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Wildlife Victims in the Gaurishankar Conservation Area.

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Abstract

Human-wildlife conflict is a major conservation challenge in Nepal, particularly in the Gaurishankar Conservation Area. This study examines the status of Human-Wildlife Conflict in Gaurishankar Conservation Area focusing on fieldwork in Lamabagar, ward no-1, Dolkha district, Nepal. It aims to identify the stress experienced by wildlife victims, analyzing their problems from social work and stress coping perspectives. The research utilizes qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection and analysis, addressing a notable gap in literature regarding social work perspectives on human-wildlife conflict. The study aims to estimate the stress levels resulting from human-wildlife conflict. This stress, when unmanaged, poses mental health challenges. Animals like monkeys, porcupines, gorals, deer, and Himalayan black bears impact community livelihoods by damaging crops and posing a threat to humans. In the research primary and secondary data has been used. Analyzing the data is supposed to lead to a conclusion.

Keywords: conflict, wildlife victim, stress, human, policy.

Introduction

Throughout history, human interactions with wildlife have led to both positive and negative outcomes. Human-wildlife conflict (HWC) is a particularly detrimental interaction, harming both people and wildlife, as well as their habitats. HWC often arises from human reliance on forest resources and habitat conversion due to strict protection measures. In Nepal, HWC is escalating, especially within conservation areas, posing significant challenges for conservationists and local communities. Wildlife attacks in protected areas have resulted in human casualties and injuries, imposing an economic burden on the government for compensation. However, efforts to address this issue face obstacles due to bureaucratic delays and inadequate policies. The increase in HWC is attributed to infrastructural development encroaching on wildlife habitats, leading to conflicts during daily activities such as farming and wood gathering. Indigenous communities, heavily reliant on forests for sustenance, bear the brunt of these conflicts. While the Gaurishankar Conservation Area (GCA) experiences lower population density and fewer incidents compared to lowland areas, the severity of conflicts remains a concern. To address these challenges, the government has entrusted the management of GCA to the National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC) and established guidelines for wildlife damage relief. However, mental health support for HWC victims remains overlooked in these efforts.

Methodology

The purpose of this article is to illustrate how much suffering wildlife has suffered due to human activity. In the research there has followed both qualitative and quantitative methods to collect both primary and secondary information. Quantitative data have been followed to find out the stress level of respondents and qualitative data to find out the perception, case study and to explore the human and wildlife conflict. A conclusion is intended to be drawn from the analysis of the collected data.

Statement of Problem

This study is related to humans and wildlife. The general perspective of human and wildlife conflict impact is seen only in economic loss but not in mental health especially with respect to stress, the affected people experience. Similarly, the issue of protecting wildlife from unethical and illegal encroachment is still there. This study is significant in that it may fill the knowledge gap that exists regarding level of stress. In this study following research question are stated:

- What is the level of stress from the human and wildlife conflict?
- What is the perception of victim toward the conservation?

Objectives

Wildlife victims are facing physical as well as mental problems due to human and wildlife conflict. Especially people living nearby conservation area surviving their life in stress. It is important to know the level of stress in the wildlife victims. Main objectives of the study are:

- To study the perception and stress of people living in the nearby protected area due to human wildlife conflicts.
- To explore the ways to mitigate the human–wildlife conflict.

Analysis and Finding

The differing levels of support for conservation and wildlife management strategies relate to human and wildlife conflict. Wildlife threatens the livelihood of community people in many ways. Households were asked about the problems they faced from the establishment of the conservation area. Among the total respondents most of them claimed that wildlife is creating problems such as crop damage, livestock loss and injuries which were severe problems they were facing. Respondents share that they are living their life full of fear. Fear of injuries, fear of livestock attack and fairy of agricultural loss were the experiences shared by the responded. Responded were unable to cope with the situation they are facing by the wildlife fear. Participants were asked to rate their level of stress. Every household has experienced varying degrees of conflict.

Participants mentioned that Crops damage victims due to wildlife are increasing. Most of the houses are found near the forest. In here, most of the people are depended on their livelihood from the agricultural livelihood. Maize, potato, barely, wheat is damaged by the bear, deer, and monkey. 90 percent responded that monkeys do the crops damaged.

