

# **Sustainable Development of Indigenous Culture Tourism in Nepal.**

## **Case study: Newari culture of Bhaktapur**

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<p>This report presents possibilities of cultural tourism development in a Newari community of the Bhaktapur region, Nepal. The theoretical aspects of the sustainability of cultural tourism are analysed in the report and the impacts of cultural tourism in Bhaktapur are described.</p> <p>This research is exploring the impacts of tourism in the local communities based on the case study of community homestays in the area in a developing country, Nepal. The main objective of this thesis project is to show the need for conservation of indigenous cultural tourism and to determine the current obstacles in the conservation process. Information about the current situations was investigated and the problems were identified. After analysing the results from the research, the literature and empirical observation, and recommendations were noted. The results show that the conservation of indigenous culture is important for the Newar of Bhaktapur. This thesis focuses on how tourism has affected the local area and its outcome. This thesis also presents the interconnections between culture, indigenous knowledge, and development in Nepal. Particularly the case studies of Bhaktapur, Panauti, and Barauli community homestays provide the much-needed insight for sustainable indigenous tourism development.</p> <p>To further validate the case studies in this thesis, long-term tourism experts and tourism students from Nepal who are from the Newari background are interviewed. This real-time data collected from the interviewees aims to enhance usability and provides a solid foundation for future tourism development in the community. The primary aim of the thesis is to study the impacts of tourism in the local community. How have they influenced the livelihood of the research area, why the changes have occurred.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b> Indigenous cultural tourism, Newari community, sustainability, tourism's impact	

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# 1 Introduction

This report is presenting the sustainable development of Newari culture in the central part of Nepal. The research is exploring tourism's impact on one of the old living cultures in Nepal. Bhaktapur is one of the very well-known tourist destinations, many people's livelihood is sustained by the income generated from the travel and tourism industry. However, in recent years people who are engaged in the tourism industry have either closed their shops or have started a different business. This research paper will dive deep into the causes of it. Find the answers to whether tourism has brought any changes in the community if any what are they and how.

One of the many reasons why I have chosen Bhaktapur for my research purpose is that I have spent a significant time of my adulthood wandering around Bhaktapur, this place has changed much since I was twelve-thirteen years old. The old wooden stone houses have turned into tall, huge shopping complexes, the rice field has turned into houses of concrete. The temples which had thousands of years old cultural values and tradition have been decimated into rubbles. This thesis studies the sustainability of indigenous culture tourism in Nepal, where the research problem is focused on the Newari community of Bhaktapur district. It also discusses how indigenous people and their culture have been influenced by the tourists who visit their town. (Indigenous people means 'Newari people' and their culture means 'food, clothes, festivals, and way of living')

This thesis follows the guidelines of a qualitative research method, and the theoretical framework is aiming to uncover the comprehensive information of the phenomena. The interview questions were built based on the themes of theoretical framework, and they aim to get profound answers and insights to the research questions. This thesis' empirical part is a case study, which is done by interviewing the tourism professionals, cultural experts, travel agencies, and travel guides, who have been working in this region for over a decade. The interviews were carried out in the year 2019 to 2020 via social media such as Facebook messenger, Zoom, and Skype. Altogether six unstructured interviews were carried out and the results were analysed using the qualitative method.

The first chapter of this thesis is introducing the research place, people, and their culture. The second chapter introduces the theoretical framework for the thesis. In this chapter, the tourism industry in Nepal is described in general which is followed by the importance of cultural tourism. The third chapter introduces Newari cultural tourism in Nepal. It gives an in-depth understanding of the Newari culture and traditions of Bhaktapur in detail. The fourth chapter describes the methodology studies the research literature where indigenous culture tourism is explained via a case study of Bhaktapur. It also highlights

the obstacles and limitations since the indigenous tourism development concept is new in Nepal, but it taps into a notion that has been existed for a long time. In this chapter, data collected from the interviews are analysed and possible suggestions and recommendations are made. Finally, in the fifth chapter, a conclusion is drawn based on the whole research.

## **2 Indigenous cultural tourism in Nepal**

Culture refers to the group's shared beliefs, practices (i.e., human activities), and values for a living. It is the total of people's way of life. It includes everything produced by society, for example, people's way of talking, dressing, cooking, mourning, eating, wedding ceremonies, including all the values, customs, and traditions. People are slowly appreciating their culture and finding the best value in it and long to see other people's cultures and traditions too. Many people travel to different places away from their homes to learn and see the culture and different lifestyles of others. People feel happy if their culture is respected by others and vice versa.

Cultural tourism, on the one hand, is necessary to realize the importance of cultural heritage and, on the other, it helps people to maintain cultural diversity and even to flourish. All that is significant and worthwhile must be preserved. When something is precious, there is a need to protect it. Tourist attraction gives cultural assets added value and significance. This adds attractions to the community to raise the number of tourists, as a result, a variety of businesses are open on cultural heritage bases. Work opportunities are created, and the community may benefit from the possible cultural heritage. There is also a range of advantages including cultural exchanges and guest learning opportunities.

However, the mix of culture and tourism is not free of side effects, this also poses problems as the local cultural heritage is associated with tourism. The very society, exposed to unplanned tourism, may be at risk. Consequently, conservation may not be very straightforward. The problem of conserving culture emerges in cultural heritage tourism, as does the question of preserving nature in nature-based tourism. Culture preservation requires maintaining one's heritage. Therefore, introducing culture to tourism means transmitting identity, that is, making oneself known to others. Cultural assets have become one of the most significant phenomena for tourism industry growth. It should be coordinated with a lot of attention, instead of ignoring the contact of visitors with the local culture.

This study explores how we can establish cultural heritage-based tourism without having detrimental cultural effects. A renowned destination for heritage tourism was selected as the case study of this thesis. Firstly, Kathmandu is the only entry point in the country through the airway and entry point to many famous places;(i.e., Pashupatinath Temple, Boudhanath Stupa, Sywambunath) a world heritage site identified by UNESCO. Secondly, the sister cities of Kathmandu are the hub for Newari culture observation. Citizens visiting Kathmandu have the bonus opportunity to experience an exclusive Newari lifestyle in sister cities Bhaktapur and Lalitpur. (Gyanendra Dhar Pradhananga, 2020.)

Nepal is a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-cultural country. The fact that we have become Nepalis with such diversity is still not properly assimilated. A serious and in-depth study of Nepali society and culture has not been done well yet. However, the state of unity among these diversity makes it clear that we have been tolerant, generous, and appreciative of our diverse culture and thinking. Without it, our diversity would not exist. It would not have continued till today. And it would not be possible to combine different cultural streams from different sources. Thus, if there was no unity among the diversity, the country called Nepal, which is an ancient country that existed when there were only 17 countries in the world, would not exist. Acknowledging and recognizing this long-standing diversity is, in fact, one of the strongest and most successful aspects of our culture. But over time, a situation of inequality, discrimination, and exclusion arose between Nepalis. It still exists in society (Cultural diversity and cohesion, 2017 Samaya post).

Nepali unity is reflected in various festivals and cultures. In Nepal, Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, and all religions have their special festivals. However, the characteristics of all the festivals are to do good to all, to help, to have a sense of friendship, to behave politely, to maintain civility, harmony, service, cooperation, happiness, and peace.

Due to the large number of Hindus in Nepal, there are many festivals based on the Hindu religion. As Nepal is the birthplace of Buddha, there are many festivals based on Buddhism. As there are also followers of Islam in Nepal, the number of people celebrating Muslim festivals is also high. Christians have also been celebrating Christmas. Nepal is made up of mountains, hills, and plains. Even in these areas, festivals are celebrated according to the region. Chhath is celebrated in the Terai, hills, and mountains. There are different festivals in Nepal according to each caste. Some festivals including Krishna Janmashtami, Buddha Purnima, Christmas Day, and Bhanu Jayanti are named after national and international celebrities. Siddha Puja based on agriculture and Vishwakarma Puja based on the industry are also celebrated in Nepal. Therefore, the festivals and

culture celebrated in Nepal have their originality and specialty. (Cultural diversity and cohesion, 2017 Samaya post).

Each of our festivals carries ethnic, religious, and regional originality. As Nepal is a secular state, every caste and community is free to celebrate its original festivals. Religious and ethnic tolerance like in Nepal is difficult to find in other countries. If these festivals can be linked with tourism by preserving the religious, ethnic, and regional festivals here, then foreign tourists can be attracted under the pretext of celebrating these festivals. It can be used to promote Nepal's festivals abroad and contribute to Nepal's economic prosperity.

The basic aim of this thesis is to study whether tourism has brought many changes in the local community whether it is positive or negative. In this thesis researcher is presenting the basic goals of culture tourism are minimizing negative impacts and maximizing benefits for the local people and their natural environment, while providing positive experiences to visitors.

## **2.1 Nepal as a tourism destination**

Tourism is an important area to generate revenue and employment. It is a backbone for a developing country like Nepal. On one hand, tourism is the most viable industry providing skilled and unskilled jobs, reducing poverty. Whereas, on the other hand, tourism not only brings foreign currency but also brings cultural and behavior changes. In places where tourism is the primary source of income, locals have been heavily influenced by the culture that is brought by the tourists. The Newari people in the Bhaktapur got involved in various cultural activities after the community homestay program was launched. Now they have managed to grasp the good business opportunity and they developed the area as a prime location of tourist stay. The indigenous communities and the tourism products across Nepal are the same but they are deriving the benefit from the similar opportunity in very different proportions. (Rajiv Kumar Thakur, 2013)

Cultural heritage is one of Nepal's most important aspects of tourism. Nepal draws visitors from around the globe not only because of its natural beauty but also because of its exotic/special culture. Kathmandu, Nepal's capital city, is known worldwide as the city of temples, shrines, and monuments. Besides Kathmandu, it has many other destinations which are popular as cultural destinations. For example, Lumbini, Gautam Buddha's birthplace is one of many countries' most significant cultural pilgrimages to the Buddhists. Mithila Painting is popular amongst cultural researchers and tourists in the Central Terai region.

Nepal became accessible to foreigners after the emergence of a democratic government in 1951 A.D (Gyanendra Dhar Pradhananga, 2020). Numbers of tourists have come here to enjoy this magnificent scenery, multi-ethnic diversity and culture, variety of flora and fauna, high rugged Himalayan mountains, and magnificent lakes and rivers. Nepal's major tourist attractions include several Himalayan peaks, 17 natural heritage sites including national parks and reserves, and nine World Heritage Sites. More than a million visitors are visiting this together each year. (Gyanendra Dhar Pradhananga, 2020).

Despite being known to the world for its natural beauty and cultural diversity, Nepal does not have a long history of tourism growth. Until the 1950s the country was under the control of autocratic Ranas. However, it was proclaimed a democratic state in the 1950s, due to different reasons the country remained in a sort of seclusion throughout the time of the King's direct rule for another 40 years. In, 1990 AD when the nation achieved 'multiparty democracy,' it gradually opened doors to the outside world. (Subash Basnet, 2016.)

The tourism industry has been identified as a possible national revenue market. Maoist revolts started again in a few years and again the country became caught in the 'civil war'. Tourist traffic decreased again in the civil war era due to safety reasons. 'Nepal has emerged from the civil war years' turmoil into a time of peace and (relative) political stability, and the tourist trade is gradually recovering. Fewer than 300,000 tourists visited Nepal in 2005, compared to nearly double that amount in 1999's. (Subash Basnet, 2016.)

