

## **Local community's perception on the existing home stay program in Terai and Hilly districts of Nepal**

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### **Abstract**

*Homestay tourism program is a new part of tourism sector which involved local community in tourism development within their own and surrounding area. It is also lately emerging tourism concept in the world. Nepal is known as an important tourist's destination and can be a model homestay country with its abundant natural resources, multi culture, multi religion, multi ethnic, tradition life style, archeological heritage, innocent society and community. Due to all these above factors homestay tourism program became the dream for the lover of nature and experts of tourism in Nepal. Homestay program can be easily established, Promoted and developed by minimum investment and based on many aspects such as good service, safety, security, souvenir, family and attractions. It is a major tourism industry for the development of rural economy by generating huge number of employment and social benefits. The major objective of the study is the perception of community towards homestay tourism program. Descriptive and exploratory research design, cross-sectional study design and deductive approach with mixed method have been used in this study. Both primary and secondary data are used simultaneously. Primary data are collected from 348 respondents with three categories of nine study Districts. Similarly, secondary data are collected from various publications of central, state, local Governments, different articles in international journals,*

*books, credible magazines, newspaper, reports prepared by research scholars, experts and universities and different websites etc. Finally, majority of community people have a positive perception towards on existing homestay program in Nepal.*

**Keywords:** Community perception, people, program, homestay program, Nepal

## **Introduction**

Gnanapala & Sandaruwani (2016) studied about two objectives relating to impact of tourism development and the attitudes and perceptions of local communities in their neighborhoods. For that they had used data gathered method and unstructured interviews. From their studied it was revealed that there was inadequate planning, policies and regulations insufficient knowledge & skills of tour operators and broader social issues of poverty. Despite it, the government, private businesses and other external organizations were getting more economic benefits than the local villagers. Besides it, the above institutions should be played a parental and supportive role to strengthen the rural economy in the village. Community people did not see the positive support on the existing homestay program.

Donny & Mohd, Nor, (2015, pp. 274-275) Studied on the topic "Local perceptions towards tourism impacts related to home stay program". They conducted the research among three types of responded such as High contact (HC), Middle contact (MC) and Low contact (LC). The HC respondents were positive towards social impacts and supported additional tourism development. In contrast, the MC respondents perceived social impacts negatively, but agreed to support additional tourism development. The LC respondents had positive perceptions towards social impacts, but were both supportive for additional tourism development and for restrictions on tourism development. The research provides practical implications for local government and stakeholders for planning and policy in the community-based home stay program in Sarawak, Malaysia. A majority of respondents were benefited from homestay program. Therefore, community people had a positive perception towards on the existing homestay program. The theoretical implication highlights the need for heterogeneous respondents in the future home stay program studies on perceptions towards social impacts of tourism.

Shukor, Mohd Salleh, Othman, & Mohd Idris (2014), in their paper on the topic "Perception of Home stay Operator's Towards Home stay Development In Malaysia" Their study aimed to analyze the perception of operators on the impacts they experienced as a result of their involvement in the development of homestay. They did face to face survey among 333 respondents who were peninsular Malaysia's home stay operators participated in the study. From their study it could be found that home stay operators and community people who involved in homestay program both had gained the economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits by the homestay program. So they had both positive perceptions towards homestay program.

Rasid, Razzaq, Hadi & Mustafa, (2011, p. 1418) had studied on the topic of “Local community participation in home stay program development in Malaysia” They found that the government of Malaysia has recognized the tourism industry is the second largest industry after manufacturing sector. It is also recognized that tourism industry is an engine for economic, social, political and ecological development, especially in rural areas. Therefore Ministry of Tourism of Malaysia has rapidly promoted the homestay program by formulating the Malaysian Rural Tourism Master Plan 2001 A.D. and allocating RM 40 Million under the 9<sup>th</sup> Malaysian plan for upgrading infrastructure and facilities in homestay participating villages. By the parental role of Tourism Ministry of Malaysia motivated local communities including women, youth and retired person to involve in homestay program. Sixty two respondents from local communities actively involved in operating the homestay program participated in this study. Local communities remarkable participated showed that they had positive perception towards on existing homestay program in Malaysia.