The attitude of the people towards wild animals was negative because they are in loss of livestock and crop damage. In the Gaurishankar Conservation area, Lambagar-1, crops loss is the most common form of the damage found from the human and wildlife conflict. Due to wildlife destruction people are not attracted toward farming. One of the respondents Futuki Sherpa (name changed), 65 age from Lamabagar feels very sad because cultivated potato and maize was eaten by monkey and deer.

Every interviewed household found that they were worried because of the wildlife movement in their agriculture land. One of the respondents shared, "I become so angry when wildlife enters my farmland, but I have nowhere to show my frustration. I become so angry but what to do? We should not kill wildlife that was taught to us". People's attitude towards wildlife is more negative. The reason behind monkeys as major pest animals is supported by various past studies, such as monkey has been seen a prominent crop raider throughout Asia, (Regmi et.al 2013). Previous studies have shown that crop damage by wildlife was one of the main reasons for a negative attitude among local communities toward conservation even though they received benefits from conservation area (Heinen 1993, Studs rod & Wegge 1995, Bajracharya et al. 2006, Bhattarai & Basnet 2004). People are aware about the conservation they are compelled to go against the law. However, they are not satisfied with conservation policy. People are unable to adapt to the increase of wildlife. Wildlife is increasing hampering them especially in the crops. They feel irritated to work in their agriculture land. Every household survey family share that they feel torture of wildlife.

The world is adopting protected area management to conserve biological resources (Allendorf et al 2007, Bajracharya et al 2006) but those protected areas establishment and management has created the conflicting situation between wildlife and people living inside the protected areas and in its buffer zone area (Thapa 2014). When the needs and behaviors of human and wildlife negatively impact each other's interests, conflict occurred (Madden 2004). Human Wildlife Conflict (HWC) arises mainly because of the loss, degradation, and fragmentation of habitats through human activities such as logging, animal husbandry, agricultural expansion, and developmental projects (Fernando et al. 2005). The study of Fernando (2005) matches to the context of Nepal as well. Many developmental activities like roads, railway lines, and transmission lines have fragmented the intact forest areas of Nepal, and such fragmentation increases the rate of human wildlife encounters as Silwal et al., (2013) indicated in his study.

Human-Wildlife Conflict is the confrontation between humans and wild animals, usually resulting in crop and livestock depredation, property damages, human injuries, and retaliatory killing or capturing of wildlife (Elliot et al. 2008). Human-Wildlife Conflict or negative interaction between people and wildlife has recently become one of the fundamental aspects of wildlife management as it represents the most widespread and complex challenge currently being faced by the conservationist around the world. Human-

wildlife conflict is a hot topic in conservation sector (Macdonald & Service 2007) and it arises when the requirements of people and wildlife overlap, creating costs to both (Inskip & Zimmermann, 2009). In the context of Nepal also many incidents happened that caused human injuries, human casualties, property as well as livestock damages and crop damages because of wild animals and the retaliation killings of wild animals as the response of their losses took place every year.

To date, human-wildlife conflicts have proven challenging to manage, in part, we contend, because in most cases they are researched by conservation biologists working to understand and mitigate ecological impact rather than social dimensions (Knight et al.,2006). Human-wildlife conflict problem is equally seen in the social sector but what we find is that the social sector part is completely ignored by the conservationists. In Nepal, many conservationists are from the biologists but not the social scientist. Human and wildlife conflict are facing several challenges to balance human and wildlife interaction and are alone insufficient to avert the impending conservation crisis (Hayward 2011). In the context of Nepal, also human and wildlife conflict are facing several challenges to balance human and wildlife interaction. Conservation crises are rising but lack of solution to minimize it. In Gaurishankar Conservation Area what is found that confrontation between humans and wild animals, usually resulting in crop, livestock depredation, property damages, and human injury.

