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Stakeholder identification and engagement for enhancing heritage management in Kathmandu Valley

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Abstract:

Effectively managed heritage sites shape an overall sense of place. Collaboration and engagement of diverse stakeholders are crucial in the heritage management process. This study attempts to identify the salient stakeholders in the world heritage sites of Kathmandu Valley, as well as their potential role in the heritage management process. The study utilizes eight semi-structured interviews of participants working in the heritage tourism of Kathmandu. Qualitative thematic analysis was chosen as an analysis method for this study.

The results indicate that ownership-related disputes, right issues conflict, and lack of consultation are common among stakeholders WHS of Kathmandu. The most salient stakeholder in the world heritage sites of Kathmandu was identified as Guthi. Similarly, international organizations, governmental organizations, religious groups, local peoples and private business organizations were found salient but less than Guthi.

In addition to demanding greater stakeholder participation, stakeholders should emphasize developing a single policy and the facility in the world heritage sites of Kathmandu. These findings from the study help heritage governing bodies to formulate strategies and polices that acknowledge the interest and role of

salient stakeholders. Overall, this study could help to increase the liveability, productivity, and attractiveness of world heritage sites of Kathmandu.

Abbreviation

AMPA   Ancient Monument Preservation Act

CDO   Chief District Officer

CSR   Corporate Social Responsibility

DAO   Department of Archaeology

KMC   Kathmandu Metropolitan City

NGO   Non-Governmental Organization

NTB   Nepal Tourism Board

SSI   Semi-structured interview

ST   Stakeholder theory

TA   Thematic analysis

UNESCO   United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

WHS   World Heritage sites

Contents

List of Tables:

List of figures:

Appendices:

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

Places around the world have stories, artifacts, and activities that represent the past and present. Heritage encompasses tangible and intangible elements that define a community, region, or nation's identity. The term "heritage" refers to the historical, natural, and cultural legacies that are transferred from one generation to the next. Heritage sites draw thousands of tourists from all over the world, contributing to an enormous portion of the world's tourism industry. Heritage sites have become an important economic generating sector and wealth creator in tourism (Gannon, Lynch & Harrington, 2010). Heritage sites are essential to creating a sense of place (Liu et al., 2022).

Heritage and tourism have a deep and complex relationship in which both have a variety of effects on one another. In a broad sense, heritage tourism is a popular tourist activity that consists of visiting a place that represent the past (Vaquero & Hernandez, 2024). It involves exploring and experiencing the unique aspects of a region's past, traditions, architecture, art, and landscapes. It falls under cultural tourism, a desire to connect and learn about the heritage of a particular destination (Vaquero & Hernandez, 2024). Heritage tourism's importance in the economy has also added management, scientific, and political focus (Nag & Mishra, 2023).

There is a continuous rise in the visitor's numbers to heritage sites. The continuous rise in visitor activity in heritage sites brings both positive and negative impacts. While it promotes economic growth on a local and regional level, it also causes serious social and environmental issues in those areas (González et al., 2020). Maintaining the cultural environment can boost empowerment and civic pride. It is the responsibility of host nations to manage and protect its exceptional and outstanding sites that are unique and carry meaning to humanity (Alvarez et al., 2016). Thus, various cities around the world have used tactics of cultural heritage to improve their chances of success. Heritage sites are seen as a competitive resource that needs specialized management in the global urban economy (Nag & Mishra 2023). The transformation of this heritage into an attractive sector gave rise to the importance of sustainable consumption of resources (Alvarez et al., 2016). Effective management mechanisms can ensure the

preservation and sustainable usage of resources in heritage sites. Due to this, recently heritage management is seen as a key topic.

There is high demand in an international context for a Heritage site to be managed and safeguarded (Alvarez et al., 2016). To preserve the world's heritage sites for present as well as future generations, UNESCO encourages cooperation and group involvement (Alvarez et al., 2016). Most heritage sites are typically managed by a broad managerial group with various interests (Alvarez et al., 2016). Several stakeholders from a variety of disciplines and backgrounds are involved in the heritage management process because of its complexity. Furthermore, the interactions between wider stakeholders make management particularly difficult (Alvarez et al., 2016). Due to this complexity, a successful heritage management approach requires involving the goals and controlled interactions between all stakeholders (Kc et al., 2018). However, the level of interaction and structure differ from site to site and depends on the cooperation of different interests.

