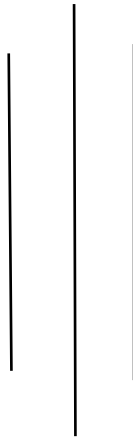


**A PROJECT REPORT ON
EXPLORING THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN
SIRUBARI HOMESTAY HOST: A QUALITATIVE STUDY**



BY

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A Project Work Report Submitted to Pokhara University in partial in the
requirement for the degree of **Bachelor in Hotel Management**

AT the
Nepal Tourism and Hotel Management college

Pokhara-14, Chhinedanda

July 2026

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the project work report entitled “**Exploring the challenges and opportunities in Sirubari home stay host.**” Submitted for the BHM is my original work and the Project Work Report has not formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, or other similar titles.

Samjhana Gurung

July, 2026

CERTIFICATE

I hereby declare that the project work report entitled “**Exploring the challenges and opportunities in Sirubari homestay host**” submitted by Samjhana Gurung Roll NO- 23150258 for the partial fulfilment of the requirement of BHM embodies the bonafide work done by her under my supervision.

.....

Suresh Raj Adhikari
Project Work Supervisor
July, 2026

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to all those who have contributed to the successful completion of this research study.

First and foremost, I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to my research supervisor, Mr. Suresh Raj Adhikari, for his invaluable guidance, continuous encouragement, constructive feedback, and expert advice throughout the entire research process. His valuable insights, patience, and academic support have greatly contributed to the successful completion and improvement of this study.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to the respected faculty members and administration of Nepal Tourism and Hotel Management College (NTHMC) for providing the necessary academic support, resources, and a supportive learning environment that enabled me to conduct this research successfully.

I am profoundly grateful to all the research participants who generously contributed their valuable time, knowledge, experiences, and personal insights during the data collection process. Their willingness to openly share their perspectives, provide meaningful information, and participate despite their busy schedules was essential to the success of this research. The authenticity and depth of their responses greatly enriched this study and helped me gain a better understanding of the research topic. I sincerely appreciate their cooperation, trust, and commitment, without which this research would not have been possible.

I would also like to express my heartfelt thanks to my family, friends, and well-wishers for their continuous encouragement, motivation, and emotional support throughout this academic journey.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge and appreciate everyone who directly or indirectly supported me in completing this research study. Their guidance, encouragement, and assistance have been invaluable, and I remain truly grateful for their contributions.

Thank you

Samjhana Gurung

BHM 6th Semester

NTHMC

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Sirubari, located in the Syangja District of Nepal, is widely recognized as one of the first planned homestay villages in the country and a pioneer in community-based rural tourism. It has played a key role in shaping Nepal's rural tourism model by integrating local participation, cultural preservation, and sustainable tourism practices. The village has become an important example of how rural communities can use tourism as a tool for economic development while maintaining their cultural identity (NTB, 2023). The homestay concept in Sirubari was introduced as a response to limited income opportunities in rural areas, where agriculture alone was not sufficient for livelihood sustainability. The initiative was developed through strong community collaboration, where villagers collectively decided to host tourists in their homes and provide cultural hospitality experiences. This approach differs from traditional hotel-based tourism, as it emphasizes personal interaction, cultural immersion, and participation in daily rural life activities such as farming, cooking, and cultural performances (UNWTO, 2019).

Sirubari homestay tourism has become a model for other rural tourism destinations in Nepal. Its success is largely attributed to strong community organization, active participation of local people, and coordination through local tourism committees. The system ensures that tourism benefits are distributed among households, thereby improving living standards and reducing rural poverty. It has also contributed significantly to women's empowerment and youth involvement in income-generating tourism activities such as guiding, hospitality services, and cultural performances (Gurung & Shrestha, 2020). Cultural preservation is another important aspect of Sirubari homestay tourism. The village is predominantly inhabited by the Gurung community, which has rich traditions, rituals, music, dance, and festivals. Through homestay tourism, these cultural elements are showcased to visitors, helping to preserve and promote them. Tourists often participate in traditional welcome ceremonies and cultural performances such as Ghantu dance, which enhances cultural exchange and strengthens local identity (UNWTO, 2021). Despite its achievements, Sirubari homestay tourism faces several challenges. One major issue is inadequate infrastructure development, including transportation access, communication facilities, and modern hospitality services. Limited road connectivity and basic facilities can affect tourist satisfaction and reduce repeat

visitation. In addition, seasonal tourism patterns create income instability for host families, as tourist arrivals fluctuate throughout the year (Adhikari, 2021). Another challenge is the variation in service quality among homestay operators. Since each household manages its own services, differences in hygiene, food quality, and hospitality standards can impact the overall tourist experience. This makes training and capacity-building programs essential for maintaining consistent service quality across the village (Thapa & Lama, 2022). Environmental sustainability is also an important concern. While homestay tourism is considered eco-friendly, increasing tourist numbers can create pressure on natural resources, waste management systems, and local infrastructure. Without proper planning and awareness, tourism activities may negatively impact the environment, making sustainability measures necessary for long-term success (Sharma, 2020). On the opportunity side, Sirubari has strong potential for digital tourism development. With the growth of online platforms and social media, rural destinations can attract international tourists more effectively. Digital marketing and online booking systems can increase visibility and accessibility for global travelers (World Bank, 2022). Additionally, diversification of tourism activities presents further opportunities. Sirubari can expand tourism services by including trekking routes, cultural programs, agricultural tourism, and handicraft promotion. This diversification can increase tourist engagement and generate additional income sources for local residents. Integration with nearby tourism destinations can also strengthen its position in Nepal's tourism network (Nepal Tourism Board, 2023). Government policies and institutional support also play a significant role in strengthening homestay tourism. Programs focused on rural tourism development, infrastructure improvement, and skill training can enhance service quality and sustainability. Collaboration between government agencies, tourism boards, and local communities can further improve the competitiveness of Sirubari as a tourism destination (Gurung & Shrestha, 2020).