In Nepal, HWC is a major problem in most of the protected areas and often resulted from the inability of local communities to access the local natural resources they were using from time immemorial before being legally barred from their use after the legalization of protected areas (Lamsal 2012; Timalsina and Ranjitkar 2014). However, the frequency and intensity of park–people conflict mostly arises from crop and livestock depredation, human injuries caused by wildlife, illegal logging, illegal grazing and fodder collection, poaching, and poor relations between local people and protection units (Shrestha et al. 2007; Timalsina and Ranjitkar 2014). “The primary reason for the failure of current HWC mitigation efforts has been the absence of science-based approach resolving the problem.” Yes, a science-based approach should apply to solve the HWC. (Desai A. Ajay and Heidi S. Riddle, 2015), however, social perspective shouldn't be ignored.

Science based approach and social approach are very important perspectives to be considered to solve the human-wildlife conflict. Human-wildlife conflicts undermine human welfare, health and safety, and have economic and social costs. Nuisance encounters with small animals, exposure to zoonotic diseases, physical injury or even death caused by large predators’ attacks have high financial costs for individuals and society in the form of medical treatments to cure and prevent infections transmitted from animals through human contact (Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection, British Colombia, 2003). Humans can be economically affected through destruction and damage to property and infrastructure (e.g. agricultural crops, orchards, grain stores, water installation, fencing, and pipes), livestock depredation, transmission of domestic animal diseases, such as foot and mouth. Negative social impacts include missed school and work, additional labor costs, loss of

sleep, fear, restriction of travel or loss of pets (Hoare, 1992; Human-Elephant Conflict Working Group, HECWG). Damage caused by wildlife can affect people's perceptions, especially when it exceeds a certain level of tolerance (Hill, 1998). Attitudes of local people are important in wildlife conservation and may vary according to gender, age, education, and past experiences (Hill, 1998; Roskaft et al., 2007).

Reason for Human and Wildlife Conflict

Human-wildlife conflict has traditionally been viewed to occur 'when the needs and behavior of wildlife impact negatively on the goals of humans or when the goals of humans negatively impact the needs of wildlife.' (Madden, 2004, p-248). As both the human and wildlife population increase, and people occupy new land, the level of conflict is also increasing. The unresolved human-wildlife conflict is creating negative attitudes towards both the government and proposed new wildlife related developments. Conover (2002) defined these interactions as 'situations occurring when an action by either humans or wildlife has an adverse effect on the other'. Human and wildlife activities is hampering is each other. Wildlife habitat is using my people in reason of the human settlement, plotting and tourist destination and many more. Naturally the local people have high dependency on the community forest as prime habitat for wildlife in the GCA for their daily need, as study reported that community forest is prone to conflict (Sharma 1991, Karanth et al.2012). More recently, with the increasing demand for space by a rising human population, wildlife habitats have been turned into human-dominated landscapes, leaving only islands of protected areas as refuges for wild species (DeFries et al. 2005). When governmental authorities were facing economic and governance constraints, they had great difficulties to address these problems adequately (Karanth and Nepal 2012). Previously, human wildlife conflict was considered a "rural or agricultural sustainability of human livelihoods (Gillingham and Lee 2003; Raoet al 2002; Sahoo and Mohnot 2004). Concomitantly, resultant economic loss due to crop and livestock damage (Brara 2013; Mackenzie and Ahabyona 2012; Schön 2013) and management of HWC drains the affected countries of financial and human re-sources (Lamarque et al 2009). Nepal government is facing financial burden for managing HWC. Nepal government is giving compensation for the wildlife victim which is one of the major financial burdens in Nepal.

The existing state of HWC in the developing world is most likely to increase in the future due to several factors such as "expanding human settlement, growth of outdoor recreation, and the increase of species adapted to living in human dominated landscapes" (Manfredo 2015). As mentioned by the Manfredo (2015), HWC is likely to increase in developing country like Nepal. Human settlement is expanding day by day in Nepal due to increase in human settlement conflict can be one most major problem not far in future. Protected areas remain an important approach for conservation, they have proven difficult to implement in many settings, especially in the developing world due to ongoing park-people conflict (Nepal and Weber, 1995b). The attitudinal factors of local people on human and wildlife conflict depend upon the level of damage. From the level of wildlife damage conflict can be categorize. Those whose high damage high level of conflict. People whose crops are

damaged and face injury, there will be different levels of conflict. People response to conflict according to their suffering. The result of conservation attitude of local people depends upon the level of conflict. There are different types of conflict in the case of human injury and human death due to wildlife their view upon conservation will be different.