Aref & Redzuan (2009, pp. 207-213), this paper on the topic of “community leader’s perceptions toward tourism impacts and level of community capacity building in tourism development” they found that there was a significant relationship between the community leader’s perceptions towards tourism impacts and their effort in building the capacity for tourism development in local communities of Shiraz, Iran where 175 community leaders were the respondents. Furthermore, they found that those leaders who perceived the tourism activities could bring economic benefits would have the higher propensity to be actively involved whereas those who perceived tourism could bring negative to the environment would put less effort in the capacity building in tourism development.

The Homestay tourism is increasing in Nepal also and it has promoted the community based tourism program by attracting the urban tourists to rural area. Though, there is no adequate research on this topic so it shows the need of in-depth study to know the perception of local people towards the homestay. So, the study was started. The main objective of this study is to explore the perception of local community towards the homestay running in their area.

## **Materials & Methods**

Descriptive and exploratory research design, cross-sectional study design and deductive approach with mixed method have been used in this study. Both primary and secondary data are used simultaneously. Primary data was collected by structured survey questionnaire and interview from 348 respondents of study Districts like Kailali, Kavre, Kaski, Kathmandu, Syangja, Tanahun, Bhaktapur, Nawalpur and Chitwan. Similarly, secondary data was collected from various publications of central state, local Governments, different articles in international journals, books, credible magazines, newspaper, reports prepared by research scholars, experts and universities and different websites etc. The collected data was analyzed from the statistical software and presented in the tabular form.

## Result and discussion

The study had included 348 respondents from the nine study districts of Nepal. The distribution of sample was in three categories such as homestay operators, community people, tourism experts and policy makers. Among of them number of respondents in each district like kaski (49), kailali (46), kavre (61), Kathmandu (34), chitwan (21), Tanahun (32), Bhaktapur (21), syangja (43) and Nawalpur (41).

Homestay hasn't been long introduced in Nepal but has made a positive effectiveness on the economic and socio-cultural aspect of the country. Without homestay programs being introduced in the country most of the people in the villages of the Terai and hilly regions would have become unemployed or would have to seek other countries to make a living. Homestay has brought a positive change in the life of these people and has made them aware about a lot of things. In the current state, homestay is managed by the people of the community and the policy makers with the guidance of the tourists' experts. It is crucial for the homestay to be in a well-maintained condition so as to make it into an appropriate sustainable factor of tourism management. It must meet in order to become a sustainable and eco-friendly part of the tourism industry and help it grow in the right direction.

### Condition of Home stay management program in village

Homestay management is necessary so as to ensure that more tourists are attracted to it and the operator can maintain good quality experience with the improvement in the quality of the homestay management program. The data in the Table No. 1 shows the condition of the homestay management program in the village.

**Table 1: Condition of Home stay management program in village**

	District									Total
	Kaski	Kailali	Kavre	Kathmandu	Chitwan	Tanahun	Bhaktapur	Syangja	Nawalpur	
Well managed	16.7%	22.2%	28.6%	57.1%	88.9%	100.0%	100.0%	66.7%	100.0%	51.8%
Moderate	66.7%	77.8%	57.1%	42.9%						39.3%
Temporary	16.7%		14.3%		11.1%			33.3%		8.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Source:** Field Survey, 2018

The data in the table shows that there is well managed homestay program in the districts such as Kathmandu (57.1%), Chitwan (88.9%), Tanahun (100%), Bhaktapur (100%), Syangja (100%), Nawalpur (100%) etc. In aggregate, the percentage of well managed homestay according to the participants is 51.8%. This data indicates that majority of the participants reported that the homestay in their districts or village is well managed, by well managed it means with proper facilities of housing, food, sanitation, safety and security etc. On the other hand, the table shows that 39.3% of the participants consider the homestay facility were in moderate level and not completely managed in their village. In the overall analysis, the data in

the table shows that in the majority of the places, the homestay is well managed. This means that community people have positive perception towards on existing homestay program.

### Socio-cultural change from home stay operation

Homestay operation brings the various forms of change in the people of the community. The exchange of the culture is both ways, the foreigners that come for a cultural retreat learn about our culture and those that operate the homestay also learn about that culture. The data in the Table No. 2 represents the information collected from the participants about the socio-cultural change.