In conclusion, Sirubari homestay represents a successful model of community-based tourism in Nepal that contributes to economic development, cultural preservation, and sustainable tourism practices. However, challenges such as infrastructure limitations, service quality inconsistency, and seasonal income variation must be addressed. With proper planning, policy support, and community engagement, Sirubari has strong potential to further develop as a leading homestay destination in Nepal.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Homestay tourism has become an important part of rural tourism development in Nepal, contributing to local income generation, employment opportunities, and cultural preservation. Nepal is widely recognized for community-based tourism, and Sirubari is considered one of the pioneer homestay destinations in the country. Through homestay programs, local families have been able to promote traditional Gurung culture, hospitality, local food, and rural lifestyles to domestic and international tourists. Despite these contributions, homestay hosts continue to face several operational, economic, and social challenges in managing their businesses effectively.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What opportunities have homestay businesses created for hosts and the local community in Sirubari?
2. What major problems do Sirubari homestay hosts face in managing tourists and tourism services?
3. What support and improvements do homestay hosts expect from the government or tourism organizations?

1.4 Objectives of study

- To explore the challenges and opportunities experienced by homestay hosts in Sirubari.
- To identify the socio-economic opportunities created by homestay tourism for hosts in Sirubari.
- To examine the major challenges faced by homestay hosts while operating homestays in Sirubari.

1.5 Significance of the study

This study on exploring the challenges and opportunities among homestay hosts in Sirubari holds significant importance for homestay operators, local communities, policymakers, tourism stakeholders, and future researchers. The study provides valuable insights into the real experiences of homestay hosts, particularly regarding the operational, financial, cultural, and managerial challenges they face while running homestay businesses. At the same time, it highlights the opportunities created through homestay tourism, such as income generation, employment opportunities, cultural exchange, women empowerment, and rural tourism development.

1.6 Literature Review

Homestay tourism has become an important component of community-based tourism, providing visitors with authentic cultural experiences while creating income and employment opportunities for local communities. In Nepal, homestays have contributed to rural development by promoting local traditions, preserving cultural heritage, and encouraging sustainable tourism. Previous studies have shown that homestay hosts face various challenges, including limited financial resources, inadequate infrastructure, lack of training, seasonal fluctuations in tourist arrivals, and marketing difficulties. At the same time, researchers have identified several opportunities, such as increased household income, women's empowerment, cultural exchange, preservation of local customs, and community development through tourism. Many studies have focused on the economic impacts, tourist satisfaction, and the contribution of homestays to rural tourism development. However, fewer studies have explored the personal experiences and perceptions of homestay hosts regarding the challenges they encounter and the opportunities they experience while operating their homestays. In the context of Sirubari Homestay, one of Nepal's pioneering community-based tourism destinations, there is limited qualitative research that examines the lived experiences of homestay hosts, including how they manage daily operational challenges, interact with guests, and benefit from tourism activities. This research gap supports the use of a phenomenological approach to explore the experiences, perspectives, and realities of Sirubari homestay hosts in depth.

1.6.1 Homestay Tourism in the Nepalese Context

Homestay tourism has become one of the most important forms of community-based tourism in Nepal. It provides visitors with an opportunity to experience the local culture, traditions, lifestyle, and hospitality while creating economic opportunities for rural communities. The concept of community homestays in Nepal began in Sirubari, Syangja, in the late 1990s and has since expanded to many districts across the country. Homestay tourism has been recognized as an effective approach to promoting sustainable tourism, preserving cultural heritage, and improving the livelihoods of local people. According to Gautam (2024), homestay tourism has generated significant economic, social, cultural, and environmental benefits for rural communities in Nepal. The study highlighted that homestays create employment opportunities, increase household income, preserve traditional customs, and encourage community participation

in tourism development. Furthermore, homestays provide tourists with authentic experiences by allowing them to participate in local festivals, taste traditional food, and learn about indigenous cultures. Walter et al. (2018) explored community-based ecotourism in Sirubari and Ghalegaun and found that homestay hosts continuously develop new knowledge and skills through their interactions with tourists. The study reported that hosts improve their hospitality practices, environmental awareness, cultural presentation, and homestay management over time. This learning process contributes to both personal development and the long-term sustainability of community-based tourism. Similarly, Lamichhane et al. (2024) reported that Nepal's homestay program has played a significant role in rural development by conserving local culture, improving livelihoods, and strengthening community participation. However, the study also identified challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, limited marketing, insufficient training, and weak institutional support, which affect the sustainable growth of homestay tourism. Bhandari et al. (2022), in a case study of Sirubari Village, found that homestay tourism has positively influenced the socio-economic conditions of local households by increasing income, encouraging cultural preservation, and improving community cooperation. Nevertheless, they noted that continued government support, infrastructure development, and capacity-building programs are necessary to maintain the long-term success of homestay tourism.

Overall, the existing literature indicates that homestay tourism has become an important strategy for promoting sustainable rural tourism and community development in Nepal. Although previous studies have discussed its economic, social, and cultural contributions, limited research has focused on understanding the lived experiences of Sirubari homestay hosts regarding the challenges they face and the opportunities they experience in their daily operations. This gap provides the foundation for the present phenomenological study.