Human wildlife conflict (HWC) tends to be more common in and around protected areas, where wildlife abundance is greater and where animals often stray into adjacent cultivated fields. (DiStefano 2005). Hidden impacts of human-wildlife conflict may be defined as costs characterized as uncompensated, temporally delayed, psychological or social in nature (Orgam2008). Human-wildlife conflict has a range of poorly-documented indirect or 'hidden' impact on the poor in the low-income nations. These impacts include opportunity and transaction costs that occur because of conflict (Orga, 2008), as well as health impacts that impair people's physical and mental wellbeing (Chowdhury et al. 2008, Dixon et al., 2009). One of the most serious causes of human–wildlife conflict is the fear of being killed by a large carnivore or mega-herbivore. The fear of carnivores is deeply rooted in the human psyche and has been interpreted as an instinctive anti-predator response (Kruuk 2002; Quammen 2003). One of the most serious causes of human-wildlife conflict is the fear of being killed by wildlife (Thirgood et al., 2005). Damage by wildlife can change people's perception towards wildlife especially when damage exceeds a level of tolerance (Hill, 1998). People living near the protected and conservation areas living their life in the most of time in forest. Forest is source of their life for survival. In same time not going only in the forest but in living in fear anytime they can be victim of wildlife. Safety of self and family is the major concern that determines the attitude of people towards wildlife and the higher level of fear generally results in more negative attitudes (Roskaft et al., 2007). Fear always produces an associated stress (emergency) response. The degree of stress response is directly proportional to the degree of fear.

The greater the fear, the more dramatic the stress response. A stress response will fire every time we perceive we are in danger (experience fear). Attitudes of local people are vital in wildlife conservation and the attitude may vary according to gender, age, education, and past experiences with the species of wildlife (Hill, 1998, Roskaft et al., 2007). Older people generally have more negative attitudes, as do people who have experienced damage from wildlife while people with higher levels of education tend to be more positive towards wildlife (Roskaft et al., 2007). Education tends to be more positive toward life compared to the elder generation who is less educated but educated younger generation has positive transformation. With rising awareness about the importance of the interaction between wildlife and people, more and more conservation organizations are focusing on this topic (Hoare 2012; Madden 2004; Osborn and Parker 2003; Peterson et al. 2010). Human-wildlife conflict (HWC) generally refers to situations where "wildlife impacts humans negatively (physically, economically, or psychologically), and where humans likewise negatively impact wildlife" (Draheim et al. 2015). When wildlife damage crops, human properties, or lives, this can negatively influence the attitude towards wildlife and conservation issues (Kansky and Knight 2014; Sukumar1991).