Tourism is one of the cornerstones of the Nepalese economy. It is also a major source of foreign exchange and sales. Having 8 of the world's top 10 mountains, Nepal is a hotspot destination for mountaineers, rock climbers, and adventure-seekers. (Nepali Sansar, 2019.) Nepal's Hindu, Buddhist, and other cultural heritage sites are also strong attractions, as are fair weather throughout the year. To tourists, mountaineering and other forms of adventure tourism and ecotourism are important attractions.

According to Nepal Tourism Board, in 2012 a total of 598,204 foreign tourists reached the country by air route. Nepal's government proclaimed 2011 to be the year of "Tourism Nepal" and hoped to draw one million international tourists to the country during the year. The tourism industry is seen as a means of alleviating poverty and achieving greater national social equity. (Nepali Sansar, 2019.)

On January 1, 2020, the government of Nepal inaugurated the campaign 'Visit Nepal Year 2020' to attract 2 million international tourists however because of the Covid-19 virus, it was canceled. Also, in the first quarter of 2020 Nepal experienced a two percent decline in



tourist arrivals, despite promoting the campaign on the global scene. (Nepali Sansar, 2019.)

## **2.2 Cultural tourism in Nepal**

Nepal is portrayed in the world as the richest country in cultural diversity and natural resources. These unique cultural heritages are the highlight of tourism development in Nepal. Similarly, Nepal, which is also rich in culture, has 125 castes and 123 languages. Based on these areas, there is ample potential for the development and expansion of the tourism business in Nepal (Udaye Ranamagar, 2019, karobar post)

The tourism industry has remained the backbone of the economy. It is an important tool to accelerate the pace of development of the country through the industry. Studies in the tourism sector have also shown that there is a positive correlation between economic growth and the tourism industry. Nepal has been open to foreign nationals since 1949, but its development and expansion has taken place only after the historic change of 2007 (Udaye Ranamagar, 2019, karobar post)

Tourism is a substantial business sector for Nepal, but there has not been enough investment which has led to depletion in tourism. According to the World Tourism Organization, the contribution of the tourism sector to Nepal's GDP in 2018 is estimated to be around 7.8 percent (Udaye Ranamagar, 2019, karobar post). However, there has not been enough investment in this sector. A study has shown that if 3 tourists come to Nepal, 1 local person will get employment. It has been helping to solve Nepal's unemployment problem to some extent. Tourists stay in Nepal for an average of 12.57 days and spend USD42.8 per person per day. Neighboring country Bhutan, on the other hand, prioritizes quality tourism and spends about USD200 per tourist per day (Udaye Ranamagar, 2019, karobar post).

Nepal, on the other hand, has not been able to be effective in developing and expanding the tourism sector because it is focused on small numbers of tourists only. Looking at the situation from 2000 to 2008, the average growth rate of tourists is only 3.8 percent. In 2006, the number of tourist arrivals in Nepal was 383,926. In 2014, 404,525 tourists arrived in Nepal. By the end of 2018, more than one million tourists have arrived, and the target is to reach 2 million by 2020 which was diminished by the Covid-19 pandemic (Udaye Ranamagar, 2019, karobar post).

Amongst the tourists coming to Nepal, the number of hiking tourists is more. Revenue collection from pedestrian tourists is also noteworthy. According to the records of the Immigration Department, the revenue collected from pedestrian tourists in 2014/15 is 15.73 percent. However, this figure was 18.31 percent in 2013/14. (Udaye Ranamagar, 2019, karobar post.) Nepal has been developing as a suitable place for tourism business. In 2006, Nepal was ranked 90th in the list of countries easy to do business, in 2007 it was ranked 100th and in 2017 it was ranked 110th. (Udaye Ranamagar, 2019, karobar post.) In addition, Nepal ranks 103rd in the tourism competitive standard. Nepal, situated in the middle of a country with a huge population like China and India, is likely to take full advantage of this opportunity. All these facts can be said will create a conducive environment for tourism business in Nepal. (Udaye Ranamagar, 2019, karobar post.)

How to make Nepal's traditional cultural, trekking and mountain tourism sustainable and more attractive is challenging. To develop and expand the tourism sector in the federal structure, it is necessary to move forward by setting a common agenda. However, now the tourism industry is being harassed to a greater extent due to the Covid-19 pandemic as well as unfair management and distribution of royalties and investment management. There is no uniformity even in service, facility, and package rate. The task of investing private sector investment based on integrated and governmental priorities has become another complex issue. As the food and other items being consumed in the tourism sector have been imported, it has not been possible to reap the benefits locally. (Udaye Ranamagar, 2019, karobar post.)

### **2.3 What is indigenous cultural tourism?**

Indigenous people are also known as native people or aboriginal people, they are the early settlers, original or earliest known inhabitants of an area. Indigenous people are characterized by some of the richest, unique, and diverse cultural expressions of humankind. These cultural and traditional expressions are developed over thousands of years across our world. Indigenous people, their lands, and traditions have a great value in the modern world. It is important whether to understand how people lived hundreds of years ago or just to appreciate the art and culture. These expressions represent a clear pull factor for the tourism industry.

Today, cultural tourism is one of the largest and fastest-developing global tourism markets: an estimated four out of ten tourists choose their destination based on its cultural offering. (UNWTO, 2019.)

Aboriginal people are distinct groups compared to their country's dominant post-colonial society. Indigenous people typically have their language, beliefs, and practices, which are affected by living relationships with their ancestral homelands. Indigenous peoples of Nepal are officially defined as indigenous (Adivasi & Jaanajati) nationalities. They make up 35.81 percent of the total population of the country (about 8.5 million out of the Nepalese 26 million. (IWGIA, 2020.)

But Indigenous People's Organizations say their population may be as large as 50 percent of the population of the nation. While constituting such a large part of the population, indigenous peoples have been oppressed throughout history in terms of language, culture, and political as well as economic opportunities. Nepal has 126 castes and ethnic groups which speak as many as 123 languages as per the 2011 census. And Indigenous Peoples speak 90 percent of these languages. (IWGIA, 2020.)

In Nepal, the situation of some indigenous groups has always been suppressed. Many of their issues are lack of schooling, health services, traditional practices, superstition. Even if we are talking about the world's indigenous peoples, their situation may not be the same everywhere. Because of the government's special programs, and many other factors, they are no longer marked by difficulties and lack basic needs such as schooling, health, etc. But being a minority group and considered a tribal group can, of course, be typical features of indigenous people around the globe. Living in remote areas and becoming a minority community has led to discrimination and a variety of issues have been forced to face. Even the language issue will keep them isolated from normal social activities. But, at the same time, living in remote and wilderness areas, having a culture and way of life has created a lot of potential for tourism. Visiting such destinations is of greater interest to the true cultural tourists. One of the main features of the indigenous peoples is their peculiar culture.

Indeed, an increasing tourist demand for indigenous cultural experiences correlates with the indigenous need to extract income from land, cultural capital, and new economic projects. In ecotourism, educational tourism, and alternative tourism markets, economic, educational, and spiritual aspects of indigenous heritage and practices are featured.

## 2.4 Examples of indigenous cultural tourism

### Panauti community homestay

Another finding from the research is that how community homestays have managed to bring back some of the Newari traditions and rituals via the tourism industry. Nepal started its first community homestay in Panauti, and it is one of the most popular community homestays nationally and internationally.

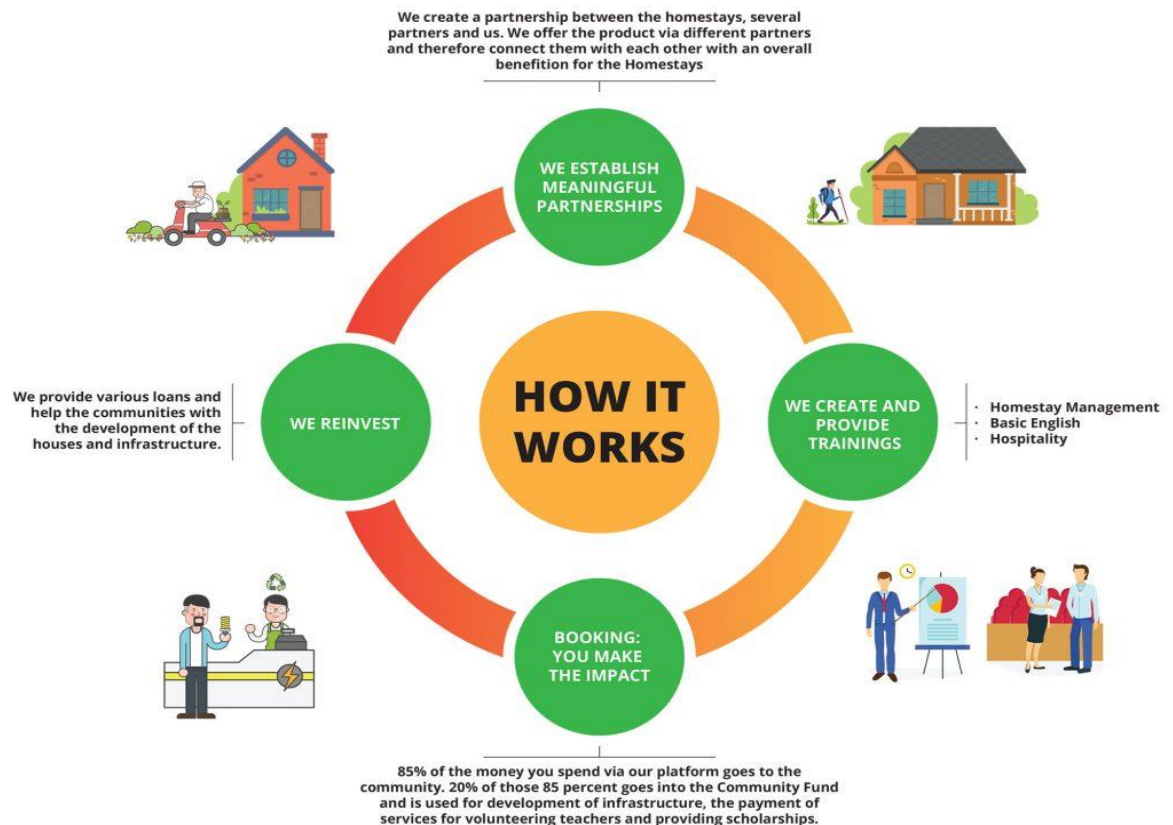


Figure 1. How Community homestay works (source: Panauti Community homestay)

Panauti Community homestay was established in 2012. With the motive of women empowerment and responsible tourism, it all began with just one house and one woman in Panauti, a place rich in culture but almost no tourists to observe them. With support from Royal Mountain Travel, a few tourists started to come to Panauti, and ten more houses joined to become Panauti Community Homestay which is currently one of the most popular community homestays in Nepal. In 2020, there are over twenty-four community homestay networks within Nepal.

*“Since we started community homestay in Panauti a lot of people have gotten jobs, many locals have now learned how important it is to preserve culture. When we started, we used to welcome our guests with traditional Newari musical instruments and Newari food delicacies. These musical instruments that we play were about to extinct and there were*

*only a handful of people who could play them. Now, that has changed, even younger people are interested in learning. That is quite an achievement.”- Interviewee 3*

Culture and Heritage Tourism is an economic development tool that achieves economic growth by attracting visitors from outside a host community who are fully or partially driven by an interest in a city, country, group of institution's historical, cultural, science, or lifestyle/heritage offerings. Such travel focuses on experiencing cultural cultures, including landscapes, the visual and performing arts, unique lifestyles, beliefs, customs, and events. (Erick Maina, 2015.)