1.6.2 Community-Based Tourism and Homestay Development

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) is a tourism approach in which local communities actively participate in planning, managing, and benefiting from tourism activities. It aims to improve local livelihoods while preserving cultural heritage, protecting natural resources, and promoting sustainable development. In Nepal, community-based tourism is closely associated with homestay programs, where local families provide accommodation, food, and cultural experiences to visitors. These

programs enable communities to become active stakeholders in tourism development rather than passive beneficiaries. Kanel (2021), in a qualitative exploratory study conducted across several rural tourism destinations in Nepal, found that community-based homestays contribute significantly to poverty reduction, sustainable rural development, and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The study further highlighted that capacity development, local participation, and supportive government policies are essential for the long-term sustainability of community homestays. Similarly, Walter et al. and Khanal (2018) explored community-based ecotourism in the Sirubari and Ghalegaun homestays and concluded that active participation in homestay tourism enables hosts to develop new knowledge, improve hospitality skills, strengthen environmental awareness, and preserve local culture. The researchers reported that continuous learning and community collaboration are important factors in the successful development of community-based tourism. Kanel et al. (2024), in a qualitative study of community homestay operators in Nepal, reported that homestay development is driven by local entrepreneurship, community cooperation, and cultural values. The study highlighted that operators perceive homestays not only as a source of income but also as a means of preserving local traditions, strengthening social relationships, and improving the quality of life in rural communities. Gautam (2025) further asserted that community-based tourism supports sustainable development through collective decision-making, local participation, cultural preservation, and responsible management of natural resources. The study explored how community involvement enhances authentic visitor experiences while generating economic and social benefits for host communities.

Although previous studies have extensively discussed the contribution of community-based tourism to rural development, livelihood improvement, and cultural preservation, limited research has specifically explored how Sirubari homestay hosts personally experience the opportunities and challenges associated with community-based tourism. Therefore, the present study seeks to understand these lived experiences through a phenomenological perspective, contributing to a deeper understanding of community-based homestay development in Nepal.

1.6.3 Role of Homestay Hosts in the Hospitality Industry

Homestay hosts play a central role in the hospitality industry by providing accommodation, food, cultural experiences, and personalized services to visitors. Unlike

commercial hotels, homestays offer direct interaction between hosts and guests, allowing visitors to experience local traditions, lifestyles, and hospitality. As a result, homestay hosts serve not only as accommodation providers but also as cultural ambassadors, guides, and community representatives. Their ability to deliver quality hospitality significantly influences guest satisfaction, destination image, and the long-term sustainability of community-based tourism. Walter et al. (2018), in an interpretive case study of the Sirubari and Ghalegaun homestays in Nepal, found that homestay hosts continuously develop hospitality knowledge and practical skills through their interactions with tourists. The study highlighted that hosts learn to improve sanitation, environmental conservation, cultural presentation, communication, and homestay management. It further reported that these learning experiences strengthen hosts' confidence and enhance the quality of services they provide to visitors. Similarly, Kanel et al. (2024), in a qualitative study of community homestay operators in Nepal, explored the experiences of homestay entrepreneurs and concluded that hosts play an essential role in preserving local culture while creating employment and income opportunities for rural communities. The study asserted that community participation, institutional support, and continuous capacity development motivate hosts to improve their hospitality services and expand homestay enterprises. Subedi (2019), in a study on the role of homestays in promoting rural tourism in Nepal, reported that homestay hosts contribute significantly to tourism promotion by introducing visitors to local customs, traditional cuisine, cultural festivals, and natural attractions. However, the study also noted that limited financial resources, inadequate coordination among stakeholders, and insufficient promotional activities reduce the effectiveness of homestay operations.

A recent qualitative study by Sarma et al. (2025) explored service quality from the perspective of homestay hosts and found that quality hospitality extends beyond physical facilities. The researchers highlighted that genuine care, effective communication, personalized attention, cultural authenticity, cleanliness, and trust are key dimensions of service quality that shape guests' overall experiences. Overall, previous studies indicate that homestay hosts are fundamental to the success of the hospitality industry because they influence visitor satisfaction, preserve local culture, and contribute to rural development. Nevertheless, limited research has specifically examined the lived experiences of Sirubari homestay hosts regarding how they balance their hospitality responsibilities with the challenges and opportunities encountered in

their daily operations. This gap provides the rationale for the present phenomenological study.

1.6.4 Challenges Faced by Sirubari Homestay Hosts

Homestay tourism has significantly contributed to rural development and community-based tourism in Nepal. However, homestay hosts continue to encounter various operational, financial, and managerial challenges that affect the sustainability of their businesses. These challenges include inadequate infrastructure, limited marketing and promotion, seasonal fluctuations in tourist arrivals, insufficient hospitality training, financial constraints, and limited institutional support. These issues influence the quality of services provided by hosts and their ability to compete in an increasingly competitive tourism market. Walter et al. (2018), in an interpretive case study of the Sirubari and Ghalegaun homestays, found that homestay hosts continuously adapted to social, cultural, and economic changes through workplace learning. The study highlighted that hosts faced challenges in maintaining environmental cleanliness, improving sanitation, preserving local culture, and managing homestay operations. Although these challenges required continuous learning and adaptation, they also strengthened the capacity of hosts to improve their hospitality practices over time. Similarly, Lamichhane et al. (2024), in a review of homestay tourism in Nepal, reported that inadequate infrastructure, weak marketing systems, limited access to financial resources, and insufficient government support remain major barriers to the sustainable development of community homestays. The researchers further asserted that improving training opportunities, strengthening local government involvement, and enhancing tourism promotion are essential for addressing these challenges and ensuring long-term sustainability. Kunwar (2019), in a study examining the social impacts of the homestay program in Sirubari and Panchamul villages, found that while homestays generated positive social and cultural outcomes, hosts also experienced challenges associated with increasing tourism activities, changing community dynamics, and the need to balance traditional lifestyles with visitors' expectations. The study highlighted that continuous community participation and effective management are necessary to sustain the benefits of homestay tourism. Pokhrel and Mahat (2025), in a study of the Sirubari and Ghalegaun homestays, concluded that homestay operators encounter practical challenges related to service quality, infrastructure, business management, and changing tourist preferences. Despite these difficulties, the researchers found that community cooperation, cultural preservation, and

local commitment enable many hosts to overcome obstacles and continue operating successfully.