To mitigate tourism threats, promoting communication, coordination, and collaboration among stakeholders is crucial (Aas et al., 2005). The perception of tourists and various other stakeholders can link image, reputation, identity, and heritage competitiveness to site attractions. Finding common ground among diverse parties can lead to the development of heritage tourism that preserves local resources and benefits all (Aas et al., 2005). Additionally, sustainable protection of heritage sites is supported by encouraging public, stakeholder engagement and empowering the community. For carrying out sustainable tourism development, stakeholder's involvement is compulsory in the process of development (Erick, 2007).

However, the development process related to the economy creates potential tensions or conflicts on heritage preservations (Kim et al., 2023). Stewardship is another compelling factor contributing to conflict. Porter et al. (2005) state that conflict emerges when stakeholders fail to act as stewards and heritage management extends outside their control. An integrative approach with stakeholders' interactions helps in managing the conflicts or tensions among heritage preservation and development (Kim et al., 2023). In such experts, local NGOs, and the governmental sector all play important intermediary roles in heritage planning and management (Liu et al., 2022).

Stakeholder collaboration has been felt essential to formulate policies and manage visitation to a place (Bramwell et al., 1999). Additionally, to improve resilience across cultural heritage, better knowledge sharing and communication should be established among direct stakeholders and local communities

(Louis et al., 2023). Heritage sites have missed a chance to strengthen them by establishing partnerships with public and business stakeholders (Louis et al., 2023). Such criticism indicates that collaboration or engagement of stakeholders is crucial in any heritage site.

Although the goals, objectives, and perceptions of each stakeholder in general undoubtedly impact the management of a particular project, the identification of stakeholders remains a challenge (Neudoerffer et al., 2008). Similarly, stakeholders need to be identified to fulfill the role of protection because urban reconstruction is destroying architectural heritage (Wang et al., 2019). However, heritage sites do not have direct stakeholder identification processes and are recommended to access processes for stakeholder identification and their engagement (Louis et al., 2023).

Tourists from all over the world are drawn to the cultural sites in the Kathmandu Valley because of their remarkable architectural typologies, ensembles, and urban fabric (KC et al., 2018). Unfortunately, international organizations including UNESCO have criticized the management of World Heritage Sites (WHS) in Kathmandu, leading the sites to the included in the "endangered list" the 2003 (Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, 2007). Since then, there has been continuous risk of including the WHS of Kathmandu on the endangered list. Conflicts related to power and legitimacy between stakeholders like tourism organizations, local business owners, donor organizations, governmental institutions, and residents are experienced even within heritage sites in the Kathmandu Valley (Chapagain, 2008). According to Neudoerffer et al., (2008), power and hierarchy positions are turning into a barrier to collaboration and interaction among stakeholders.

To sum up, there is a need to address challenges such as the identification of stakeholders with conflicting interests and ensuring mechanisms for effective heritage management. In this regard, the purpose of my research is to identify the salient stakeholders, as well as their engagement role in the effective heritage management process of Kathmandu Valley.

1.2 Purpose of the study:

Considering issues of heritage and stakeholder collaboration discussed in the introduction part, this thesis attempts to investigate the most significant stakeholders and their role in the efficient heritage management system in the Kathmandu Valley. Kathmandu Valley has most sophisticated World Heritage properties in the world. It is made up of seven monument zones, each with unique management

conditions (Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, 2007). After Kathmandu Valley was listed as a vulnerable World Heritage site in 2003, UNESCO requested Nepal to create a comprehensive management strategy for all the Kathmandu Valley heritage sites on several occasions (Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, 2007).

A growing number of stakeholders from the national government to international organizations and the local community are becoming involved in heritage management in Kathmandu Valley (Chapagain, 2008). Such involvement and interest have undoubtedly made heritage the center of attention. However, differences in stakeholders' backgrounds, organizational structures, and interests have led to conflict and disruption in the processes of management and conservation (Maria, 2024, Kim et al., 2023 Louis et al., 2023). In the context of Kathmandu, the Department of Archaeology (DAO) is the country's official government agency for the preservation of cultural assets. However, they do not have the appropriate resources to maintain historic monuments (Chapagain, 2008). Conflicts between various stakeholders, especially between DOA, Guthi, and locals, are seen within cultural sites of the Kathmandu Valley (Subedi & Shrestha, 2023). It is true that satisfying the demands of every stakeholder group is impossible (Park & Lee 2015). To at least minimize the conflict, it is crucial to identify and prioritize different stakeholder groups.