### **Barauli Community Homestay**

Before we go through the Barauli community homestay it is important to understand the surroundings as well. Chitwan district lies in the central development region of Nepal, it is about 205 km away from the capital city, Kathmandu. Chitwan National Park is one of Nepal's most popular tourist destinations, situated in the subtropical southern part of the country. The national park was established in 1972 A.D. and was placed on the UNESCO World Heritage list in 1984, It was the first national park to be established in Nepal. The Park covers an area of almost 1000 square kilometers. This place is rich in natural habitat which includes a complex variety of fauna and flora. This Park is also a home for many endangered animals such as one-horned rhinoceros, the Royal Bengal Tiger, and the gharial crocodile. (Iuliana Marchian, 2017.)

Barauli, home to the Tharu people, is a small Indigenous community near the Chitwan National Park in Nepal. The Park is a popular tourism attraction that is well known for its wildlife but less known for the cultural value that it has to offer travellers. Despite this are being tourism hotspots, most of the Tharu residents have never been able to access the economic benefits of tourism. Limited opportunities for community members have led to engagement in illegal activities like poaching and deforestation in the park as a means of income diversification. After understating the value of local people and their culture to include them in the tourism business a community homestay was born.

Barauli community homestay was established in 2014 with the support of Royal Mountain travels, a travel agency in Nepal. The primary motto of the project is to support women's empowerment in Nepal. The community homestay platform has enabled women and their families to generate a sustainable livelihood from responsible tourism. On top of that tourists Get to know the Terai's indigenous Tharu people while enjoying village tours, jungle safaris, and other natural attractions around Chitwan National Park. At the Barauli Community Homestay Nepal, guests can live alongside one of the indigenous ethnic groups of the Terai,

the Tharu people. Their culture, language, architecture, and cuisine are a mixture of those found in the hills of Nepal and the plains of North India. Running the homestays gives the local women valuable skills and self-confidence, as well as an independent source of income.

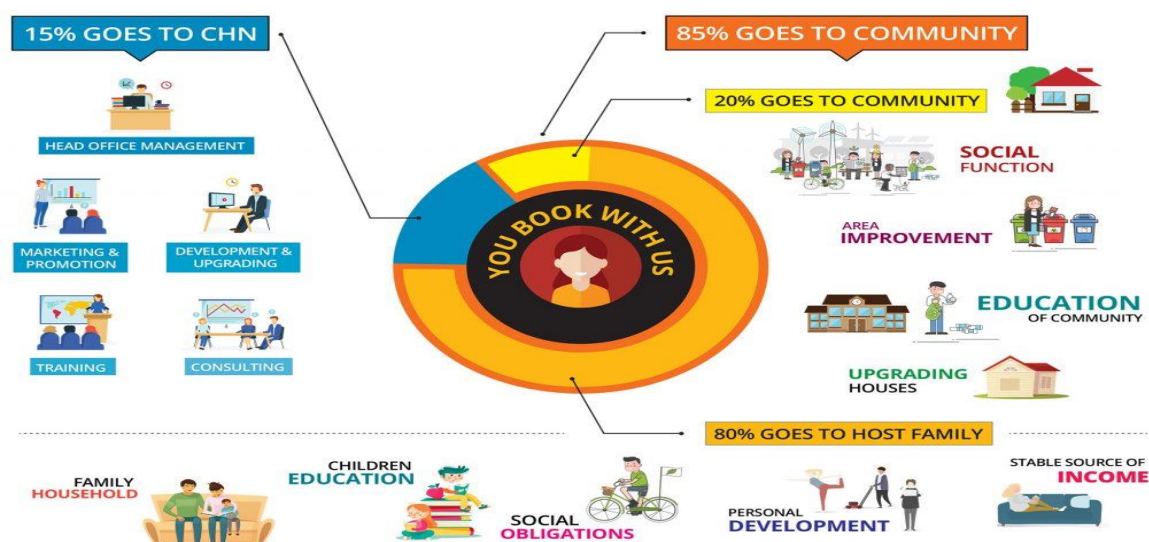


Figure 2. Barauli community homestay

Running the homestays has given the local men and women valuable skills and self-confidence, as well as an independent source of income. This cooperation with the local indigenous Tharu people has significantly gained traction in the tourism industry in the area. Not only foreign tourists are engaged in these activities and gave enjoyed the experience but also domestic tourists. As mentioned above traveling is a much new concept in Nepal. However, the growing economy has enabled many Nepalese to travel abroad or within the country. There are well over twenty community homestays operations around Nepal. Even though it is a niche tourism market the influence of integrating the local community into the tourism business is huge.

In conclusion, community homestay has proven to be a success in filling the gap between the local community and the tourism business. This is not a very typical example elsewhere in the world, that local people are starving yet tourism companies making millions exploiting the very place where local people live who understand the value of land, plants, and animals. However, it is also possible to include indigenous people in the tourism industry and learn what they have to offer. The long tradition of nurturing nature yet with sustainable tourism development.

## Australian indigenous cultural tourism

I visited Australia in the year 2019. Upon traveling around Australia for over one and half years driving well over 35000km I was extremely impressed by the beauty of Australia and its cultural diversity. Sydney was the first travel destination in Australia, I was fascinated by the vivid lifestyle, food culture, especially the coffee culture. Despite the international city, I could barely see the proper representation of Australian aboriginals in the city. There were a few circumstances where I encountered aboriginals playing their folk music in the tunnel of a railway station. However, the further I traveled from the city to the outback I saw much more presence of Indigenous people. What surprised me the most is how different aboriginal Australian's lifestyles to the city dwellers. I will not go through the whole aboriginals' situation in Australia but will dive into the relationship between aboriginal Australians and cultural tourism.



Image 1. Uluru, Australia. (Madhu)

Uluru also is formerly known as Ayers Rock is the ultimate site of division in Australia on indigenous matters. After a long legal battle, the site was returned to Anangu custodianship in 1985 under land right legislation. (2017, Michelle Whitford, Lisa Rauhanen, and Anna Carr). Uluru is sacred to the Anangu people the Aboriginals of the area. Tourism activities began already in the 1930s in Uluru. After the Aboriginal welfare policy was passed in the 1940s, the government of Northern Territory, Australia significantly promoted local tourism which gained huge traction nationwide. The construction of the first vehicular track to Uluru in the early 1950's further helped to flourish the tourism industry in the area. (Aboriginal culture, 2016.)

In this research, altogether three case studies have been presented. One is from my own experience while traveling outback in Australia. After one and half years traveling around Australia and studying closely the much well-known Australian aboriginal culture, there

are some similarities to the other following case studies from Nepal. The insight of Australian aboriginal culture was obtained via talking to the aboriginal people, their experiences as well as tourism companies operating in the area. I find this process was much easier compared to the one from Nepal since I could not be there personally. Gathering information in person was much easier, people were much open to the conversation and share their experiences without hesitation.

To have a better flow in the conversation spontaneous questionnaires were applied so that it does not overwhelm the interviewees. The process was relaxed, most of the interviews happen either in the café watching the sunrise or by the fire pit in the middle of nowhere with other travellers. One challenging part of the process was to start the conversation with the aboriginals if they were not involved in the tourism business. However, once you have started the conversation it was easy to get the insight and they were happy to share their stories and culture with travellers.

Most of the aboriginals that I had a conversation with were from the Northern Territory of Australia since most aboriginals live there. Alice spring and Uluru were amongst the places where many of the Aboriginals were engaged in tourism activities. You could hire a native tour guide and it felt like the stories they told us about their sacred land were much more natural and authentic.

Western Australia was another prime example of how to protect the natives, their lands, and their culture. They have spent millions of dollars to integrate the aboriginals into modern society, educate them and make them independent. Since the time is moving forward at the rocket speed, hunting, and gathering is no longer the viable source of livelihood. The alternative was to get involved in tourism activities which is much more sustainable. Both parties are winning in this scenario as natives get involved in the jobs and are independent and travellers get to enjoy the native land with aboriginal terms and conditions. Which also eliminates the fear of mass tourism, cultural extinction, and abuse of the land.



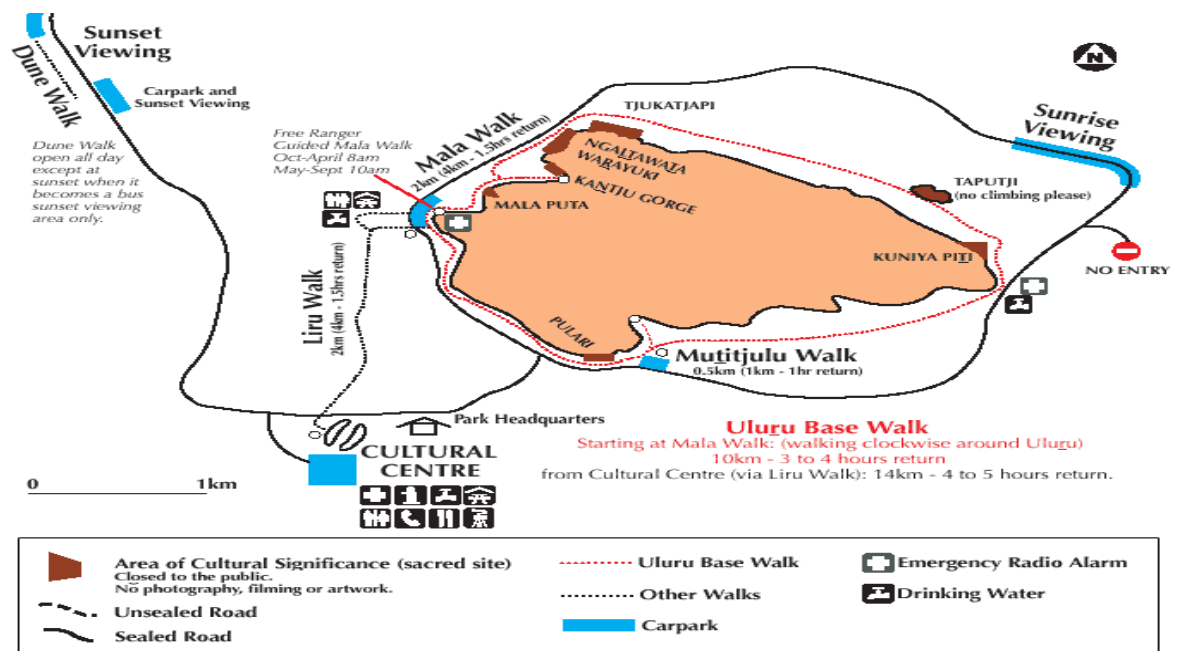


Figure 3. Uluru tourist guide map. (Vazyvite)

### Indigenous culture and tourism cohesion

Indigenous cultures and lifestyles offer a lesson in the acceptance of diversity. Uluru is a prime example of how to foster cross-cultural engagement and learning. There is no doubt that Aboriginal Australians have suffered greatly for a long time when colonial settlers from Europe arrived in the country. The settler-colonial stains on culture, land dispossession, attempted genocide, taking of children, attack on culture, and usurping of the wealth and the lands have severely crippled the trust between aboriginals and the settlers even to this date. However, the time has changed and there has been significant pressure on the government to include aboriginals in the cross-culture integration. At least this approach has worked in Uluru. The displaced remaining aboriginals of Uluru we brought back, given the land rights, and given the options to involve in the tourism business or go back to the old way of living. (Indigenous Tourism, cases from Australia and New Zealand, 2017.) The development of the Uluru culture centre has certainly helped to understand the local culture to the thousands of tourists that visit the area daily. There are many ways for a tourist to familiarize themselves with the local tradition, legends, and the ancient story behind the monolith. They either can listen to the audio, watch the videos, walk around the museum, if visitors want to immerse themselves even further in the culture they can participate in the aboriginal events and rituals. This together culture preservation approach has tremendously helped locals to sustain their economy in a modern emphasizing sustainable cultural tourism.

