

An Exploratory Study on Status of Homestays from Lamjung

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Abstract

This is a preliminary assessment on the situation of homestays in Lamjung, Nepal. This study is a comparison of international, national, and local home stays in Nepal's Lamjung district. The core topic of the study was an investigation of the guest's desired and existing facilities, biodiversity (agriculture, forest, and wild life), conservation role, income, and interest in stays. In-depth interviews were used in a qualitative study. The study was carried out in three home stay locations: SAARC village home stay Ghalegaun, national home stay Kaulepani Gaunsahar, and local home stay Rainaskot in Nepal's Lamjung district. The guest desired a variety of facilities such as an attached bathroom with hot and cold water, traditional food and cultural programs and attire. There are a neat and clean atmosphere with beautiful Himalaya views. It is suggested to visit these places at least once.

Key words: biodiversity, culture, homestay, Ghalegaun, Kaulepani, Rainaskot

Introduction

Homestays are a type of community-based eco-tourism in which local populations participate. A homestay has no common definition (Janjua, Krishnapillai, & Rahman, 2021). Many tourism academics, however, consider homestay as a sort of guest lodging. Visitors stay in private homes (Gyamtscho, 2022), interact with host families to learn about local culture and generate

income for the host, and indirectly improve rural communities' living conditions through associated income-generating tourist activities (Janjua, Krishnapillai, & Rahman, 2021). Homestays denote the commercialization of one's house, with the intention of utilizing residential space for economic gain (Gyamtscho, 2022).

Homestay terminology is used differently in different circumstances. Farm stay, cultural and heritage homestay in Canada, agriculture and educational homestay in the United States of America, educational homestay in Japan and South Korea, urban homestay in Singapore, leisure stays in South Africa, and rural homestay in Bhutan are all terms used in Australia (Bhuiyan, Chamhuri, & Mohamad Ismail, 2013). Homestays assist the local economy and allow guests to interact with host families to learn about local culture, traditions, customs, and livelihoods, while host families benefit economically as an additional source of income for their homes (Gyamtscho, 2022). Similarly, homestays in Nepal have been designed to complement the rural population's income. Homestays serve a significant role in providing lodging for tourists, particularly in tourist regions where lodging options are limited.

Dambar Ale Magar (2021) studied on economic contribution of Magar Homestay of Naruwal, Lamjung. The findings showed that the rate of revenue and expenditure had gradually increased since the start of homestay tourism in the community. According to the findings of that survey, many of the respondents had controlled their daily expenditures through the income of homestay entities. All homestay operators had reported an improvement in their financial situation.

Tiwari et al. (2020) studied on motivating factors to run the homestay program in Kaulepani village of Lamjung. The findings revealed that the chance to improve the household economy and the usage of leisure time were the most important motivating elements for running the homestay program in the area. The homestay had helped to increase income, improve greenery in the village, and raise public awareness about cleanliness and biodiversity conservation. There is a substantial contrast between the perspectives of homestay households and non-homestay households. Visitors were also quite delighted with the services and hospitality provided by the people. The scenic beauty and cleanliness of the environment are important elements in attracting tourists to this area.

Bharat Budhathoki (2014) studied on impact of homestay tourism on livelihood of Ghale Gaun, Lamjung. According to the findings, tourism income generated 23% of net total income, which is around three times higher than livestock and agriculture income. Pension income accounts for 30% of total income, while remittances account for 20.8%. Based on affluence, whole home hold was divided into five groups, each with the same population of 21, with the exception of one group having 22 households. Among the five income groups, tourist income benefits the poorest and richest the most. Tourism income accounts for 31.6% of total income in the poorest

income group and 46% of total income in the richest income group. The tourism industry has played a key role in achieving economic equality among rural households.

Krishna Chandra Jha and Nimananda Rijal (2022) conducted research on contribution of promoting homestays at Ghale Gaun, Lamjung. The findings revealed that the villagers have some extra income and that some of them rely entirely on tourism to generate money. The village's expertise in conducting home stay tourism, infrastructure development, and locating tourist attraction locations would be advantageous to all in trickling down the country's income in the rural area as well.

The aforementioned literatures could not capture the comparative studies of homestays from Lamjung. Thus, this study was a comparative study of three homestays (Ghale Gaun, Kaulepani and Rainaskot) from Lamjung district, Nepal. These homestays represent SAARC level, national and local level respectively.

Objective

The main objective of this study is to compare the status of Ghale Gaun, Kaulepani and Rainaskot homestays of Lamjung, Nepal.

Methodology

The research was an explorative based on qualitative method. This study was conducted in Lamjung district of Nepal. The participants were home stay owners: male and female. The data were collected through in-depth face to face interview with semi-structure questionnaire. Total 30 home stay owners were participated in the interview. Received data were coded, decoded and analysed.

Result and discussion

General information

All these three homestays were community level homestays. The homestays are under the different location of Rural Municipality and Municipality of Lamjung district. The respondents were interviewed 10 from each homestay. Out of 30 respondents, 14 were females and 16 males. They were also asked about their education status. They were illiterate to bachelor degree holders. Age of respondents varied from 26 to 82 years.