Overall, previous studies indicate that Sirubari homestay hosts experience a combination of financial, operational, infrastructural, and socio-cultural challenges while managing their homestays. Although these studies have identified common issues affecting homestay operations, limited research has explored how individual hosts personally experience, interpret, and respond to these challenges in their daily lives. Therefore, the present study adopts a phenomenological approach to gain a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of Sirubari homestay hosts.

1.6.5 Opportunities for Homestay Hosts through Tourism Development

Tourism development has created significant opportunities for homestay hosts in Nepal by improving household income, generating employment, preserving local culture, and encouraging sustainable rural development. As a form of community-based tourism, homestays enable local families to participate directly in the tourism industry while providing visitors with authentic cultural experiences. The growth of homestay tourism has also strengthened local entrepreneurship, enhanced community participation, and promoted the conservation of traditional lifestyles and natural resources. Subedi (2019), in a study on the role of homestays in promoting rural tourism in Nepal, found that homestay tourism creates employment opportunities, increases household income, and supports the promotion of rural destinations. The study highlighted that homestays encourage tourists to experience local culture, traditional food, festivals, and agricultural activities, thereby contributing to sustainable tourism development. However, the author also emphasized that stronger coordination among stakeholders and improved tourism promotion are necessary to maximize these opportunities.

Similarly, Kanel et al. (2024), in a qualitative study on homestay operators' experiences in Nepal, concluded that homestay development provides opportunities for entrepreneurship, capacity building, and community empowerment. The researchers asserted that participation in homestay tourism enables hosts to develop hospitality skills, strengthen leadership abilities, and improve their standard of living through continuous learning and collaboration with local communities. Lamichhane et al. (2024) explored the opportunities and challenges of homestay tourism in Nepal and reported that homestays contribute to rural development by preserving cultural heritage, promoting environmental conservation, and improving the livelihoods of local

communities. The study further highlighted that supportive government policies, community participation, and effective tourism management can enhance the long-term sustainability of homestay enterprises and create greater opportunities for homestay hosts. Tiwari and Khatiwada (2025), in their study on homestay tourism and poverty alleviation in Nepal, found that homestay businesses empower rural households by diversifying income sources, reducing poverty, and encouraging inclusive economic development. The researchers related that homestay tourism also promotes women's participation, strengthens social cohesion, and supports the preservation of indigenous culture and traditions while creating meaningful interactions between hosts and visitors.

Overall, the existing literature demonstrates that tourism development offers numerous opportunities for homestay hosts, including economic improvement, cultural preservation, entrepreneurship, skill development, and community empowerment. Nevertheless, limited studies have specifically examined how Sirubari homestay hosts personally perceive and experience these opportunities in their daily lives. Therefore, this study adopts a phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences of Sirubari homestay hosts and to understand how tourism development has shaped their personal, social, and economic lives.

1.6.6 Research Gap

Previous studies have examined homestay tourism in Nepal from various perspectives, including community-based tourism, rural development, socio-economic impacts, cultural preservation, and sustainable tourism. Several qualitative studies have explored the experiences of homestay operators and local communities, highlighting both the benefits and challenges of homestay tourism. These studies have reported issues such as inadequate infrastructure, limited marketing, financial constraints, and insufficient training, while also emphasizing opportunities for income generation, cultural exchange, and community empowerment. However, despite these valuable contributions, limited research has specifically focused on the lived experiences of Sirubari homestay hosts, one of Nepal's pioneering community-based tourism destinations. Most existing studies discuss homestay tourism at the community or destination level rather than exploring how individual hosts personally experience and interpret the challenges and opportunities encountered in their daily lives. Furthermore, there is a scarcity of phenomenological research that provides an in-depth understanding of the meanings, perceptions, and personal experiences of Sirubari homestay hosts.

Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by adopting a phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences of Sirubari homestay hosts and to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges they face and the opportunities they experience through homestay tourism.

1.6.7 Summary

This chapter reviewed the existing literature related to homestay tourism in Nepal, community-based tourism, the role of homestay hosts in the hospitality industry, the challenges faced by homestay hosts, and the opportunities created through tourism development. The reviewed studies indicate that homestay tourism has contributed significantly to rural development by generating employment, increasing household income, preserving local culture, promoting community participation, and enhancing sustainable tourism. At the same time, homestay hosts continue to face challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, limited marketing, financial constraints, insufficient training, and seasonal fluctuations in tourist arrivals. The literature also highlights the important role of homestay hosts in delivering authentic hospitality experiences and promoting Nepal's cultural heritage. Although previous studies have provided valuable insights into homestay tourism, there is limited phenomenological research that specifically explores the lived experiences of Sirubari homestay hosts. This review therefore identifies a research gap and establishes the need for the present study. By adopting a phenomenological approach, this research aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the challenges and opportunities experienced by Sirubari homestay hosts, thereby contributing to the existing body of knowledge on community-based tourism and homestay development in Nepal.

1.7 Research Methodology

This chapter describes the research methodology adopted for the study entitled "Exploring Challenges and Opportunities in Sirubari Homestay Hosts." It explains the overall research process used to achieve the objectives of the study and answer the research questions. The chapter presents the research design, study population and participants, sampling technique, data collection methods, data analysis procedure, ethical considerations, and the delimitations and limitations of the study. Since the study aims to explore the lived experiences of Sirubari homestay hosts regarding the opportunities created by homestay tourism, the challenges they face in managing tourists and tourism services, and the support they expect from the government and tourism

organizations, a qualitative phenomenological research design was considered the most appropriate. The methodology provides a systematic framework for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting participants' experiences to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings.