### Scope and significance of cultural heritages

Cultural heritage has been one of the key drawing factors for visitors. Its range is rising day by day. It preserves old forts and monuments and transfers them into heritage sites. People transform into modernity on the one hand, but on the other, they are the descendants of primitive cultures and traditions.

Visiting such places triggers a deep sense of the past. This form of cultural tourism involves all the key destinations to visit of a cultural heritage site. Heritage is material (museums, temples, galleries, historic sites) and intangible (traditions, holidays, customs); Ethnic tourism involves travel to get to know and understand, as well as the inclusion of people with different cultures, behaviors, lifestyles, and traditions within the community. Ethnic tourism is characterized by learning more about the various cultures. (Raymond A. Rosenfeld, 2008.)

It is also claimed that tourism would soon be the world's biggest industry offering the biggest number of jobs. Similarly, cultural tourism is considerably growing. Cultural tourism is growing and expanding all over the world. There is an increasing desire by millions of travellers for access to 'primitive' cultures, a curiosity to taste if only briefly their traditional way of life, a wish to see, experience photograph their 'exotic' practices.

### 3 Newari Culture

Bhaktapur is located 15 km east of Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal. The town is located 1401 meters above sea level and covers an area of 6.88 sq. km (Bhaktapur Municipality, 2020). More than half of the town habitants are Newars, and the rest are Brahmins, Chhetri, Muslims, and other ethnic groups. According to the census of 2011 A.D. Bhaktapur district has a population of 304 651 and the historical city of Bhaktapur has a population of 83 658. The city was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1979 A.D. (Bhaktapur Municipality, 2020.)

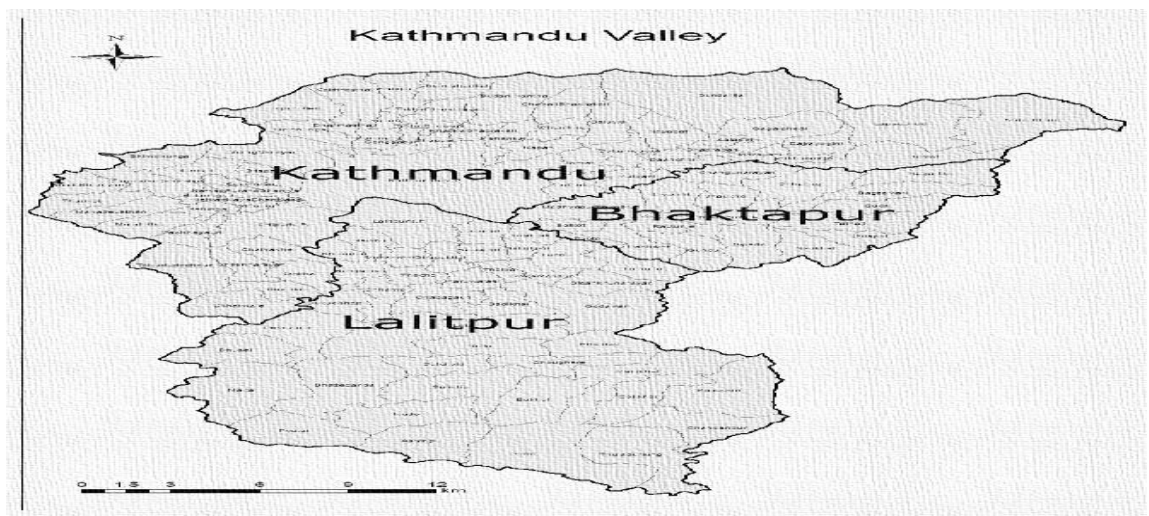


Figure 4. Map of Kathmandu Valley

Bhaktapur is the smallest city within Kathmandu valley inhabited by a majority of Hindu Newar, (Brahmin, Chhetri, Vaishya, and Sudra). Traditionally Nepalese were divided into different caste systems based on their work skills and knowledge. *A caste is an elaborate and complex social system that combines elements of occupation, endogamy, culture, social class, tribe affiliation, and political power. Discrimination based on caste, as perceived by UNICEF, is prevalent mainly in parts of Asia (India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Japan) and Africa.* It affects their family life, food, dress, occupations, and culture. It determines their way of life. (GoNepal.EU, 2018.)

Bhaktapur is well known for its religious, cultural, and historical heritages. The city is also known as Bhadgaun, the city with rich ancient arts, religious values, traditions, architectural masterpieces, and ancient sculptures. Bhaktapur has a cluster of temples, parados, monuments, courtyards, squares, and traditional houses often people refer to it

as a city of open museums. Buddhist shrines and monasteries built at different times in history are a perfect reflection of ancient history in modern times. Throughout the history, people of Bhaktapur have been able to preserve its originality. Local Newari traditions, cultural events, and gastronomy are much well known amongst Nepalese and foreign travellers. This city is on the ancient trade route between India, Kathmandu, and China. Even today it is one of the busiest trade routes and a hub for travellers within Nepal. Araniko Highway connects Kathmandu valley with Kodari, Nepal. This 115-kilometer-long highway connects Nepal to China which follows through Bhaktapur district, making it one of the oldest trade routes to China. (Adarsha Nepal Adventure 2019.)

Nepal opened its border to foreign visitors after the advent of a democratic government in 1951 A.D., since then the number of visitors has been increasing. People visit Nepal to see its beautiful landscapes, multi-ethnic composition and culture, variety of flora and fauna, and high rugged Himalayan mountains as well as beautiful lakes and rivers. Many Himalayan peaks, 17 natural heritage sites including national parks and reserves, and 9 World Heritage Sites are the main tourist attractions of Nepal. These together receive more than a million tourists every year. (Gyanendra Dhar Pradhananga, 2020.)

#### History of the Newari community

The Newar people are the historical inhabitants of the Kathmandu Valley and its environs in Nepal and the founders of its historical civilization. The valley and surrounding areas formed the former Nepal Mandala kingdom of Newar. Unlike an ethnic group of common origin, Newars is a good example of a nation-community with relic-identity. Within the Newari community it consists of various types of racial, caste, and religious heterogeneity, as today's Newars are descendants of the diverse group of people who have lived in Nepal. Indo-Aryan settlers such as the Licchavis and Mallas who arrived at different times gradually mixed with the local Newar indigenous community by adopting their language and customs. These immigrants retained their Indian heritage and brought with them their Sanskrit languages, social structure, Vedic religion, and culture which profoundly altered the Newar civilization's history. The Newar rule in Nepal Mandala ended in 1768 when the Gorkha Kingdom conquered it. (Newar language, 2016.)

Agriculture is the main profession in Nepal, with some recently involved in tourism-related business and some other employment. They lived in those areas for over the years. Preservation of their culture through the house and museum of culture was a very significant topic there. They are considered brave and resistant men because they are the only group in Nepalese Hilly to have lived successfully.

The Newar maintains a highly literate community and its members are influential in all fields, from agriculture, industry, education, and government administration to medicine, law, religion, architecture, fine art, and literature. The fact that Newar architects may have been responsible for designing Asia's multi-tiered pagoda architecture is generally accepted. Newar devotional Paubha and thangka painting, sculpture, and craftsmanship in metal are renowned worldwide for their exquisite beauty. The fine temples and palaces of Kathmandu, Patan (Yala), and Bhaktapur are primarily the work of Newar architects, craftsmen, and sculptors. Now the enterprising Newars are scattered across Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim state, and Darjeeling district in India. (Newar language, 2016.)

Newar, people who comprise about half the population of the Kathmandu Valley in Nepal, speak a language belonging to the Tibeto-Burman family, but their culture has been strongly influenced by Indian religious and social institutions. The Newar population of Nepal was estimated to be slightly more than a million in the early 21st century. Most of the Newar are Hindus, but some practice an Indian form of Buddhism. There are about 70 castes, Buddhist as well as Hindu, covering approximately the same spectrum as the caste system of India. (Elizabeth Prine Pauls, Kanchan Gupta. 2007.) The Newar have a wide range of occupations, many are farmers, others are prominent in the retail trades, and some occupy high political and administrative posts. They have traditionally been noted as architects and artisans, the builders of the famous temples and shrines of Kathmandu. From the 10<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century, painting and sculpture flourished among the Newar, along with crafts such as pottery making, paper production, wood carving, and metallurgy. Each of the crafts has traditionally been the specialty of a particular caste (Elizabeth Prine Pauls, Kanchan Gupta. 2007.)

## **People**

Newar is one among 59 indigenous peoples recognized by the government of Nepal. Newars are found in every part of the country and beyond the borders, but they are the original inhabitants of Kathmandu valley, the capital city of modern Nepal. Previously the Kathmandu valley was known by the name 'Nepal' and for many people, the words 'Nepal' continue to mean it. As early as the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC, the Nepal valley was settled by a Tibeto-Burman speaking Mongoloid people who later founded the Kirat dynasty. In the second century AD, the Kirat rule was replaced by the Lichhavi from north Bihar who spoke Prakrit but used Sanskrit for sacramental purposes. Newar is also said to be the descendent of the Kirat people who inhabited the land in the past. (Elizabeth Prine Pauls, Kanchan Gupta. 2007.)



Image 2. Local Newar feeling water from the tap.

Newar speaks their mother tongue which belongs to the Tibeto-Burman language family, with rich ancient and modern literature going back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century. During the Malla period, from the 13<sup>th</sup> century till its downfall in 1769 AD, the then kings themselves played a significant role in promoting Newari literature. Newars include people of both Mongoloid and Caucasoid extractions. They practice both Hinduism and Buddhism. They have their distinct culture having a long history, which is heavily influenced by Buddhism as well as Hinduism with remnants of ancient Kirat culture. They have a distinct way of life, customs, and traditions of Newar. They are very famous for their skills of woodcarving, painting, stone carving. Newars are one of the very few indigenous nationalities who have been urban-oriented and made great success in politics, bureaucracy, arts, and architecture. (Elizabeth Prine Pauls, Kanchan Gupta. 2007.)

## **Food**

Food is a very important part of the ritual and religious life of the Newars. The food items served to the guests during festivals and feasts have their symbolic significance. Different sets of ritual dishes are placed in a circle around the staple rice flakes to represent and honor different sets of deities (gods) depending on the festival or the ceremony.



The meal consists of rice (JA), dal (KE), and vegetables (tarkari). The same meal is eaten morning and evening. If one can afford it, meat (la) item is seen on the side of Newar's regular meal.



Image 3. Newari festival dishes.