Damage caused by wildlife can affect people's perception, especially when it exceeds a certain level of tolerance (Hill,1998) People living in rural areas were found to be more negative towards wildlife conservation that those living in urban areas, as they bear disproportionately the costs of damage caused by wildlife (Bandara & Tisdell,2003). In the context of human safety, people's attitudes towards wildlife are more negative. Damage caused by wildlife can affect people's perceptions, especially when it exceeds a certain level of tolerance (Hill, 1998). We suspect that it will be more productive to tackle the underlying human dimensions by working with affected communities (Gregory, 2000; knight et al., 2006). Every year from 2003 to 2013 a mean of 30 people was attacked around Chitwan National Park, sustaining minor to fatal injuries (Decker et.al 2000). A single interaction between wildlife and people may generate both positive and negative impacts. Different stakeholders can have very different evaluations of the same interaction. Even the same individual may perceive an interaction as creating both positive and negative impacts. Whether that stakeholder evaluates the overall interaction positively or negatively depends on how he or she personally weighs the importance of each positive and negative impact. (Decker et al. 2002). Negative wildlife interactions in a locale may catalyze community-level concern and eventually become controversial (Minnis and Peyton, 1995). Wildlife poses various risks to people-the risk of disease transmission, the risk of physical injury, the risk of property damage. Tolerance of wildlife depends in part on how people perceive these risks (Knuth et al. 1992). Two aspects of risk perceptions are of concern: perceptions of the probability of an undesirable outcome and the worry or dread associated with that outcome (Slovic, 1987). Wildlife damage on negative psychological impacts occurs when wildlife disturbs stakeholders' normal activities or environment. Deer damage to ornamental plants, goose feces in public areas, and excessive noise from urban crow roosts are examples. Many nuisance problems have associated costs, but the economic effect on stakeholders is less significant than the psychological impacts yet where crop predation has been reported, there is evidence that it has a significant impact on agricultural output, community coping strategies, rural livelihoods, and food security (Ezealor and Giles, 1997; Saj etal., 2001)In 1978, a study by Fischhoff et al. revealed that the most important drivers of risk perception and tolerance were the level of intrinsic dread – that is whether the threat could be calmly considered or whether it instilled an intrinsic sense of dread – and the novelty of the risk.

These results are corroborated in studies of perceived danger posed by wildlife: inherent, deep-seated dread and fear is a key driver of hostility towards wildlife (Prokop, Fancovicova & Kubiatko, 2009), while people who have experience of living alongside wild animals tend to be less fearful of them (Roskaft et al., 2003).However, the veracity of this assumption is rarely tested, and there is a need for rigorous studies examining the conservation effects of mitigation, both at a household and community level, and in terms of direct and indirect consequences of conflict. The hidden dimensions of human–wildlife conflict: Health impacts, opportunity, and transaction costs, 2013, "Hidden impacts of human–wildlife conflict include diminished psychosocial wellbeing, disruption of livelihoods and food insecurity". The emerging literature suggests that there may be a change of hidden mental health consequence of human-wildlife conflict. A study conducted in the Indian Sundarban

found that over 50% of widows of tiger and crocodile attack victims suffered from poor physical and mental health (Chowdhury et al., 2008; Chowdhury and Jadhav, 2012). Human-wildlife conflict is impacting on the physical and mental health of victims, but research and study is needed more to mitigate the human-wildlife conflict. It was found from the study that people were suffering mentally due to human and wildlife conflict, but they were unaware about stress coping mechanism.

Psychosocial antecedents of conflict- related fatality are still poorly known. Only a couple of studies have so far grappled with this aspect of human–wildlife conflict (Chowdhury et al., 2008; Jadhav, 2011). It is urgent need of action that should needed to be done from the perspective of human-wildlife conflict mitigation. There should be dialogue, interaction, and roundtable discussion from the view from social work, conservation, psychology, and social science sectors. Studies examining transaction and opportunity costs should also be implemented across a range of human–wildlife conflict contexts. Whilst this paper has focused on low-income countries, these issues may also apply to the 'developed' world where the hidden costs of living with wildlife are potentially great (Redpath and Thurgood, 2009). Human and wildlife conflict is not a problem of a single country, it is a worldwide issue. Research into human and wildlife conflict should be done in every country and sharing is also equally needed. Sharing the finding and learning from each/ other country help to do mitigate the problem.

Negative Impact

When wildlife damages crops, human properties, or lives, this can easily influence the attitude towards wildlife and conservation issues in a negative way (Kansky and Knight 2014; Sukumar 1991). With rising awareness about the importance of the interaction between wildlife and people, more and more conservation organizations put their focus on this topic (Hoare 2012; Madden2004; Osborn and Parker 2003; Peterson et al. 2010). Human-wildlife conflict (HWC) generally refers to situations where "wildlife impacts humans negatively (physically, economically, or psychologically), and where humans likewise negatively impact wildlife" (Draheim et al. 2015).

The third type of interaction, involving harm to people and/or wild animals, is sometimes a result of wild animals predating livestock, as in retaliation for predation, but also occurs when people are otherwise occupied, such as collecting forest resources (Khan, 2009) or working on croplands (Silwal et al.,2016).