In academic literature, effective stakeholder collaboration is widely acknowledged as a crucial element and studied with numerous prospects such as policy making, competitiveness, urban planning, governance, conflict management, power relations, and disaster risk management. There is however lack of studies on stakeholder identification and their role in mitigating issues of heritage management in WHS of Kathmandu Valley.

Previously, Chapagain (2008) investigated the stakeholder's interests and showcased the variety of stakeholders involved in Kathmandu's heritage conservation. Especially in Kathmandu Valley, the views of various stakeholders excluding government bodies have been neglected in policies and while running the heritage sites (Subedi & Shrestha, 2023). Additionally, there has been criticism for responding to international organizations and donor agencies rather than the local people (Chapagain, 2008). Finding a balance between the competing interests of stakeholders such as travel companies, communities, business owners, donor organizations, and governmental organizations is essential in Kathmandu (Chapagain, 2008).

This study attempts to investigate on identification of the salient stakeholders with different attributes affecting the management of WHS in Kathmandu Valley, as well as their potential role in the heritage management process. This study might be helpful for the heritage tourism of Nepal resulting in heritage site preservation, maintaining a balance between all stakeholders, and involving them in the heritage management process. Overall, this study might be beneficial for heritage sustainability and the well-being of Heritage sites.

The thesis aims to find answers to the following research questions:
1. Who are the highly salient stakeholders in the Kathmandu Valley heritage sites?
2. What role does stakeholder engagement play in Kathmandu Valley's effective heritage management?

Along these main objectives, the research is intended to go through the present condition of stakeholders in heritage sites, problems or challenges caused by stakeholders' ineffective engagement, and recommendations for improving heritage management through stakeholder engagement.
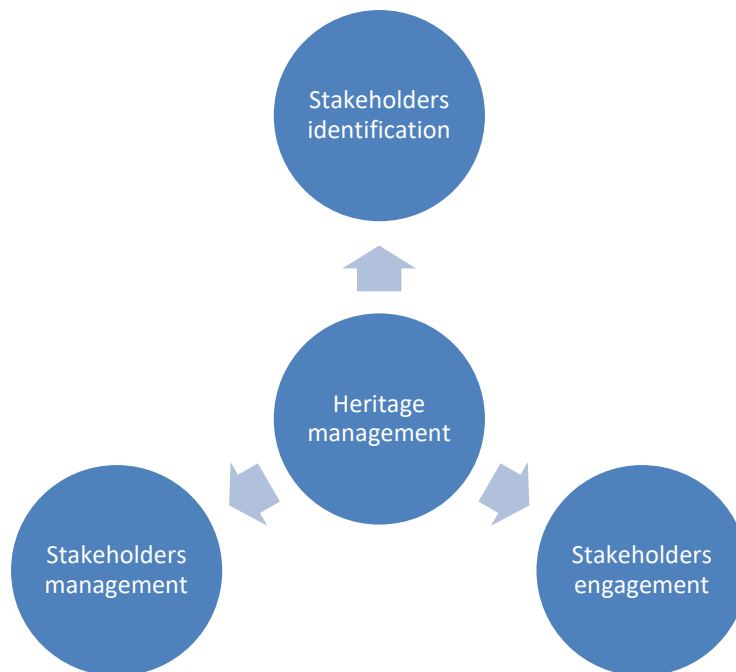
Figure 1: Position of the study

Heritage management process compromised of stakeholder's identifications, stakeholder's engagement and stakeholder's management in this study. Firstly, stakeholder's identifications topic is studied. Then stakeholder's engagement and stakeholder's management are described and studied. Studying these three topics provided the comprehensive understanding of heritage management of Kathmandu valley.

1.3 Key concepts:

Heritage:

In its broader sense, the "heritage" refers to a symbolic embodiment that is passed down from one generation to the next. Heritage is the symbolic representation of the past, recreated and recreated. Heritage is a vulnerable sector that includes tangible forms such as buildings, museums, and monuments and intangible forms such as customs, music, tradition, and fashion of the past (Ghimire, 2019).