Newars prefer to eat snacks in the afternoon. It generally consists of flattened rice (baji), eaten with such items as roasted and curried soya beans (musya), fermented mustard leaves (gundro), or curried potato (alu tarakari). They also have some meat (la) and homemade liquor (thon) with them. Baji (rice flakes) is called chiura in Nepali. (Gwarmari, 2012.)

Another main category of food is served at feasts. In this meal beaten rice (baji) is the main dish. At feasts, various preparations based on buffalo meat are served along with curries of vegetables and pulses. Home-made liquor (thon) is served along with the food. Generally, a feast meal is concluded by serving curd, sugar, and fruit (sisapusa). As a dessert, usually, pieces of betel nuts, funnel seeds, and cloves are also served at end of the meal.

Kwati (soup of different beans), Kachila (spiced minced meat), Choila which is water buffalo meat marinated in spices and grilled over the flames of dried wheat stalks, wo (lentil cake), paun kwa (sour soup), stuffed lung, fried liver, fried tongue, tripe stuffed with bone marrow and jellied fish soup are some of the popular festival foods. Dessert consists of dhau (yogurt), sisabusa (fruits), and mari (sweetmeat). Thwon and aila are the common alcoholic liquors that Newars make at home.

At meals, festivals, and gatherings, Newars sit on long mats in rows. Typically, the sitting arrangement is hierarchical with the eldest sitting at the top and the youngest at the end. Newar cuisine makes use of mustard oil and a host of spices such as cumin, sesame seeds, turmeric, garlic, ginger, mint, bay leaves, cloves, cinnamon, pepper, chili, and mustard seeds. (Gwarmari, 2012.)

### **Local community**

Newars, the makers of all those impressive cultural heritages, are the locals living in and around the Kathmandu Valley. According to the 2011 census, Newari people's population is around 6 percent of the total population and is also Nepal's sixth most populous ethnic group. They are found mainly in the Bagmati region of Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, and Lalitpur but are spread in mere numbers across the world.

Newars are a traditional caste of merchants and traders that is prominent in ancient urban areas of Nepal, including Kathmandu. Before Nepal's "unification," Newari kingdoms existed along major trade routes in Nepal's hills and Newari kings were renowned for their temples and crafts. Many of Kathmandu's old palaces and temples are the work of Newars, and their rich woodcarving and stonework practices continue to this day. Newars are less than 6 percent of the population and speak Newari, a special and hard-to-learn Tibetan-Burman language. (The free Encyclopedia, 2020.)

Jatra, the term refers to the Nepalese Newari community celebrating festivals. The historical inhabitants of the Kathmandu Valley are Newar or Newah, the founders of ancient heritage and culture. They are renowned for their rich history, significant cultural diversity, and urban life. This culture includes many festivals known as Jatras. There are many ceremonies and gatherings including birthday celebrations, rice feeding in Newari culture. A few of the example ceremonies are listed down below.

### **Major aspects of Newari culture**

It is worth knowing some of the big aspects of Newari culture when it comes to Newari people and the tourism-dependent on their culture. In the following pages, the past of the Newari community is presented in brief. Newari festivals and festivities are subsequently discussed.

The old houses in the Newari community were small, rectangular in form, made of exposed brick with finely crafted wood carvings and a tiled roof that oozes history and ancient times. Such houses are constructed following the perimeter of a courtyard, known as 'Chowk,' living in a dense community. Everyone living in and around similar chowk, take it for all



social activities or just casual meetings as their gathering point. The cluster of such houses in their configuration is possible because of the uniformity.



Image 4. A common old modeled Newari house near Kathmandu. (Photo by Mithila Jariwala)

### **Newari festivals**

The festivals are cultural components. Traditional festivals are celebrated to continue. Their beliefs are religious. Festivals are generally conducted with people from one's own culture. Jatras or Festivals has tremendous religious significance among Kathmandu Valley's Newar culture. The districts of Kathmandu, Lalitpur, and Bhaktapur new communities devotedly celebrate many Jatras in a year.

The Kathmandu Newars celebrate Indra Jatra as their main festival, the Lalitpur Newars celebrate Rato Machindranath Jatra while the Bhaktapur Newars observe Bisket and Gai Jatras. Both Bisket and Gai Jatras are classified as important festivals in which thousands of people gather to watch these festivals on Bhaktapur Durbar square. Like many other communities, Newari people celebrate several festivals throughout the year. They share some festivals such as Dashain, Diwali, etc. with other communities. However, they have their ways of celebrating these festivals. The following are their major festivals and their descriptions:

#### **Bisket Jatra**

The Bisket Jatra is a long nine-day festival that falls at the end of the Chaitra Nepalese month. This festival marks the end of a year on the Bikram Sambat calendar and the beginning of a new year. The Jatra's focus is on pulling the chariots of two deities, namely

the Bhadrakali goddess and the Bhairav wrathful deity. A few days before the action, the chariots are assembled on Bhaktapur Durbar square. Young locals pull that through Bhaktapur's narrow streets.

#### Indra Jatra

Indra Jatra is one of the main festivals of Kathmandu Valley. It is also known as Yenya which means the "celebration of Kathmandu." This festival is celebrated in honor of Indra (a deity regarded in Hinduism as the King of Heaven). This festival consists mainly of masked dances and events, and a procession of the living goddess Kumari's chariot festival. (JRN treks, 2017.)

#### Shikali Jatra

A section of the ethnic Newar community living in Khokana, a medieval Newari heritage village in the southern part of the Kathmandu valley, celebrates the Shikali Jatra. The villagers do not celebrate Dashain while they practice Hinduism. They follow the colorful Shikali Jatra instead of Dashain. The five-day-long festival is dedicated to the Shikali goddess also known as '*Ajima*' or goddess of a mother. Dancers wearing colorful attires during the festival perform masked dances following tantric rituals. The dancers represent the Hindu pantheon of 14 gods and goddesses. A wooden chariot with Goddess Rudrayani's idol is carried through the streets of the village, resting in front of the Shikali Temple located on a grassy hill just outside the town. The parade, led by Newar priests wearing their white ceremonial robes, features devotees from Khokana and other parts of the Kathmandu Valley participating.

#### Rato Machchhendranath Rath jatra

Rato Machchhendranath Rath Jatra is one of the Newari community's largest socio-cultural events that is held in Patan, Nepal each year (May-June).

#### Gai Jatra

Gai Jatra is a festival of dancing, singing, rejoicing, and spreading happiness. In the Kathmandu Valley, the cow festival is held to mourn the death of loved ones. Dressed up like cows for a street parade. The festival usually falls in July or August. (Welcome to Nepal, 2020. Gai Jatra.)

## **Newari museum and culture houses at Patan, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur**

The 'Udaya Museum' founded at Ason of Kathmandu brings together different items and arts that shed light on the ancient occupation, costume, and lifestyle of the Newar community's various sub-caste groups of the Udaya caste. Among others, the Udaya caste comprises the sub-caste classes Tuladhar, Kansakar, Sikhakar, Baniya, Sindurakar, Silakar and Selalik. The Udaya Samaj museum was built in 1995 A.D. (Neel Kamal Chapagain, 2008.)



Image 5. Bhaktapur Durbar Square

Also, on Dattatreya Square, there is a national woodwork museum building with a magnificent peacock window. Designed by Yaksha Malla, the Pujari Math building is a museum, with the finest Newari wood carvings. The building is also embellished by mural paintings of the deities Dattatreya, Vishnu, and Shiva-Parvati.

In addition, there is also a special ethnology museum gallery, called the Ethnological Gallery of the Nepalese Society, which reflects the entire country where you can find various life-size models of men, women, and children from different ethnicities wearing traditional clothes. There is also a special ethnology museum gallery, called the Ethnological Gallery of the Nepalese Society, which reflects the entire country where you can find various life-size models of men, women, and children from different ethnicities wearing traditional clothes.

## Bhaktapur durbar square

Bhaktapur Durbar Square is a conglomeration of pagoda and shikhara-style temples grouped around a fifty-five-window palace of brick and wood. The square is one of the most charming architectural showpieces of the valley as it highlights the ancient arts of Nepal. The golden effigies of kings perched on the top of stone monoliths, the guardian deities looking out from their sanctuaries, the wood carvings in every place-struts, lintels, uprights, tympanums, gateways, and windows, all seem to form a well-orchestrated symphony. (Vibe3D, Durbar Square-Bhaktapur, 2020)

The history from the 9th to 12th century goes almost blank in Bhaktapur. Gopal Raj Vamsavali and other chronicles credit Anand Deva as the founder of Bhaktapur city in 1197AD and mention that he had built a royal palace called Tripura. Although Newari people do not accept this to be fully true, it shows that Anand Deva could have transformed the village Khopring drang into Bhaktapur city. The royal palace of Bhaktapur city is located almost at the center of the city. Most of the monuments located in and around Bhaktapur Durbar Square were constructed during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. During the early medieval period, the palatial location was called with different names such as Tripura Durbar, Thanthu Rajkula, and Vasantpur Durbar. (Sangam Shrestha, page 20-45, 2010.)

Bhaktapur Durbar Square, which was the palatial complex of the Malla rulers during the medieval period. The major attractions of the complex are the famous Golden Gate to the Taleju Bhawani Temple, the 55-Windowed palace, and several other temples, including Jagannath, Kedarnath, Rameshwor, and Badrinath. Bhaktapur is also famous for Dattatreya Square, which lies in the eastern corner of the city. The main attractions of this square are the Bhimsen Temple, Pujarinath (wood carving museum), peacock window, and the Dattatreya Temple itself. It is believed that the temple, dedicated to the combined incarnation of the three supreme Hindu gods Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheshwar, it is believed that the temple was built using timber from a single tree. (Gyanendra Dhar Pradhananga, 2020.)

## Fifty-five Windows palace

Like other royal palaces of the Kathmandu Valley, Bhaktapur Durbar Square is also dotted with many courtyards (chowks), royal buildings, stone spouts, and temples dedicated to different gods and goddesses and an example of high architectural buildings erected during different centuries by different kings. The Durbar Square, as in the medieval period, did not serve only as a royal residence but also as an administrative center as well.

The Palace of Fifty-five Windows, this magnificent palace was built during the reign of King Yakshya Malla in 1427AD and was subsequently remodeled by King Bhupatindra Malla in the seventeenth century. Among the brick walls with their gracious setting and sculptural design, is a balcony with Fifty-five Windows, considered to be a unique masterpiece of woodcarving. Bupatindra Malla, king of Bhaktapur, somewhere between circa the 1700s, constructed the Malati Chowk and established a golden spout. Also, the Taleju temple was embellished with golden pinnacles after the restoration. The rare example of Bhupatindra Malla's contribution is the Fresco paintings in the fifty-five windows palaces. (SK Nepal travels and tours, 2010.)

These paintings are the depiction of different stories as narrated in Ramayana and Mahabharat. The central figure of the painting is Viahvaroop. This is one of the rarest wall paintings of Nepal. The stone images of Nara Singh, Hanuman, and a golden statue of his own are other examples of his contribution. In the architectural field, in addition to the palace, another remarkable contribution is the Nyatapola temple erected in 1702 A.D. adjacent to the palace in Taumadhi Tole. This is the tallest Pagoda in Nepal and is also the landmark of the country which has been proved to be a great attraction for the tourist. Nobody would miss praising its beauty and grandeur. This single monument could attract thousands of tourists each year. Another contribution is the temple of Bhairav just a few meters away from the Nyatapola and was built a decade after the inauguration of Nyatapola.