Victim Compensation Process

The compensation process for wildlife victims is very slow. The above example also proved that victim is lack getting compensation in time. Nepal government is unable to provide the compensation in time for the victim which also make wildlife victim high perceived scale. Wildlife victims are also getting compensation after six years. GCAP area has provided compensation after the establishment of Gaurishankar conservation area. GCAP was established in January 11, 2010.

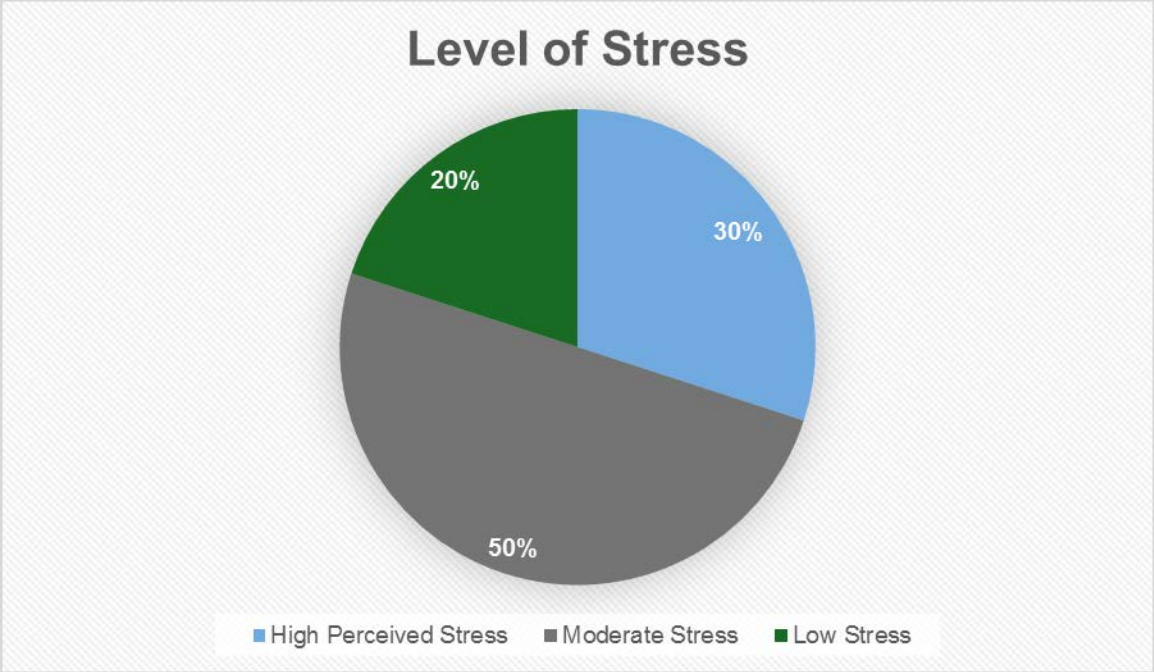

Figure 1 illustrates the level of stress of respondents. 30% of respondents had high perceived stress, 30% had moderate stress level and 20% had low stress level.

High perceived stress found to be those who are old citizen, school going students, farmer who depended fully upon agriculture, uneducated people, female and economically backward people are in high perceived scale. Farmer, female, old citizen, school going students and uneducated people's answer were in between 27-40 in perceived stress level. It is seen that people are in the high perceived stress because their perceptions were negative toward the conservation.

From the response it is found that 50 percent are in moderate stress. Students, people with agriculture as side business and involved in other works are in moderate stress level. The answer of 50 responded were in range of 14-26 in perceived stress level. The person who is doing side by side other profession found to be in moderate stress. Male ratio is high in the moderate stress comparing to female because male is active in the social work. The level of education and understanding is far better compared to perceived high-level scale which make them able to think more positively toward the conservation.

Twenty percent respondents answer is in the 0-13 scale of perceived measure scale. The persons with formal education, high economic status and community leaders are found to be in the low stress. The people who are economically sound are in low stress. It is found that educated people and community leaders have positive perception and better understanding about wildlife and its importance.