Stakeholders:

A stakeholder is one who either influences or impacts the goals of a company (Park & Lee 2015). According to Nag & Mishra (2023), "Stakeholder" refers to individuals or groups whose interests may impact the success, goals, and results of a project. In the tourism context, stakeholders include local government representatives, people who live around heritage sites, and visitors to heritage sites. In this study, stakeholders refer to person, group, or organizations who influence or whose interests impact the management of heritage sites.

Stakeholder's identification:

Stakeholder identification is the analysis of methodically identifying important stakeholders and evaluating their impact on an organization concerning specific issues. It is the step that classifies and prioritizes important stakeholders based on power, legitimacy, and urgency attributes (Park & Lee 2015).

Stakeholder's engagement:

The term "stakeholder engagement" is described as the procedures to include stakeholders in any organization's operations (Greenwood, 2007). As stated by Kujala et al. (2022), stakeholder engagement is the strategic, ethical, and pragmatic management of goals, actions, and consequences of stakeholder relations.

Heritage management:

Heritage management is concerned with combining the qualities of the four management cycles: knowledge, planning, monitoring, and dissemination (Maria, 2024). It includes efforts to protect archaeological sites, land planning, monitoring the conditions of heritage, and building different forms of facilities in heritage sites.

1.4 Structure of the research:

The first section shows a quick overview of the research background before introducing the tourism of Nepal and the current scenario of heritage tourism in Nepal. The study purpose and objective are then covered in the next section. Finally, it summarizes the study's main concepts such as heritage management and stakeholder engagement.

The concepts are elaborated in more detail and relevant theories of stakeholders are covered in the theoretical section. The theoretical section includes the stakeholder's theory, the stakeholder's topology with attributes, the stakeholder's management process, and the stakeholder's engagement in heritage management.

In the third section, the study methodology is presented. Then the research approach with collection and analysis of data are explained. After that, the findings on each theme from the data are reported. After this, a summary of the key findings and comparison with earlier studies are conducted. Lastly, conclusions of the study are drawn based on the findings. Next to a conclusion, theoretical and managerial implications are discussed. An evaluation of the study and future research ideas are presented as well. In the ending part, references and appendices are added.

2. Research area background

2.1 Tourism in Nepal:

Nepal is a landlocked South Asian country, neighboured with China and India. Nepal has an area of 147,516 square kilometers and is divided into three geographical divisions: the Himalayan region, the hilly region, and the Terai region. Nepal is the birthplace of Gautama Buddha and is home to Mount Everest, the highest mountain peak in the world (Michaels, 2018). Out of the 14 peaks in the world that are higher than 8000 meters, eight of them are in Nepal (NTB, 2024). Nepal has 6,000 rivers either fed by snow or require rain. It is also known as the water towers of South Asia.

Kathmandu is the capital city of Nepal with a diverse range of cultures that shape the country's identity (MOFA, 2024). Kathmandu has been named the world's best natural destination by the well-known travel website TripAdvisor, which evaluated traveler choices in seven categories: including best, natural, trending, cultural, food, honeymoon, and sustainable destinations (Myrepublica, 2024). Since Nepal was united in the eighteenth century, the Kathmandu Valley has served as the cultural hub of the country. Religion has a significant role in a Nepalese daily existence. Most people in Nepal are either Buddhists or Hindus and for millennia, these two religions have coexisted peacefully. In Nepal, Buddha is highly revered by both Buddhists and Hindus. Hindus in Nepal pay homage to the antiquated Vedic gods. Nepalese ethnic diversity allows for a wide variety of customs. It is home to 142 ethnic groups or castes within 5 main language groups (Michaels, 2018). Most of these traditions have their roots in Buddhist, Hindu, and other religious traditions.

Nepal is well-known for three activities: cultural exploration, trekking, and mountaineering. Nepal offers a unique experience and a place of discovery with its rich old civilizations as well as the world's most stunning scenery. Nepal is the must place to visit for open-minded people appreciating a genuine and captivating experience. The range of activities available in Nepal is unparalleled due to its extreme diversity, ranging from the sultry jungles to the freezing mountains (MOFA, 2024). Nepalese people are one of the drawing factors for many visitors (MOFA, 2024). Indeed, unique customs and renowned hospitality from diverse ethnicities makes Nepal so unique. Nepalese people are friendly everywhere from isolated mountain villages to Kathmandu Valley's historical hill towns.