**Table 2: Socio-cultural change from home stay operation**

Socio-cultural change		District									Total
		Kaski	Kailali	Kavre	Kathmandu	Chitwan	Tanahun	Bhaktapur	Syangja	Nawalpur	
Changing condition of socio-economic life style	Unchanged		25.0%				50.0%				8.2%
	Normal	75.0%	75.0%	50.0%	100.0%	88.9%	25.0%	50.0%	50.0%		67.2%
	Changed	25.0%		50.0%		11.1%	25.0%		50.0%	100.0%	23.0%
	Highly Changed							50.0%			1.6%
Changing condition of academic or awareness of education	Unchanged		16.7%	6.2%	28.6%			50.0%			9.8%
Changing condition of academic or awareness of education	Unchanged		16.7%	6.2%	28.6%			50.0%			9.8%
	Normal	62.5%	58.3%	37.5%	14.3%	22.2%	75.0%				39.3%
	Changed	25.0%	16.7%	56.2%	42.9%	77.8%			100.0%		41.0%
	Highly Changed	12.5%	8.3%		14.3%		25.0%	50.0%		100.0%	9.8%
Changing condition of cultural and language	Unchanged		16.7%	12.5%	71.4%						15.0%
	Normal	12.5%	25.0%	12.5%	14.3%	11.1%	33.3%				15.0%
	Changed	87.5%	50.0%	68.8%	14.3%	22.2%		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	53.3%
	Highly Changed		8.3%	6.2%		66.7%	66.7%				16.7%
Changing condition of sanitation of surrounding areas of village	Highly Unchanged		8.3%								1.7%
	Unchanged		25.0%		71.4%		25.0%				15.0%
	Normal		8.3%	18.8%	28.6%	11.1%	25.0%				13.3%
	Changed	85.7%	41.7%	68.8%				50.0%	100.0%		41.7%
	Highly Changed	14.3%	16.7%	12.5%		88.9%	50.0%	50.0%		100.0%	28.3%

**Source:** Field Survey, 2018

In various districts in Kaski, Kailali, Kavre etc. the aggregate percentage of normal changing the socio-economic life style is 67.2%. The changed percentage of the socio-economic lifestyle is 23%. The highly unchanged percentage is 1.6%. This indicates that despite the increase in the homestay facility, the changing of condition of socio-economic lifestyle is normal for the

majority of the participants. In the context of changing condition of academic or awareness of education, the unchanged percentage is 9.8%, the normal changing condition is lower than compared to the changed condition i.e. (39.3% < 41%). This indicates that there is a higher chance of a lot of change in the academic or awareness of education because of the homestay operation in the community. Homestay increases the chance of the influence on the society and brings awareness in the educational sector and aids in the change of the concept of people towards education. More people are interested in getting proper education because of the positive influence on them by the foreigners.

In the context of changing condition of culture and language, the unchanged and normal percentage are both at 15%, the changed percentage on the other hand is 53.3% which is greater than the highly changed percentage of 16.7%. This indicates that there is change in the culture and language of a community after the introduction of homestay operation which brings in the culture of other foreigners that have entirely different culture than compared to the community and the homestay operators.

In the context of changing of sanitation around the village, the changed and highly percentage form the percentage of 70% which is greater than the one half of the participants? This indicates that the increase in homestays brings a positive change in the cleanliness and sanitation of the community and areas around it.

## **Conclusion**

The study had focused on, to identify the community perception on existing homestay program in terai and hilly districts of Nepal. The data in the table shows that there is well managed homestay program in the districts such as Kathmandu (57.1%), Chitwan (88.9%), Tanahun (100%), Bhaktapur (100%), Syangja (100%) etc. Followed by remaining districts such as Kaski (75%), kailali (75%), and Kavre (55.6%) are in moderate condition. In aggregate, the percentage of well managed homestay according to the participants is 51.8%. This data indicates that majority of the participants reported that the homestay in their districts or village is well managed, by well managed it means with proper facilities of housing, food, sanitation etc. On the other hand, the table shows that 39.3% of the participants consider the homestay facility were in moderate level and not completely managed in their village.

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