1.7.1 Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research approach using a phenomenological research design. A qualitative approach is appropriate because the study seeks to explore the personal experiences, perceptions, and understanding of Sirubari homestay hosts regarding the challenges and opportunities of operating homestay businesses rather than collecting numerical data. It enables participants to express their experiences, opinions, emotions, and perceptions in their own words, providing rich, detailed, and meaningful information about the phenomenon under study. The phenomenological research design is chosen because it focuses on understanding the lived experiences of individuals who have directly experienced a particular phenomenon. In this study, the phenomenon refers to the experiences of Sirubari homestay hosts in operating homestay businesses within a community-based tourism setting. The study explores how hosts perceive the opportunities created through homestay tourism, the challenges they encounter while managing tourists and providing tourism services, and the support and improvements they expect from the government and tourism organizations. A phenomenological approach enables the researcher to understand the meanings participants attach to these experiences and how they influence their livelihoods, hospitality practices, and contribution to community-based tourism. Therefore, this research design is considered the most appropriate for achieving the objectives of the study.

1.7.2 Population and Participants

The population of this study consists of registered homestay hosts in Sirubari Village, Syangja District, Gandaki Province, Nepal. Sirubari is recognized as one of Nepal's pioneering community-based homestay destinations and has become a well-known rural tourism destination because of its community participation and hospitality. Since homestay hosts are directly responsible for providing accommodation, food, cultural experiences, and other hospitality services to visitors, they are considered the most appropriate participants for understanding the opportunities and challenges associated with operating homestay businesses.

Participants were selected from registered homestays operating in Sirubari. To be included in the study, participants were required to have at least one year of experience operating a homestay, be actively involved in managing tourists and providing tourism services, and be willing to participate voluntarily in the research. A total of ten homestay hosts participated in this study.

1.7.3 Sampling Technique

This study uses purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique widely used in qualitative research. Purposive sampling allows the researcher to deliberately select participants who possess relevant knowledge and practical experience related to the research topic. The selected homestay hosts have direct experience in operating homestay businesses, interacting with tourists, managing tourism services, and participating in community-based tourism activities. Their lived experiences provide detailed and meaningful information that helps answer the research questions. A sample of ten participants is considered appropriate for a phenomenological study because the emphasis is on obtaining rich and in-depth information rather than achieving statistical generalization.

1.7.4 Data Collection Method

This study uses both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data are collected through semi-structured face-to-face interviews using an interview guide developed from the research objectives. Semi-structured interviews provide participants with the opportunity to describe their experiences freely while allowing the researcher to ask additional questions to obtain more detailed information. The interview questions focus on the opportunities created by homestay businesses for hosts and the local community, the challenges faced while managing tourists and tourism services, and the support and improvements expected from the government and tourism organizations. With the participants' consent, the interviews are audio-recorded, and field notes are taken to document important observations during the interview process. Secondary data are collected from books, journal articles, previous research studies, government publications, tourism reports, and other relevant literature related to homestay tourism, community-based tourism, and hospitality management.

1.7.5 Data Analysis Procedure

The collected data are analyzed using thematic analysis, which is appropriate for qualitative phenomenological research. The analysis begins by transcribing the recorded

interviews into written form. The researcher carefully reads the transcripts several times to become familiar with the participants' experiences. Significant statements, phrases, and ideas related to the opportunities, challenges, and expected support of homestay hosts are identified and assigned initial codes. Similar codes are grouped into categories, which are then organized into broader themes and sub-themes. The identified themes are interpreted in relation to the research objectives and relevant literature. Participants' responses are presented using pseudonyms to maintain confidentiality, and no identifying information is disclosed. Direct quotations from participants are also included to support the interpretation of the findings and accurately represent their lived experiences.

1.7.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles are maintained throughout the research process. Before conducting the interviews, participants are informed about the purpose, objectives, and procedures of the study. Participation is entirely voluntary, and informed consent is obtained from each participant before data collection begins. Participants are assured that their identities and personal information will remain confidential. Pseudonyms are used instead of participants' real names, and all identifying information is removed from the research report. The information collected is used solely for academic purposes, and interview recordings and transcripts are stored securely. Participants are also informed that they have the right to refuse to answer any question or withdraw from the study at any stage without any negative consequences.

1.7.7 Delimitations and Limitations

Delimitations

This study is limited to registered homestay hosts in Sirubari Village, Syangja District, Nepal. It focuses specifically on the lived experiences of homestay hosts regarding the opportunities created through homestay tourism, the challenges encountered while managing tourists and tourism services, and the support expected from the government and tourism organizations. The study does not include tourists, local residents who are not homestay operators, tourism officials, or other tourism entrepreneurs. Furthermore, data are collected only through semi-structured interviews.

Limitations

The study is limited by its relatively small sample size of ten homestay hosts, which may not represent the experiences of all homestay operators in Nepal. The

findings are based on participants' personal experiences and perceptions, which may vary from one individual to another. Time constraints, participants' availability, and the focus on a single community may also influence the scope and depth of the study. Therefore, the findings are intended to provide an in-depth understanding of the lived experiences of Sirubari homestay hosts rather than to generalize the results to all homestay operators in Nepal.

CHAPTER II

FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings of the study on Exploring Challenges and Opportunities in Sirubari Homestay Hosts. The findings are based on data collected from Sirubari homestay hosts through semi-structured interviews and open-ended interview questions. In line with the phenomenological research design, the chapter focuses on the lived experiences, perceptions, and meanings shared by the participants. The thematic analysis produced three main themes: Opportunities Created by Homestay Tourism, Challenges Faced by Sirubari Homestay Hosts, and Expected Support and Improvements. Each theme is presented with relevant sub-themes, descriptive narration, and supporting quotations from participants. To maintain confidentiality, participants are identified using pseudonyms, and any identifying personal information has been anonymized.

2.1 Opportunities Created by Homestay Tourism

The first theme that emerged from the interviews was the opportunities created by homestay tourism. Participants explained that homestay development has provided various economic, social, and cultural benefits to individuals and the wider community. Although participants had different experiences as homestay operators, they commonly highlighted that homestay tourism contributed to income generation, preservation of local traditions, and increased community participation. They viewed homestay tourism not only as a source of livelihood but also as a way to promote local identity and sustainable rural development.