Tourism is the pillar of the Nepali economy (MOFA, 2024). It is an important source of foreign exchange and revenue. According to statistics from the Nepal Tourism Board, Nepal witness one million visitors for the first time in four years, due reopening its borders to China and record-breaking Indian visits (The Kathmandu Post, 2023).

2.2 The Interdependence between Heritage and Tourism:

There has been cultural tourism since approximately 440 BCE in ancient Greece (Kumar, 2017). Culture was a driving force to travel in the 19th century, but the worldwide rise in cultural tourism peaked in the late 20th century (Kumar, 2017). In modern times, heritage and cultural tourism help to revitalize historic sites as well as to strengthen local and national economies (Rahman, 2013).

"Heritage" often refers to something that is passed down from one generation to the next. Heritage tourism includes tangible and intangible forms of the past. Tourism interaction with heritage often shapes how heritage is understood and presented (Nuryanti, 1996). Opportunities to depict the past in the present are provided by heritage tourism.

The heritage industry has often evolved into social, political, and economic aspects (Rahman, 2013). The relationship between tourism and heritage is more complex than that of any other economic sector. The quantity and quality of heritage determine the popularity of tourism (Coccossis, 2016). Global research has demonstrated the importance of arts, culture, and heritage as "destination enhancers," or factors that contribute significantly to the overall appeal of a certain location (Kumar, 2017).

2.3 Cultural, pilgrimage, and heritage tourism:

Nepal is home to a multicultural society. Pashupatinath is one of the most sacred Hindu temples in the world and lies in Kathmandu. It draws a lot of pilgrims and tourists. Hinduism is the predominant religion in Nepal. There are other Hindu pilgrimage sites scattered all over Nepal. Another major religion in Nepal is Buddhism. Lumbini is the birthplace of Gautam Buddha and most sacred site. Swayambhunath is another well-known Buddhist location famously known as the monkey temple in Kathmandu.
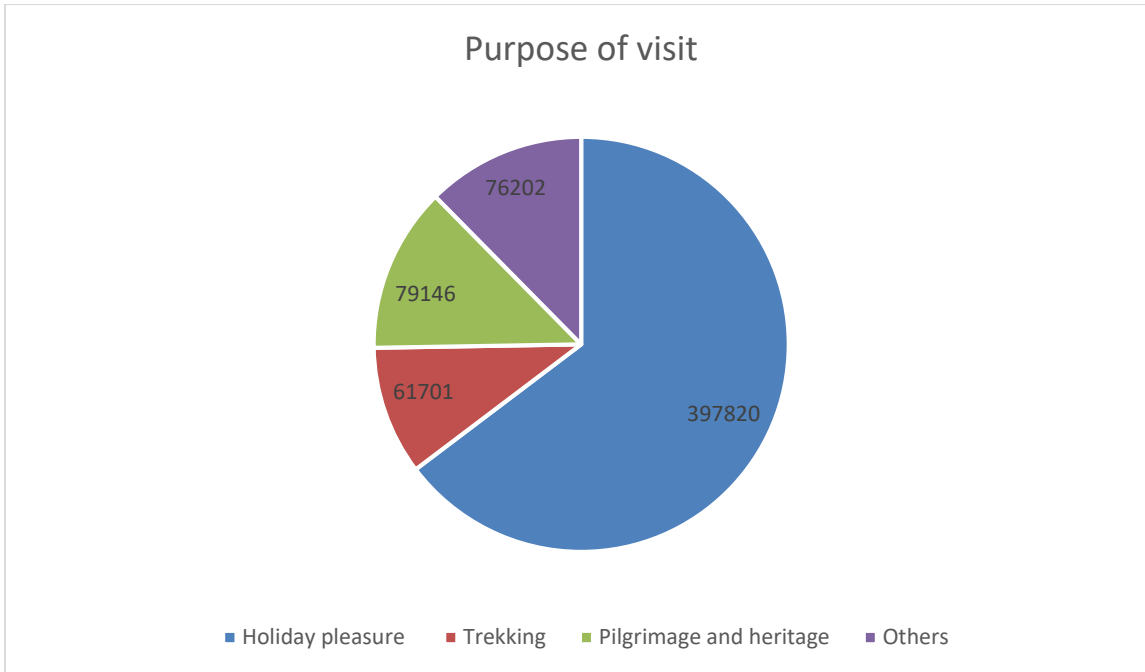
Figure 2: Tourist Arrival by Purpose of Visit from Nepal Tourism Statistics (NTS, 2022)