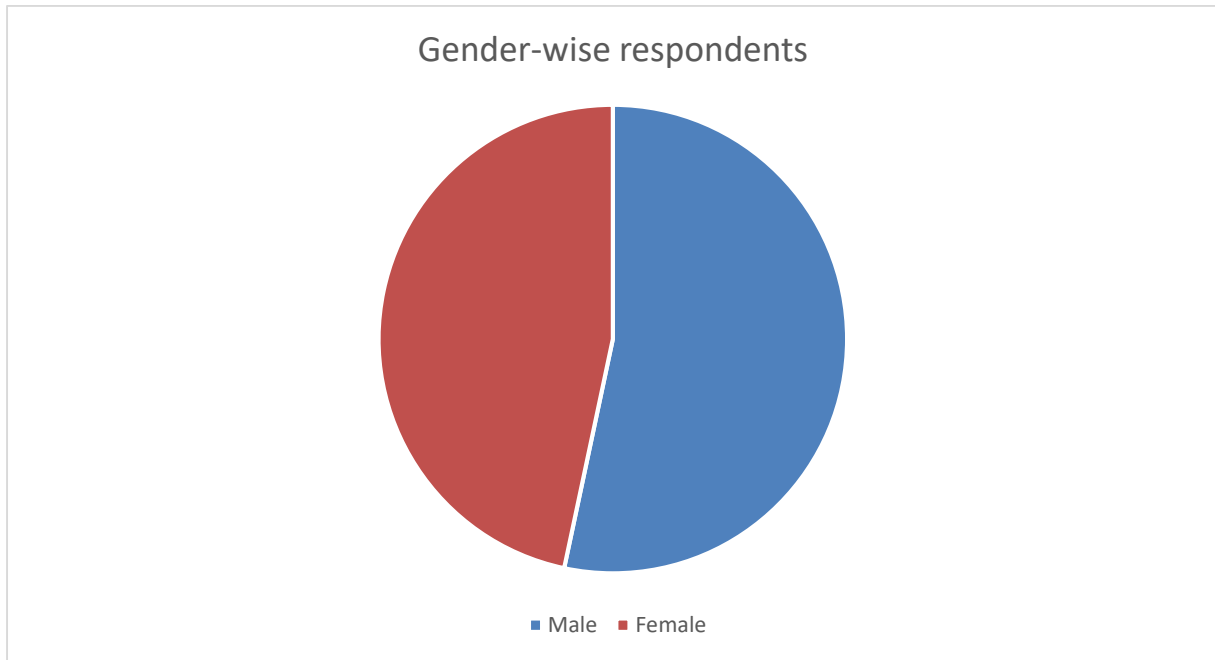


Figure 1: Gender-wise Respondents

Types of tourist visited

The respondents were asked about the visiting of international and national tourists in their homestays. The results showed that Ghale Gaun homestay has higher percentage of international tourists visit than other two homestays. In average, 88% national and 12% international tourists visit Ghale Gaun homestay. On the other hand, 98% national and 2% international tourists visit Kaulepani homestay, and 99% national and 1% international tourists visit Rainaskot homestay.