2.1.1 Income Generation and Improved Livelihood

Participants explained that homestay tourism has created opportunities to generate additional income and improve household livelihoods. Before the development of homestays, many families relied mainly on traditional occupations such as agriculture and livestock farming. The arrival of tourists provided new economic opportunities through accommodation services, food preparation, and the sale of local products.

One participant, Hari, a homestay owner in Sirubari, shared, “Homestay has become an important source of income for our family. Through hosting guests, we can earn money while continuing our traditional work.” Similarly, Maya, a local homestay operator, explained, “Tourists stay in our homes, eat our local food, and pay for the

service. This has helped us manage household expenses and improve our living conditions. Likewise, Bishnu, a community member involved in homestay activities, stated, “Homestay has created opportunities for local people to earn without leaving the village. It has encouraged people to use their own resources and skills to generate income. “These experiences indicate that homestay tourism has provided an alternative source of income and contributed to economic improvement among local households. It has reduced dependency on traditional income sources and encouraged communities to participate actively in tourism activities.

2.1.2 Cultural Preservation and Promotion

Participants emphasized that homestay tourism has played an important role in preserving and promoting local culture, traditions, and lifestyles. They explained that interaction with visitors encouraged local people to maintain traditional practices, prepare local cuisine, and showcase cultural activities.

Sita, a homestay owner in Sirubari, explained, “Guests are interested in our culture, traditional food, and lifestyle. Because of this, we feel motivated to preserve our traditions and introduce them to visitors.” Similarly, Ramesh, a local resident, shared, “Homestay has helped younger generations understand the importance of our culture because they see visitors appreciating our traditions.”

Another participant, Kamala, a homestay operator, stated, “Cultural programs, traditional dances, and local festivals have received more attention because tourists want to experience authentic village culture.”

The Participant suggest that homestay tourism has strengthened cultural identity by creating opportunities for communities to share their heritage with visitors. Tourism has encouraged the continuation of traditional practices that may otherwise decline due to modernization and changing lifestyles.

2.1.3 Community Development and Employment

Participants also highlighted that homestay tourism has contributed to community development by creating employment opportunities and encouraging collective participation. They explained that homestay activities require support from different sectors, including local guides, farmers, transport providers, food suppliers, and cultural performers. Kiran, a homestay committee member, stated, “Homestay development has brought people together. We work as a community to welcome guests, organize programs, and maintain the village environment.” Similarly, Anita, a local youth

involved in tourism activities, shared, “Homestay has created opportunities for young people to work in tourism-related activities instead of migrating to cities for employment. “Likewise, Deepak, a homestay operator, explained, “The benefits of homestay are not limited to individual families. Local shops, farmers, and service providers also receive opportunities because of increased visitors.”

These responses demonstrate that homestay tourism has supported broader community development by encouraging cooperation, creating local employment, and improving participation in tourism activities. It has helped distribute tourism benefits among different members of the community.

Conclusion

Overall, participants described homestay tourism as an important opportunity that has created positive economic, cultural, and social impacts in Sirubari. The findings reveal that homestay operations have improved household income, supported the preservation of local traditions, and encouraged community involvement in tourism development. Although the benefits varied among participants, they shared a common understanding that homestay tourism has strengthened local livelihoods and increased the recognition of Sirubari as a cultural tourism destination. The Participant indicate that homestay tourism can contribute to sustainable rural development by combining economic opportunities with cultural conservation and community empowerment.

2.2 Challenges Faced by Sirubari Homestay Hosts

The third theme that emerged from the interviews was the challenges faced by Sirubari homestay hosts while operating their homestay businesses. Although homestay tourism has created various economic and social opportunities for the community, participants explained that several challenges still influence the effective operation and long-term sustainability of homestays. Participants highlighted issues related to seasonal tourist arrivals, maintaining and upgrading homestay facilities, managing diverse tourist expectations, and financial and marketing limitations. These challenges require continuous improvement and support to strengthen the homestay sector in Sirubari.

2.2.1 Seasonal Tourist Arrivals

Participants identified seasonal variation in tourist arrivals as one of the major challenges affecting homestay operations. They explained that tourist flow is not consistent throughout the year, with higher numbers of visitors during peak seasons and fewer visitors during off-seasons. This irregular pattern creates difficulties in

maintaining stable income and managing resources effectively. Hari, a homestay owner in Sirubari, shared, “The number of guests is not the same throughout the year. During the tourist season, we are busy, but during the off-season, there are very few visitors, and income becomes limited.” Similarly, Maya, a homestay operator, explained, “Sometimes we prepare everything for guests, but if there are no visitors, our resources and time are wasted. “Likewise, Bishnu, a local homestay host, stated, “Most tourists visit during certain months, so depending only on homestay income is difficult for many families.”

These responses indicate that seasonal fluctuations create uncertainty for homestay hosts. Limited tourist arrivals during off-seasons affect income stability and make it challenging for hosts to plan long-term business activities.

2.2.2 Maintaining and Upgrading Homestay Facilities

Participants explained that Sirubari has improved accessibility, transportation facilities, and internet connectivity, which have supported the growth of homestay tourism. However, they highlighted that maintaining and continuously upgrading homestay facilities according to changing tourist expectations remains a challenge. Hosts need to invest in improving accommodation, sanitation, food services, and other facilities to provide comfortable experiences for visitors.

One participant, a homestay owner in Sirubari, shared, “Nowadays, tourists can easily reach Sirubari, and facilities like transportation and internet are available. However, we need to regularly improve our homestay facilities to provide better services.” Similarly, another participant explained, “Guests compare our services with hotels and other destinations, so maintaining cleanliness, comfort, and quality facilities is important.”

Likewise, a homestay operator stated, “Providing good facilities requires continuous effort and investment. Small improvements make guests more satisfied and encourage them to recommend our homestay to others.”