From the above findings also, we can say that 30 person people are in high stress due to human and wildlife conflict. To mitigate the human and wildlife conflict stress coping awareness program is seen needed. People are living their life which results in stress. It is also found that people are unaware of their condition. Stress coping mechanism skill is very important in people life. It is not good that people are producing stress due to the conflict. Human and wildlife is one of the most burning issues. It is highly discussed for the solution however many people are unable to think form the stress perspective. Conversationalists were found positive to address the issues of local people. To do the conservation is a need of all. Why conservation? To make the country rich in biodiversity and to improve the eco-system. Conservation of wildlife should be done by addressing the problems of people living in nearby conservation areas.

Due to slow compensation victims are becoming hopeless which is indirectly driving toward stress. Measured Stress level by age. The reaction of human and wildlife conflict is found in stress. The stress level in GCA according to age wise mentioned as below. Measured Stress level by age.

Age Group	Stress Level (%)
15-34	14
35-44	18
45-54	20
55-64	26
65 and above	22

Source: Field Study 2018

Table 1. shows the distribution of stress level with respect to age group. The stress level was found to be higher with the increasing age group until 64 age group. The highest stress level was found in the 55–64 age group while the 15 – 34 age group had the lowest stress level. Measured Stress level by caste.

Caste	Stress Level (%)
Sherpa	50
Tamang	40
Others	10

Source: Field Study 2018

Table 2. shows the stress distribution with respect to the caste in Lamabagar area. Sherpas were having high stress level followed by Tamang and other castes.
Measured Stress level by Gender:

Gender	Stress Level (%)
Female	67
Male	33

Source: Field Study 2018

Table 3. shows the distribution of stress in male and female. Female are found to be more stress comparing to the male. Females are 34 % more in stress than male. From the households survey it is found that females are more depended on agriculture and forest. However, male are also in the stress due to human and wildlife conflict in the community. 33% of male are in the stress due to HWC.

Policy

Nepal's government and stakeholders must allocate budget not just for compensation in human-wildlife conflicts, but also for research from various perspectives. Community-based and research-backed support is crucial. Different methods are used to address wildlife-human conflicts, with social workers playing a vital role. Stress coping mechanisms are often overlooked, but a combined approach of science and social science studies is key for effective solutions. Mental health issues, particularly stress, are escalating in Nepal, yet receive insufficient attention from both government and non-government sectors. Social work education can aid in alleviating wildlife conflict issues, aligning conservation efforts with community rights. There's a disparity between what communities need and what stakeholders provide, highlighting a knowledge gap between conservationists and locals. Stakeholders should invest in stress management awareness programs, utilizing social workers to aid victims and bridge the knowledge gap through advocacy and psycho-social support.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the global rise in human-wildlife conflicts poses a significant threat to both physical and mental well-being. While international literature recognizes the psychological impact, research in Nepal, rich in biodiversity, lacks focus on the social and psychological dimensions of the issue. Wildlife, a major tourist attraction, contributes significantly to Nepal's GDP, making it imperative to address the problems faced by local communities involved in conservation efforts. The literature reveals a division between visible and hidden conflicts, with research primarily concentrating on the former. More attention is needed on the hidden impacts to minimize conflicts between humans and wildlife. The Gaurishankar Conservation Area (GCA) exemplifies the escalating conflict, resulting in physical and mental suffering among victims. Despite wildlife victim relief policies, people faced difficulties in claiming relief, and conflict resolution in communities remains suboptimal. Win-win solutions should be applied in community conflicts, emphasizing the mental health of victims, an aspect often overlooked in academic research. Local farmers lack awareness of relief guidelines, and human-wildlife conflict continues to rise alarmingly, impacting people's psychological well-being. Social work, with its ethos of assisting people in helping themselves, could play a crucial role in mitigating human-wildlife conflicts, but its involvement remains limited. Vulnerable populations bear the brunt of conflicts, exacerbating poverty. Perceptions toward conservation differ between those facing crop damage and those dealing with injuries. To address issue is essential to understand the perceptions and tolerance levels of people in proximity to conservation areas.

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