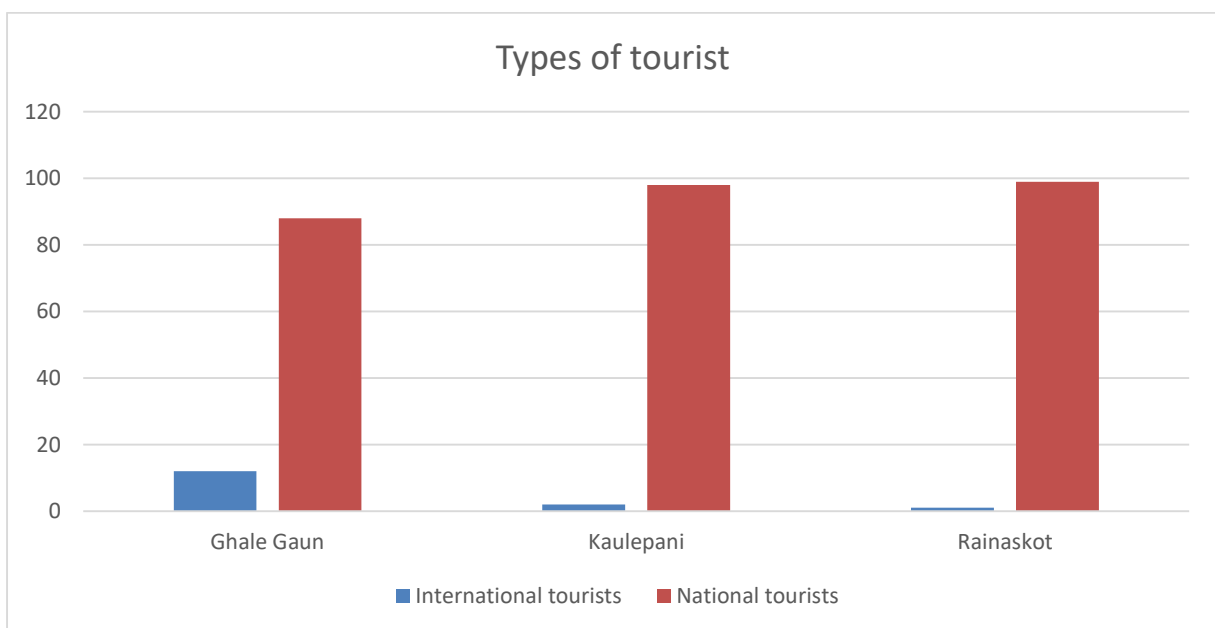


Figure 2: Types of tourist

Average monthly income

The respondents were also asked their monthly income. Monthly income of Ghale Gaun was NRs 20000 - 70000, Kaulepani NRs 5000- 65000, and Rainaskot NRs. 8000-60000. The average monthly income of Ghale Gaun is NRs 45000, Kaulepani is NRs 35000 and Rainaskot NRs 34000. Among these three homestays, Ghale Gaun has higher average monthly income than other two homestays.



Figure 3: Monthly income

Types of service provided

Bed with attached bathroom with hot and cool shower is provided at Ghale Gaun. Kaulepani Gaunsahar and Rainaskot have cool shower, if demanded hot water for bathing, one bucket hot water is available. Boiled (hot and cool) drinking water is provided by all three homestays. Mineral water is also available according to guest demand. Coffee and Tea (organic local tea) are available, not found Pizza & Burger. Traditional organic food Dhindo (Cornmeal porridge (exotic dish of Nepal) & rice with local chicken meat and soup are available for dinner and lunch according to guest demand. Vegetarian foods are also available. Hard drinks (Millet liquor and Rice cider) are available, Soft drinks: Beer and other drinks are also available according to guest demand. Every household has WIFI in Ghalegaun. For the breakfast millet Sel Roti (traditional Nepalese ring-shape sweet millet bread), egg and vegetables are provided.

Cultural programs for tourist

All three homestays perform Gurung cultural programs to welcome and entertain the visitors. Furthermore, Kaulepani homestay performs extra than Gurung cultural programs. Traditional Gurung (male and female) dresses are available for photo session & village walking time. The dresses are provided by homestay owners to the guests. However, it is not found for purchase. When fulfilled own purpose, dress should be returned to the concerned house owner.

Travelling vehicles for tourist

Almost guests (both Nepali and foreigner) come by their own private vehicles. Some guests use public vehicle to come to these homestays. All these locations have public bus and jeep access.

Support of biodiversity conservation

Cultural food:

The traditional foods: Dhindo, Nettle, Local Chicken, Tea, Maize & soybean, Gundruk pickle (fermented leafy vegetable), Millet liquor and Rice cider are conserved.

Cultural dresses and song:

Yes they have saved their traditional dresses and songs.

Forest and wildlife conservation:

Home stay community saved flora and fauna at their local level forest. The Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP) is working directly in Ghalegaun. ACAP supports Buffer Zone Development Committee (BZDP), all the households are member of BZDP. Kaulepani Gaunsahar and Rainaskot households are under the forest user groups (FUG). Both BZDP and FUGs are registered groups. They involve forest and wild life conservation like birds, wild animals, herbals, etc.

Status of homestays during the Covid period:

Shield or stopped human entry for one year. Income was also zero at Covid time in Ghale Gaun and Kaulepani Gaunsahar. Luckily, nobody suffered from the Covid in Ghale Gaun and Kaulepani. However, Rainaskot homestay owners were suffered from Covid. One person has been dead from Covid. Nowadays, the business is slowly returning in previous condition.

Any suggestion or statement:

Ghalegaun:

Two major issues they have raised are improved transportation system and quality education.

Kaulepani Gaunsahar:

Their hot cake issues are subsidies in loan for infrastructure of homestays, improved transportation system and maintenance of Lamjung Durbar.

Rainaskot:

Their major issues are improved transportation system, subsidies in loan for infrastructure of homestays, conservation of historical place and a beautiful park.

Conclusion

The Gurung culture community's house remains concentrated on the hill's crest. We can see the beautiful Himalayas from all of the home stays, as well as the cool, peaceful, nice, and clean village surroundings. There is really wonderful traditional organic food available, traditional dance and song can be seen in the evening, and Gurung attire may be worn and walked around the hamlet. The entire guest had a warm welcome and farewell in the Gurung tradition. Villages are shielded during the Covid period. Income and employment were both nil. It was gradually restoring its previous state. Some tourists choose a completely traditional atmosphere, with home stays, toilets, beds and furniture, food, and clothing. Some people prefer completely moderation in the homestays, such as an attached toilet with hot and cold water 24 hours a day, a modern restaurant dinner, lunch and breakfast, dances and song modernity, and WIFI. All guests want a mixed (modern and traditional fusion) type of environment in home stays, such as an attached bath room with hot and cold water, organic food traditional food (Dhindo, rice, local chicken, nettle), culturally traditional song and dances, a pretty, neat and clean village, natural beauty of Himalaya and greenery forest background from home stays village.

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