These responses indicate that accessibility and basic infrastructure are not major challenges for Sirubari homestays. Instead, hosts face challenges related to maintaining service standards, upgrading facilities, and adapting to increasing tourist expectations.

2.2.3 Managing Tourists and Service Quality

Participants also discussed challenges related to managing tourists and maintaining consistent service quality. They explained that meeting visitors’ expectations can be difficult because tourists come from different cultural backgrounds

and have different preferences regarding food, accommodation, and services. Kiran, a homestay committee member, shared, “Every guest has different expectations. Sometimes it is challenging to provide services according to everyone’s needs.” Similarly, Anita, a homestay host, stated, “We have experience in hospitality, but professional training is limited. Sometimes we need more knowledge about guest handling and service standards. “Likewise, Deepak, a homestay operator, explained, “Providing good food, cleanliness, and comfortable accommodation requires continuous effort. We need to improve our skills to satisfy different types of guests.”

These experiences demonstrate that homestay hosts face difficulties in maintaining professional service standards. Lack of formal hospitality training, limited resources, and changing guest expectations create challenges in delivering consistent quality services.

2.2.4 Financial and Marketing Challenges

Participants identified financial limitations and weak marketing practices as additional challenges affecting homestay growth. They explained that managing operational costs, making improvements, and promoting their homestays require financial resources that are sometimes difficult to obtain.

Hari, a homestay owner, stated, “Improving facilities requires investment, but it is not always easy for small homestay owners to arrange money.” Similarly, Maya, a homestay operator, shared, “Many people do not know about our homestay because we have limited ways to promote it.”

Another participant, Bishnu, a community member, explained, “We depend mostly on word of mouth and occasional promotion. More support is needed in online marketing and reaching new visitors.”

The Participant reveal that limited financial capacity and insufficient marketing knowledge restrict the growth potential of Sirubari homestays. Effective promotion through digital platforms, tourism networks, and financial support programs could help increase visibility and attract more tourist.

Conclusion

Overall, participants identified several challenges affecting the operation and sustainability of Sirubari homestays. Seasonal tourist arrivals, the need for continuous facility improvement, managing diverse tourist expectations, and financial and marketing limitations were highlighted as key concerns. However, participants also recognized that

Sirubari has developed important tourism infrastructure, including good road access, transportation facilities, and internet connectivity, which have supported homestay growth. The Participants suggest that future development should focus on improving service quality, strengthening marketing strategies, enhancing host skills, and encouraging year-round tourism activities to ensure the sustainable growth of the Sirubari homestay sector.

2.3 Expected Support and Improvements

The fourth theme that emerged from the interviews was the expected support and improvements required by Sirubari homestay hosts for the further development of homestay tourism. Homestay operators explained that although tourism has brought economic and social benefits to the community, additional support from government bodies, tourism organizations, and local stakeholders is necessary to improve service quality and ensure sustainable tourism development. The participants mainly highlighted the importance of financial support, training opportunities, tourism promotion, and continuous improvement of tourism-related facilities.

2.3.1 Government Financial Support

Homestay hosts emphasized that financial support from the government is essential for improving and expanding their homestay businesses. They explained that financial assistance would help them upgrade rooms, improve sanitation facilities, maintain service standards, and introduce additional facilities for visitors.

Hari, a homestay owner in Sirubari, shared, “Government support can help us improve our homestay facilities. Small financial assistance would make it easier to maintain and upgrade our services. “Similarly, Maya, a homestay operator in Sirubari, stated, “Most homestay owners have limited investment capacity. If there are support programs or subsidies, we can improve our facilities and provide better services to guests. “Likewise, Bishnu, a local homestay host, explained, “Financial support would encourage local people to continue homestay businesses and develop better facilities for tourists.

These responses indicate that government financial assistance through grants, subsidies, and low-interest loans could support homestay owners in improving their businesses and increasing the quality of tourism services.

2.3.2 Training and Capacity Building

Participants highlighted the importance of hospitality training and skill development programs for improving their ability to provide quality services. They explained that training related to guest handling, communication skills, food hygiene, service standards, and digital technology would increase their confidence and professionalism.

Sita, a homestay owner in Sirubari, stated, “We have experience in welcoming guests, but professional training would help us understand better hospitality practices and improve our services. Similarly, Ramesh, a homestay operator, shared, “Training about communication, cleanliness, food preparation, and guest management would help us satisfy different types of tourists. Likewise, Kamala, a homestay host, explained, “Tourists come from different places with different expectations, so learning new skills is important for providing better experiences.”

The Participant suggest that regular training and capacity-building programs are necessary to strengthen the skills of homestay hosts and help them meet changing tourist expectations.

2.3.3 Tourism Promotion and Marketing

Participants identified effective tourism promotion and marketing as important requirements for increasing tourist arrivals in Sirubari. They explained that although Sirubari has cultural attractions, traditional lifestyles, and natural beauty, stronger promotional activities are needed to attract more visitors. Kiran, a homestay committee member, stated, “Sirubari has many attractions, but more promotion is needed so that more people know about our destination. Similarly, Anita, a homestay owner, shared, “Online marketing and social media promotion can help us reach more tourists because many visitors search for destinations through the internet. Likewise, Deepak, a local tourism worker, explained, “Cooperation with travel agencies and tourism organizations can help promote Sirubari as a cultural homestay destination.”

These responses show that digital marketing, tourism networking, and promotional campaigns can play an important role in increasing awareness and attracting more visitors to Sirubari.

2.3.4 Infrastructure Development

Participants explained that Sirubari has improved accessibility, transportation facilities, and internet connectivity, which have supported tourism development.

