudes. On 29 December 2025 Tourism Office, Kathmandu distributed them the first-ever cycle tour guide license (Adhikari, 2025). To me as a cyclist as well as one of the core contributors to cycle tour guide training, it was a historic moment to adventure tourism and cycle culture development in Nepal. In conclusion, growing avenues of cycle tour culture in Nepal overcome series of obstacles getting recognition from the responsible stakeholders. Emphasis needs to be given on microhistorical excavation of the hidden history about avenues of cycling (hi)story in Nepali context. This research further demands investment to expand the horizon of adventure cycling across Nepal Himalayas exploring subtle strategies and ideas about precarity, polycrisis, and resilience of cycle tour guides/operators.

5. Acknowledgement

This paper is part of the UGC Small RDI Grant Agreement F.Y. 2081/82 (2024/25) award No.: SRDIG-81/82-H&S-05 awarded on 2082-02-22 (June 05, 2025). I must acknowledge University Grants Commission (UGC), Bhaktapur for this research support. I also acknowledge Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur; Central Department of Population Studies, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur; Nepal Mountain Academy, Kathmandu; Nepal Academy, Kathmandu, Tourism Office, Kathmandu; and cycling community for their valuable support during this research. A special thanks goes to the participants of cycle tour guide training and license distribution for their valued contribution during observation, interviews, interactions, field works, and group discussions.

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