After Bhupatindra Malla, his son Ranajit Malla ascended the throne in 1722 AD. He was the last king of Bhaktapur. His contribution to Durbar Square is the golden gate. It was built in 1753/54. The artwork has been proved to be a masterpiece of repose work. It has been praised by international art critics as the jewel of the entire art works created in Asia during the period. (Sangam Shrestha, page 20-45, 2010.)

#### Nyatapola temple

The next structure is the Nyatapola temple which means five stories temple in the Newari language. The temple built in pagoda style is evidence of architectural perfection and beauty. You should be able to see the sky-high rooftop of the Nyatapola Temple long before you reach Taumadhi Tole. With a five-story towering 30m above the square, this is the tallest temple in all Nepal and one of the tallest buildings in the Kathmandu Valley. This perfectly proportioned temple was built in 1702 AD during the reign of King Bhupatindra Malla, and the construction was so sturdy that the 1934 AD and 2015 earthquakes caused only minor damage. (SK Nepal travels and tours, 2010.)

## 4. Methodology

Bhaktapur is one of the most visited cities in Nepal and people believe that no tourist should consider their visit to Nepal complete unless they have had a glimpse of Bhaktapur. Bhaktapur has been a centre of attraction and admiration since it was set up by King Ananda Dev Malla in 889 A.D. Several centuries have gone by; yet, Bhaktapur has remained intact and has not changed much in terms of its integrity and authenticity. (Gyanendra Dhar Pradhananga, 2020.) Bhaktapur has been inscribed in the World Heritage List since 1979 AD. Of the seven UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the Kathmandu Valley, two are in Bhaktapur, namely Changunarayan Temple and Bhaktapur Durbar Square. While Changunarayan, the oldest temple in the Kathmandu Valley is in a rural setting, the rest of the cultural heritage sites of Bhaktapur are all in the core city area. (Gyanendra Dhar Pradhananga, 2020.)

Tourism is a major source that brings revenue for the conservation of heritage sites in Bhaktapur. It is one of the major income-earning activities of locals, which is based on cultural and heritage resources. To raise funds for heritage conservation, Bhaktapur Municipality began levying a \$1 service charge on foreign visitors in 1993 AD. Compelled by the urgency to restore many more heritage sites, the city administration raised the toll in several stages to \$10 in 2001. (Gyanendra Dhar Pradhananga, 2020.) The service charge collected in the form of an entrance fee to the city area by the municipality was initially opposed even by tourism entrepreneurs. They accused the local body of thwarting tourism and of 'killing the goose that lays the golden eggs'. Eventually, this community backlash against the service charge died down, it did not take long for the community to realize the benefits of the entrance fee. The fear of tourism dying in Bhaktapur proved to be wrong. Bhaktapur is a pivotal point in this research. It already has what it takes to be a historical city. After identifying the tourism's impact on the community, we will be able to focus on possible solutions. This research provides feedback to the Bhaktapurians to make the best decision in the future regarding tourism.

The interviews were done in Nepali to get more open and deeper answers since all the respondents were native Nepali speakers. The aim was to create a relaxed and confidential atmosphere as possible for the interviewees and using their native language supported that. For this research, approximately 17 questionnaire guidelines were created and in total there were 6 participants. The answers were analyzed using the qualitative method. A total of six unstructured interviews were conducted and they were analysed carefully. The interviewees were chosen based on their occupation and knowledge about the research subject. Interviewees are aged between 25-50 years old Nepalese. Four of

them have been working in a travel agency and a community homestay in Nepal and two of them are tourism graduates from Finland. All six respondents are from the Newari background, however, from different cities in Nepal. The contact information of the interviewees was found either through the researcher's networks or from the internet. The interviews were conducted in 2020. All the interviews were conducted remotely due to the current COVID-19 situation using two different applications. One of the interviews was conducted using Zoom – a video conferencing software and two using WhatsApp-a messaging software. The length of the interviews varied from forty minutes to one and a half-hour. The interviewees were asked for their permission to use their names on the final paper and all of them gave their consent. Amongst six, two of the interviewees have more than 10 years of experience in the tourism industry as a travel manager and a senior tour guide. Whereas one of the interviewees is a COO, chief operating officer of the Panauti community homestay.

The methodology begins by providing an overview of the philosophical positions in social science research and continues to address research methods, research areas, and data collection. The reliability and validity, as well as the ethical issues relevant to the research, are discussed after this. The final segment elaborates on the study's result analysis. The methods of analysis apply to 'methods of data collection. Such methods help to collect the data needed to address questions about the study.

To make any research a good one, it depends on the data which drives it, so choosing the right data collection technique matters. Method of data collection is a technique that allows researchers to collect information about the study population (that may be people, objects, phenomena, etc.) and the setting in which it occurs. Since this work aims to find out how tourism can revitalize indigenous and local culture, Methods of qualitative analysis were selected. The key methods used here for the study are interviews and remarks. The in-depth, semi-structured interview is considered very efficient to explain and reason for human behavior. That kind of interview can help the researchers go deeper into the informants' perceptions and the truth behind them. (Business result methodology, 2020).

#### **4.1 Case study as an approach: Newari culture of Bhaktapur**

Newari culture in Bhaktapur is unique in a way in which historians claim that the city of Bhaktapur has been inhabited by people for two thousand years. According to written documents, it seems to have originated in the eighth century. In general, the older the city, the richer it is in culture and heritage, but it should be preserved. A real example of this is Bhaktapur. Temples, sattalas, parties, chaityas, viharas, stone fountains, and artistic figures

carved on their columns, windows and walls express the consciousness of the time and society of Bhaktapur. Interviewees were the perfect candidate since all of them were born in a Newari family. They know exactly what has happened in recent years since they started working in the tourism field. They can see from the perspective of the researcher's eye that is why the results are important in this research. Interviews were conducted using social media, and interview time ranged from 40 minutes to 1.5 hours. The COO of the Panauti community is a good example of being successful in communicating between tourists and locals. Communicating with the locals and convincing them that tourism will bring positives in the livelihood, the establishment of community homestay proves her ability. Following her footsteps now there are more than eighteen community homestays in Nepal that are slowly but surely improving their livelihood. These interviewees represent the gap between the cultures since 2010-2021 because some of them are living abroad and some of them have been working in the tourism field. They know the best where tourism has brought any changes in the society.

Why Bhaktapur? the core of Newari culture is also the food culture from Juju Dhau, Bhadgaon to hats, handicrafts, wood, and pottery work to the biscuit process, Bhaktapur is now famous in the country and abroad. Located in the inner part of the city, 55 windows palace is a special attraction among tourists. In addition, this city is exceptional for its many intangible assets. There are still around 200 music and drama groups that perform regularly. The scholar Jagadish Shamsheer Rana wrote a book about this property called "The Capital of Nachgan(dance): Bhaktapur", which also clarified the identity of this city. (Bhaktapur itself, 2019, Kantipur post.)

Every procession, festival, and monastery in the city has its legend, which reflects the environment and style of the time. Newar society and lifestyle are just as safe in the narrow streets. It is a strange sight to see the inhabitants of the city walking in the temple at sunrise and engaging in farming in the fields during the day. Somewhere between the yard and the road, wood is made, somewhere marble, somewhere clay art. Then, in various activities, such as the annual procession, the festivals, which repeat themselves at regular intervals, reflect the Lichchhavi period and the Malla period. (Bhaktapur itself, 2019, Kantipur post.)

Lately, it has become a tradition to build private houses in the traditional style. Even with the disappearance of the roof, the use of brick walls and artistic windows seems to have resurfaced. The municipality is giving some concessions to those who build houses in original crafts, which has also saved the character and cover of the city to some extent. (Bhaktapur itself, 2019, Kantipur post.)



## **4.2 Unstructured interview as a method to collect empirical data**

Unstructured interview refers to an interview in which the questions to be asked to the respondents are not determined in advance. Unstructured interviews are qualitative, exploratory, open-ended questions, implicit, interpretivism, and it is used to check the details of the candidate to determine whether he is the right person for the chosen research. The unstructured interview does not use any fixed format; however, the interviewer may have some planned questions prepared in advance. It is a qualitative research method, in which questions are framed during the interview. As the interview is unplanned, it has an informal approach where a friendly conversation takes place between the interviewer and the interviewee.

The reason the researcher chooses this method of data collection is to understand the interviewees in detail. Many professional interviews might stress the interviewees and choose to answer the questions that are deemed professional. By having an unstructured interview, it is easy to ask questions on a personal level. Also, it is a better understanding, flexible, and very practical way given the background of the interviewees. It develops a good expectation for the candidate. Also, the profile of interviewees is Nepalese, it is easy to approach with an unstructured and simple questionnaire since Nepali decision-making culture is somewhat spontaneous.

However, there are some drawbacks to unstructured interviews, that the interviewer having the freedom to ask any number of questions and can change the sequence or omit certain questions which are already planned. It also lacks uniformity. In addition, the interviewer must have in-depth knowledge and skills on the subject.

Data collection is a systematic method for gathering and analyzing information from several sources to gain a complete and reliable image of a subject area. The collection of data helps an individual or organization to answer specific questions, determine outcomes, and forecast future probabilities and trends. (Emily McLaughlin, 2020.) A qualitative approach for gathering data, in-depth interviews provide the ability to obtain rich, insightful data about how people think and act, and complex processes unfold. They can be used as a stand-alone method of study or as part of a multi-method system, depending on the research needs. Typically, face-to-face interviews are done in detail, so that a report can be produced for respondents. The application of body language is to add a high degree of comprehension to the responses. The interview style is based on the interviewer. Successful interviewees listen in-depth rather than speak. The interview is more like a controlled dialogue than a session like repeat questions and answers.

This research uses both primary and secondary data based on indigenous Newari culture and tourism. The in-depth interviews were the primary source of secondary data. In the research, data collected from the interviews were scripted in English and analyzed later. Most of the respondents understood the research questions and answered promptly according to their experiences.

### **Interviewee profiles**

#### **Interviewee 1: Senior tour guide, Royal Mountain travels privately limited**

For the depth interview, I contacted and interviewed a senior tour guide from Royal Mountain travels privately limited. Kathmandu, Nepal. Narayan is a local of Patan, another big community of Newars in Nepal. He has been involved in the tourism business for over a decade and studied the culture very closely and understand it in depth.

Before the interview was conducted, a clear observation was made where the interviewee's profile meets the interview questionnaire requirements. As the family background, cultural life, education, and work experience in the tourism industry play a crucial role to get relevant or close-to answers from the interviews.

When I asked how you see tourism business in your area since you have been a tour guide in the area for more than a decade.

His answers were *“Before tourism was a thing, we were entrepreneurs, some worked in the field, some did pottery, some made the jewels, ornaments, some were wood sculptures. The consumption was very local. This has changed much since it has become more and more difficult for livelihood. Many of my friends went abroad and I did not see my ancestors’ jobs as sustainable so went to work in the tourism field. The tourism business is sustainable if you do it correctly. Nowadays our crafts are recognized beyond the borders but not many are left to do such skilled jobs. Sometimes I feel like we are forgetting our very culture, but I believe this is the change”*.

#### **Interviewee 2: Tour guide, Royal Mountain travels private limited**

Interviewee 2, Junu, is local to Patan. She has been working in the tourism industry for more than four years. She is a student of tourism and has in-depth knowledge of the Newari culture. Since she is from the Newari community and working in the tourism field, she was a well-matched interviewee for this research. She is another advocate of community homestay which we understand fairly is business model is done correctly it benefits the locals greatly.