However, they emphasized the importance of continuous improvement in tourism-related infrastructure, including visitor facilities, public spaces, environmental management, and destination facilities. Hari, a homestay owner, stated, “Sirubari is easier to reach now because transportation facilities have improved, but continuous development of tourism facilities is still necessary. Similarly, Maya, a homestay operator, explained, “Improving facilities for visitors, maintaining cleanliness, and managing the destination properly can enhance tourist satisfaction. Likewise, Bishnu, a community member, shared, “Development should focus on maintaining the natural environment and cultural identity of Sirubari while improving facilities for tourists.”

These responses indicate that future infrastructure development should focus on enhancing visitor experiences while preserving the cultural and environmental values of Sirubari.

Conclusion

Overall, participants emphasized the need for greater support and improvements to strengthen Sirubari homestay tourism sector. The findings revealed that financial assistance, hospitality training, effective tourism promotion, and continuous improvement of tourism-related facilities are important for enhancing the quality and sustainability of homestay services. Although Sirubari has already developed good accessibility, transportation facilities, and internet connectivity, further support from government agencies, tourism organizations, and local stakeholders is necessary to improve service standards and attract more visitors. The Participant indicate that collaborative efforts among different stakeholders can help overcome existing challenges, increase tourism benefits, and ensure the long-term sustainable development of Sirubari homestay tourism.

CHAPTER III

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Conclusion

This study explored the lived experiences of Sirubari homestay hosts regarding the opportunities created through homestay tourism, the challenges they face in managing tourists and tourism services, and the support they expect from the government and tourism organizations. Using a qualitative phenomenological approach, the study provided an in-depth understanding of how homestay hosts perceive and experience operating homestay businesses within a community-based tourism setting.

The findings indicate that homestay tourism has created significant opportunities for both homestay hosts and the local community. Participants described improved household income, employment generation, cultural preservation, community participation, and personal skill development as major benefits of operating homestays. The study also highlights the important role of homestay tourism in promoting sustainable rural development by preserving local traditions and enhancing the identity of Sirubari as a community-based tourism destination.

Despite these opportunities, the study found that homestay hosts continue to face several challenges in managing their businesses. Seasonal fluctuations in tourist arrivals, limited marketing and promotion, financial constraints, maintaining service quality, and changing tourist expectations were identified as major concerns. Participants explained that these challenges influence both the sustainability of their homestay businesses and their ability to provide consistent hospitality services.

The study further revealed that homestay hosts expect greater support from the government and tourism organizations. They emphasized the need for improved infrastructure, regular hospitality and tourism-related training, stronger marketing and promotional activities, financial assistance, and policies that encourage the sustainable development of community-based tourism. Such support was viewed as essential for strengthening homestay businesses and improving the overall tourism experience in Sirubari.

Overall, this study concludes that homestay tourism is an important source of economic, social, and cultural development for Sirubari. While homestay hosts experience meaningful opportunities through tourism, they also encounter challenges that require coordinated efforts from government agencies, tourism organisations, and

the local community. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of Sirubari homestay hosts and provide useful insights for researchers, policymakers, and tourism stakeholders seeking to strengthen community-based homestay tourism in Nepal.

3.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to improve the sustainability and effectiveness of homestay tourism in Sirubari:

To the Government: The government should improve tourism-related infrastructure, including roads, public transportation, internet connectivity, water supply, and sanitation facilities, to enhance the overall tourism experience. It should also provide financial assistance, low-interest loans, and grants to homestay operators to help them upgrade their facilities and improve service quality. Furthermore, policies that promote sustainable community-based tourism should be strengthened.

To Tourism Organizations: Tourism organizations should increase promotional activities for Sirubari through digital marketing, tourism campaigns, travel fairs, and collaboration with travel agencies and tour operators. Regular training programs on hospitality service, customer care, language skills, digital marketing, food safety, and business management should also be provided to enhance the capacity of homestay hosts.

To Homestay Hosts: Homestay hosts should continue improving the quality of their hospitality services by maintaining cleanliness, providing authentic cultural experiences, and responding to the changing expectations of tourists. They should actively participate in training programs, adopt modern marketing techniques such as social media promotion, and strengthen cooperation among homestay operators to enhance the overall attractiveness of Sirubari as a tourism destination.

To the Local Community: Community members should actively participate in tourism development by preserving local culture, traditions, and the natural environment. Strong cooperation among local residents, homestay hosts, and community organizations can contribute to sustainable tourism development and improve visitors' overall experiences.

For Future Researchers: Future studies may include a larger number of participants and compare the experiences of homestay hosts in different community-based tourism destinations across Nepal. Researchers may also explore the perspectives

of tourists, local government officials, and tourism entrepreneurs to gain a more comprehensive understanding of homestay tourism development.

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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Section A: Background Information

1. Please tell me about yourself and your homestay.
2. How long have you been operating your homestay in Sirubari?
3. What motivated you to start a homestay business?
4. How many family members are involved in managing the homestay?
5. Approximately how many guests do you host during the peak tourist season?

Section B: Opportunities Created by Homestay Tourism

1. What opportunities has operating a homestay created for you and your family?
2. In what ways has homestay tourism benefited the local community in Sirubari?
3. How has operating a homestay influenced your income and livelihood?
4. How has homestay tourism helped preserve local culture, traditions, or festivals?
5. What personal skills or experiences have you gained from hosting tourists?

Section C: Challenges Faced by Sirubari Homestay Hosts

1. What are the major challenges you face while operating your homestay?
2. What difficulties do you experience in managing tourists and providing tourism services?
3. How do seasonal changes in tourist arrivals affect your homestay business?
4. What challenges do you face regarding marketing, promotion, or attracting tourists?
5. How do you maintain service quality while meeting the different expectations of visitors?

Section D: Support and Improvements

1. What kind of support have you received from the government or tourism organizations?
2. What additional support do you expect from the government to improve your homestay business?
3. What types of training or capacity-building programs would help you improve your services?
4. What improvements do you think are needed to promote Sirubari as a community-based tourism destination?
5. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience as a Sirubari homestay host?