According to her *“Patan used to be the land to do farming, a lot of locals were engaged in the agriculture sector, however, that has changed much. There is not even space for gardening nowadays, farming is almost impossible unless you go out of the city”. I prefer fresh vegetables and fruits that are grown here. I am working in the tourism field; would not it be nice to have fresh food for our home community guests? Or taking them to the field to do the harvesting, for example, fresh cabbages, cauliflower, and green vegetables?*

*She also noted that “even though we are from the Newari background, we use our native language only at home with my parents, my friend and siblings prefer to speak in Nepali or English. The reason is that there is much less use of my native language. If you want to get a job Nepali and English is must”*

### **Interviewee 3: Chief operating officer, Panauti community homestay**

Poonam is a local from Panauti. Another big community of Newars, she had been the chief operating officer for Panauti community homestay for almost nine years. She is involved in different projects in the community. The idea of community homestay was one of the projects empowering women. Panauti community homestay is one of the first and most successful homestays in Nepal. *“Now Nepal has more than eighteen community homestays which all started here in Panauti she says.”*

*She says “It was not the smooth start. The idea of bringing someone into your home that you do not know was very foreign. Many people did not believe it would work but here we are. More than sixteen families are involved nowhere in this area. It started from my house, taught my mom to speak basic English, taught how to involve guests to get the vegetables from the market, in the season from the field. Guests loved it, getting the authentic experience with locals. Instead of the crowd in Kathmandu, they prefer staying here in a calm and beautiful hill of Panauti.”*

### **Interviewee 4: Tourism student, Laurea University of Applied Sciences**

Sarjo is a tourism graduate from Laurea University of Applied Sciences. He has been living in Finland for more than ten years. He originally comes from Bhaktapur, the sister city of Kathmandu and another big community of Newars live there. Saroj himself is from the Newari background, Bhaktapur durbar square used to be his playground when he was a kid.

When asked how can we have sustainable cultural development in your community he believes that *“education is the primary factor, it is possible to preserve the culture if we*

*were taught in school what culture means, the importance? Every time I walk around the old temples and houses, I am surprised by the stone and wooden sculptures. To have those talents you must dedicate your life. The younger generation like us does not want to spend our life carving woods because it is not financially sustainable. We must find a way to make it worth learning. I do not know many people who do spectacular arts and if there are any, they are already old, after them, there is no one who can continue it. Meaning that it will be forgotten and go extinct”.*

#### **Interviewee 5: Tourism student, Laurea University of Applied Sciences**

Raj is from Bhaktapur as well. He is also a tourism graduate from Laurea University of Applied Sciences. He lived in the outskirts of Bhaktapur. His experience is a bit different.

*According to him “Tourism was not yet that popular in my area. There was a popular temple near my house, only local people and Nepali came to visit when we had the festivals other than that it was a quiet town. People were working in the field, locals were operating small shops with clothes, kitchen utensils, art, and craft. Whatever was produced locally was consumed locally. These days things have changed a bit, not that many people are working in the field. Many younger people have gone abroad to work or study like me. Some of the locals have been involved in the tourism industry in the city centre. Very few are working in the field.”*

*From my point of view, to have sustainable cultural tourism development first, we must understand the core of culture, what it means to us. There are a lot of festivals that Newari people celebrate in the Kathmandu valley, thousands of domestic tourists come to see the event if we can leverage it to the international tourism market maybe it will boost the local economy. People will probably find worth involving in cultural tourism development.*

#### **Interviewee 6: Research and development manager, Royal Mountain travels privately limited**

Rabi is a research and development manager at Royal Mountain travels. He has been involved in the tourism industry for over twenty years. He has seen the most changes in the tourism industry in Nepal. He is a local from Kathmandu. Needless to say, that Kathmandu has been home to Newars for centuries. He believes that *“traveling the world is important to understand and connect with people and nature. Similarly, the inward journey is also necessary for us to know about self, as the way this universe is operating, our body is also functioning similarly.”*

How can we make Newari culture tourism sustainable?

*I have been involved in the tourism industry for a very long time before tourism used to be a thing in Nepal. Being in the travel agency business, very few guests come to see just the culture here in Nepal. Many of them come here to see nature, the mountains, and the wild animals. We have more than 136 ethnic groups and each of them has different customs and cultures, but we are not leveraging them enough. They are put into a shadow.*

*The very reason we promoted community homestay. Visitors will get to see the locals; their culture probably learns word or two local languages. This makes them a sense of belonging. If the visitors have a pleasant experience, they will pass it forward to other visitors like a chain reaction. We have a huge potential in cultural tourism, our government and other stakeholders should look through it to make it sustainable.*

#### **4.3 Validity, reliability, and limitations of the study**

Newars are present in every part of the country and beyond the borders of Nepal, but they are the original inhabitants of Kathmandu valley, the capital city of Nepal. So, we have chosen Kathmandu valley for our study area. Newars' economic and social situation in eastern Nepal can vary from that of central Nepal to western regions. Kathmandu Valley region is unique for studying this aspect (the relationship between indigenous people and tourism). The Newari Village near Bhaktapur and around are affiliated with tourism, library, Newari culture houses have been a good combination for the researcher to select this region as the field of study in this thesis.

The advantage of the interview is its flexibility, as the researcher can repeat questions, clarify answers and expressions, correct misunderstandings and have a discussion with the interviewee. The question structure can also be arranged by the interviewer to an order they see as the most appropriate. The benefit of the interview is that it can be conducted with persons who have knowledge and experience of the research topic. The interviewees were chosen to widen the knowledge of the cultural tourism field to fulfill the theory collected for the theoretical part of the research.

Reliability is a measure of whether the test scores are reliable or consistent. You may also think of it as the potential for repeatability of a study or research results. A medical thermometer, for example, is a reliable instrument that can calculate the correct temperature each time it is used. Likewise, a reliable math test can correctly assess mathematical knowledge for any student taking it and consistently reproduce credible research findings.

Reliability and validity are ways to show and express the rigor and trustworthiness of research findings in research processes. To be of assistance to research, it should avoid misleading those who use it. If a hospital wants to substitute one medication with another medication that is better and more reliable, then administrators, physicians, and patients should justifiably expect the decision to be based on strong evidence. This trust depends on a variety of research features: the main research query, how data is obtained including when and whom, and what.

### **Limitations**

This thesis aims to research the condition of the Newari community and tourism based on their society in Kathmandu. It does not reflect the conditions of all Newari people living across the country. The Newari people live from east to west of Nepal and their traditions and culture could be different from those Newari's living in capital city areas of Nepal.

This research utilized a relatively small sample size of six respondents within the city of Bhaktapur. Interviews were planned to take place in person but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was not possible to travel from Finland to Nepal. On the other hand, the project was also constricted by time: The goal was to complete this research within one year from start to finish and to complete the study largely in-house. As far as the research team could ascertain, background information and a viable review of the research literature did not exist, nor could be said research be sought out, due to the aforementioned time constraints.

#### **4.4 Interview results**

Technology and changes in the way of life of city dwellers are becoming a challenge to keep the ancient city in the same condition. Even so, owning one is still beyond the reach of the average person. Its traditions and originality change over time. However, each city has its fundamental character, the extent to which it is preserved always depends on the discretion of the ruler or the concerned body and leadership.

The tourism industry is one of the most thriving economic activities. If managed responsibly and sustainably, indigenous culture tourism spurs employment, it will revive and interact with the culture and tradition that are about to extinct. It will alleviate poverty, empower the local community, and people and allow them to retain their relationship with the land, and nurture a sense of pride. However, throughout the centuries, indigenous people have faced different forms of discrimination, displacement, and cultural assimilation, this needs to be properly addressed by the government and relevant stakeholders.

It has become clear that the development of indigenous tourism cannot be undertaken without proper partnerships among indigenous communities, governments, tourism destinations, private sectors, and civil society. Only multi-stakeholder partnerships can assure that indigenous people can derive direct benefits from tourism and keep their core values intact. Indigenous tourism refers to tourism activity in which Indigenous people are directly involved either through control and/or by having their culture serve as the essence of the attraction. Indigenous tourism is one of the fastest-growing sections of the tourism industry and if it is presented well, it provides the opportunities to promote greater cultural understanding while increasing indigenous people's economical capacity.

As an important sector of the tourism industry and as a potentially key element in community economic development, indigenous tourism is worth studying. Thus, this is a subject worth consideration by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. The ability to analyse, critique, conceptualize and plan for indigenous cultural tourism experiences is a critical skill for students. However, the roles that we play in indigenous tourism vary, determining whether to engage in tourism, what to share with tourists, and who and how that is done is a decision that must be made by indigenous people directly. Cultural heritage has been one of the key drawing factors for visitors and it is rising day by day. It preserves old forts and monuments and transfers them into heritage sites. People transform into modernity on the one hand, but on the other, they are the descendants of primitive cultures and traditions. Visiting such places triggers a deep sense of the past. This form of cultural tourism involves all the key destinations to visit of a cultural heritage site. (Erick Maina, 2015).

Cultural assets can loosely be divided into two groups: tangible and intangible. Those cultural items which can be accessed are tangible assets. For example, landmarks, sculptures, historic buildings, and many other culturally significant items. Intangible heritages represent intellectual pieces of society. They still exist but not physically in society. Examples of intangible cultural heritages are songs, traditional skills, myths, values, stories of certain arts. Cultural tourism is essentially a very ambiguous term, so it is not easy to distinguish between cultural tourism and others. Tourists are being also offered packages featuring other cultural attractions. Therefore, as part of their tours, almost all visitors visit cultural tourism destinations. According to the National Trust for Historic Preservation cultural heritage tourism is 'traveling to historic and cultural attractions to learn about the past interestingly and enjoyably'. (Erick Maina, 2015).

### Cultural heritage conservation

Cultural heritage and tourism are interconnected. While cultural heritage creates a foundation for the growth and development of tourism, the latter generates funds that make conservation of heritages possible. Indeed, cultural heritage has hardly any meaning without an audience and a community participating in and benefitting from it. At the core of this are cultural attractions, which are often man-made buildings, structures, artifacts, and sites. They were initially designed for a purpose other than attracting visitors, such as religious worship, but now attract a substantial number of tourists. Some of these cultural areas have been inscribed on the UNESCO's World Heritage List, and together with other culture and nature areas, these World. Heritage Sites are famous attractions. They form the backbone of the tourism industry, which is now a prioritized sector of the government.

Nepal's Legislature-Parliament characterizes the country as a 'multi-ethnic, multilingual, multi-religious and multicultural country in the constitution proclaimed in September 2015. It is more of a continuation of Nepal's older constitutions. Prithvi Narayan Shah, former king of Nepal and the founder of modern Nepal, declared Nepal as a garden of four castes and thirty-six sub-castes.

A contentious project at Patan Durbar Square on Keshav Narayan Chowk is a typical example of how donor agencies have worked virtually independently in some of the country's significant cultural heritage. Although the practical use of an old palace compound as a museum seems to be an appropriate technique (Narayanhi Museum), the extensive experimentation on old facades and the use of modern materials, e.g., steel instead of readily available traditional material such as timber, is doubtless. This all helps



as the bridge to preserve the cultural heritage for the future generation.  
(Gorkhapatrzonline.com, 2014.)

The Ancient Monuments Protection Act was first promulgated in 1956 and amended several times later and is the current legal text on heritage conservation in Nepal. It is no wonder this legislation places a strong focus on "old" and "archaeological." As the old saying refers to the Kathmandu Valley as the "Nepal," this act genuinely limits itself to the Kathmandu Valley heritage. Hence, Nepal's first and foremost heritage policy challenge is extending the legal provision to other areas. The strategy requires a structure for institutional management and law enforcement at locations around the country to broaden the conservation legislation to other areas. (Law commission Nepal, 2013).

Different regulatory requirements have direct and indirect impacts on the mechanism of conserving heritage. From its inception, cultural heritage protection has been seen to be closely correlated with tourism, and thus the tourism legislation and development plans have direct effects on protection motives and means. The acts of urban government, the codes governing buildings, roads, and other infrastructures have vital relations with the present state of heritage sites and their environment. Throughout the context of decentralization, the self-governance act represents to a certain extent the democratic rights of individuals and communities to meet their existing aspirations.

The first pattern of conservation from ancient history to early modern history was that preservation efforts were funded almost entirely by the King (or the government, for that matter). The second pattern is seen in recent decades (typically after the 1970s) is a major presence of national and international agencies like UNESCO and other donor agencies. Between these two key patterns, there is also a third pattern that occurs everywhere but is rarely discussed, local private and public agency initiatives; for example, repairs and renovation work funded by local individuals or families, and the same work done by joint projects within communities. Various cultural organizations and activities that promote these restoration efforts are aligned with this third pattern, i.e., youth groups in a community organize or take advantage of cultural events to raise funds to help some renovation work in local temples and other community buildings.

Nevertheless, the national environmental agenda lacks a strong stance on these local initiatives. Not directly falling under these three patterns, but the people who build, care for, and carry on the legacies of these heritages are a significant constitution of heritage and heritage practice.

## **Suggestions and recommendations**

### **Sustainable tourism development stakeholders**

Tourism enterprises namely travel agencies, tour operators and government should develop their tourism operations responsible and sustainable while enabling indigenous communities that wish to open to tourism to take full grasp of opportunities. More and more tourists are expressing their interest to experience indigenous culture and traditions. This trend makes it clear that in the future indigenous tourism will have a significant part in the travel and tourism industry economy.

Group of stakeholders that are directly involved in tourism operations on the ground.

- a. Tour operators and travel agencies
- b. Tour guides
- c. Indigenous communities
- d. Tourists

### **Culture conservation through sustainability**

Sustainability theory helps to create a balance between tourism and culture by conservation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage and sustainable tourism development. Sustainability in cultural tourism is the management of cultural heritage and tourism activities by creating social, economic, and environmental benefits. As for the balance between these crucial factors i.e., society, environment, and tourism one can spread creativity and cultural diversity through various awareness campaigns and their everlasting positive impacts. Sustainability theory also deals with the complex relationship between culture and tourism. The lack of sustainability in cultural tourism that may be planning or preparedness results in cultural and economic damage to various tourist destinations throughout the country. In the context of Nepal, Sustainability in cultural tourism plays a vital role in preserving cultural heritage as well as creating employment opportunities.

### **Authenticity**

Cultural authenticity is the analysis of beliefs and values that portrays the accurate details of everyday life and language for a cultural group. The authenticity of local culture creates a huge impact or impression on a tourist audience. The role of cultural authenticity in cultural tourism is important. As we all are aware of the tourists' fantasy i.e., they travel to those destinations that are unique and have diverse cultures, so tourists are much likely to visit such destinations which are culturally authentic. In the context of Nepal, Nepalese people

with various cultures have their own story of origin and the most interesting part is how they have evolved. Tourists are more likely to be amazed by their language and the way they live which is authentic and more intriguing at the same time.

The purpose of the present study is to broaden the understanding of authenticities' various interpretations in the cultural tourism context. All societies create traditions, invent new ceremonies, and reinvent themselves for various purposes. Everyone in this growing world is in the process of making themselves up all the time, period. When the culture becomes authentic, then only one is known for their culture rather than his work or efforts.

## 4.5 Findings

The interview was conducted using social media. A total of six unstructured interviews were conducted and interviewees were selected carefully. This research was initiated to find if the culture and traditions have been declining in the Bhaktapur district because of tourism. No concrete evidence was found to back that up. However, experts and locals living in the city believe some of the traditions are rather reviving. And if there are any changes in costumes and language spoken by local (Newari) is declining because of the social media and globalization.

Most interviewees believe that the Newari culture such as language and some old rituals have been forgotten not because of tourism but because of globalization. One interviewee's response to the declining use of the Newari language was.

*"When I was young, we spoke Newari at home, my parents spoke only Newari. At school, we spoke only Nepali and English. Since Nepali was the official language, we would rather learn to speak fluent Nepali than our mother tongue."-Interviewee 1.*

*"The reason I was afraid to learn and speak Newari was that I had an accent when I spoke Nepali, I had a feeling that if I have a Newari accent it is not professional enough. I had a friend who did not get a job just because she had a Newari accent and that is true."-Interviewee 1*

From interview analysis, it seems that most of the Newars believe that it is useful to be able to speak the mother tongue, but it does not add any benefits to the future, e.g., work-life. Whereas speaking Nepali or English language would land a better job.

*"Many people in Nepal would rather speak English all the time than speak a single word of Nepali forget about Newari, it is a minor language anyway and it does not have much use when it comes to job and going abroad. Parents are rather proud of their kids speaking English than Nepali or Newari. Bitter truth"- Interviewee 2.*

Even though the population of Newari speakers is declining slowly, many Newars are learning the artistic aspect of Newari culture for example wood carving, thanka painting, playing traditional instruments.

*"We started community homestay about a decade ago, our town is one of the oldest Newari towns in Nepal but the community we live in have mixed ethnic group, news, brahmans, chantries, and other minorities. When tourism started to flourish here, we started to welcome them with Newari traditional music, we started teaching them how to*

*make Newari dishes. This has taught locals how to make Newari food and play newari instruments even though they are not from the same background.”- Interviewee 3*

Involving the Indigenous community in the tourism activities.

The shared value between tourists and the indigenous communities has been the only motive to tourism development in many economies. An indigenous community could thrive economically and preserve their culture at the same time if it is done sustainably.

Bhaktapur has an abundance of resource attractions which since been attracting tourists for a long time. However, the engagement between the local community and tourists happens much seldom. These encounters sometimes lose the sense of belonging in the culture. Which in the long run presents significant tension between the tourists and the local community. As tourists feel they have been ripped off and the local community feels like tourists are not spending enough.

From the interviews finding, to balance the relationship between the indigenous community and tourists, there should be a proper guideline which can be achieved involving the indigenous people community in the tourism activities. As an example of Panauti Community Homestay, the local tourism stakeholders have realized early enough that how important it is to include the local community in the tourism activities.

*Interviewee 3: says that “We would not have achieved this success if the local community was not involved since the beginning. It is important to teach ourselves the core value of our community and culture than bring it into the spotlight for tourists to enjoy. Every experience we provide here to the tourists is very genuine, we want our guests to feel like they are one of us. For example, taking them to harvest fruit and vegetables from the garden, teaching them how to cook a local dish. This eliminates the gap between tourists and local people. This way tourists get to have first-hand experience and local gets to directly involved in the tourism activities.”*

## 5. Conclusion

Tourism is generally known for its tangible results, job creation, tax revenue as well as less tangible results, for example, quality of life. It can be built on a wide range of attractions like agritourism, arts tourism, cultural and heritage leisure, leisure centers, fairs, events and conferences, sports teams, entertainment, and more. International tourism is one of the largest export earners in the world.

Visiting old monuments and places causes a deep sense of past culture and society. This type of cultural tourism comprises all journeys' main goal visits to places and objects of the cultural heritage of the destination. Heritage is material (museums, monuments, galleries, historical sites) and intangible (traditions, holidays, customs). Ethnic tourism includes travel to get acquainted and learn, as well as inclusion in a group of people with different customs, habits, lifestyles, and traditions. A distinctive feature of ethnic tourism is learning more about different cultures. It is also claimed that tourism would soon be the world's biggest industry offering the biggest number of jobs. Similarly, cultural tourism is considerably growing. Cultural tourism is growing and expanding all over the world. There is an increasing desire by millions of travellers for access to 'primitive' cultures, a curiosity to taste if only briefly their traditional way of life, a wish to see, experience photograph their 'exotic' practices.

We have seen immense changes in ourselves within a couple of decades. Changes that are driven by globalization, urbanization, and most importantly the rapid development of technologies. One most notable change is changing in culture and tradition. In this study, we have found that some of the Newari cultures have declined, at the same time some of them are reviving. Some of the traditions are declining because local wants to explore the foreign culture. Tourism does seem to have an impact on the livelihood of the locals. Not necessarily all the changes that are brought by tourists are negative. They also leave positive impacts in the community for example the people of Pauanti have learned to harness the power of their much old culture and traditions.,

To conclude, every stakeholder should be taken responsible for the changes, whether it is a governing body or an individual tour guide. Co-operation should go together with tour companies, tour guide, and locals. This way locals will have first-hand experiences of how it is important beneficial for them to preserve their culture.

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## Attachments

Appendix. 1.

Sample stakeholder interview guide

I want to thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. My name is Madhu Chaulagain, and I would like to talk to you about your experiences in representing the Newari community of Bhaktapur. I am doing my master's degree thesis in 'Indigenous culture and tourism of Bhaktapur district, Nepal'. I am accessing the history of Newari culture and tourism and its effects in the capital regions of Nepal.

The interview might take about than an hour. I will be taping the session because I do not want to miss any of your comments that are valuable to my research.

I will be taking some notes as well so please feel free to share your experiences and expertise as much as possible.

All responses will be kept confidential. This means that your interview responses will only be shared with my thesis supervisor, and I will ensure that any information I include in my report does not identify you as the respondent. And please remember, you do not have to talk about anything you do not want to, and you may end the interview at any time.

Please let me know if you have any questions regarding the interview?

Are you willing to participate in the interview?

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Interviewee

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Date & signature

### Interview questionnaire Guideline

1. Would you like to begin with your introduction, what you do and some of your work experiences?
2. Could you please give us some background about Newari culture in your local area?
3. How do you communicate with your family and friends, what language do you speak with them?
4. What is your perception on younger Newari generation?
5. Have you stopped celebrating any ritual and cultural ceremonies within last 5 years?
6. Are there any cultural ceremonies, festivals that have gone extinct due to exposure to tourism?
7. How are your culture influenced by tourists? Foreign and local tourists?
8. How the Newari culture is any different from other culture?
9. How do local feel about tourism in the community?
10. How has local people's life been changed because of the tourism?
11. How has tourism contributed to local community?
12. Has tourism improved the living standard of the local community?
13. Tourism needs to be developed in harmony with the natural and cultural environment.
14. Has there been any negative impact in the local culture due to tourism?
15. What are the major ways to promote indigenous cultural tourism without disturbing cultural heritage?
16. Which are the major reasons for or shifts in cultural decline?
17. What kinds of changes in indigenous culture are observed which are tourist attractions?

The thesis will address the following questions.

#### Research questions

- What are the major ways to promote indigenous cultural tourism without disturbing cultural heritages?
- Which are the major reasons for disappearing culture and traditions?
- What kinds of changes in indigenous culture are observed which are tourist attractions?