There were 79,146 visitors in Nepal for pilgrimage purposes (NTS, 2022). There were 55,204 numbers of visitors in the Pashupatinath temple (NTS, 2022). Although the exact number of tourists visiting the heritage sites of Kathmandu is not clear, most of the tourists landing in Kathmandu regardless of their purpose visit the heritage sites of Kathmandu. A day of sightseeing tour in Kathmandu is mostly included in the itinerary of most tour packages.

2.4 Culture and heritage sites in Kathmandu Valley:

Kathmandu Valley comprised three historic cities Kathmandu, Lalitpur, and Bhaktapur. They were once sovereign states from the 12th to the 18th centuries under the Malla dynasty (Michaels, 2018). Kathmandu Valley was included as a single site consisting of the UNESCO World Heritage sites (Maharjan, 2012). Galleries in Kathmandu feature both ancient and contemporary art, while museums have extensive collections of important archaeological, historical, and artistic artifacts.
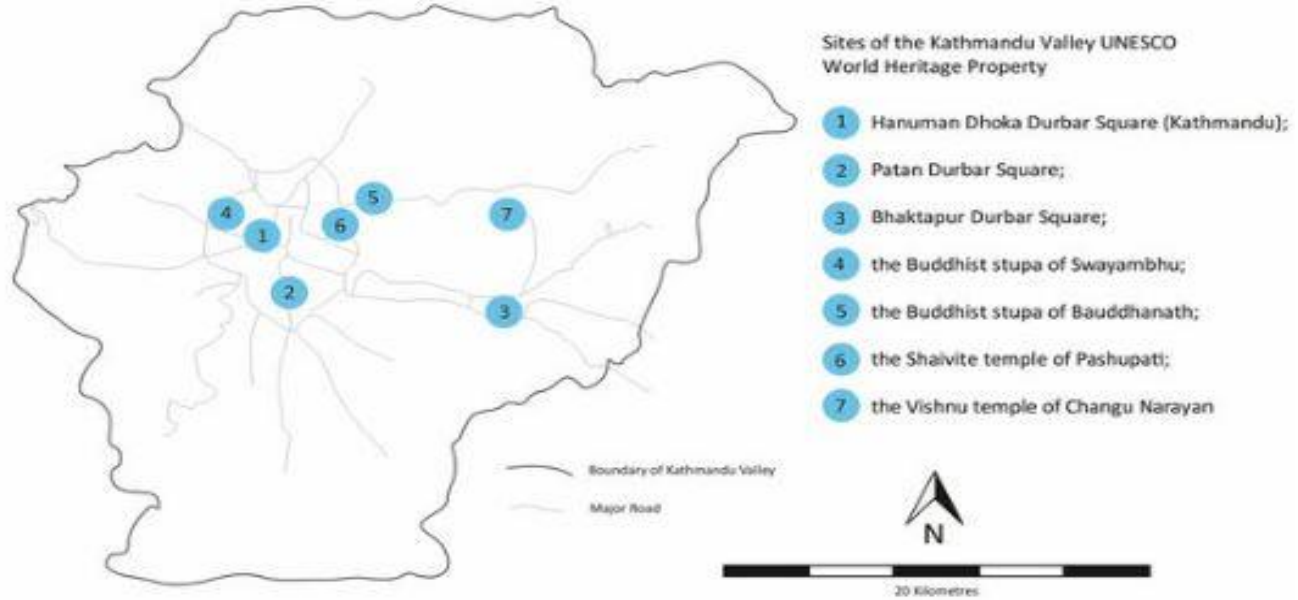
Figure 3: Map of Kathmandu Valley with the location of UNESCO World Heritage sites from Davis et al., (2020)

Hanuman Dhoka or Kathmandu Durbar Square (1), Pashupatinath Temple (6), Baudhanath Stupa (5), Swayambhunath Stupa (4) are WHS inside Kathmandu city. Patan Durbar Square (2) lies in another city called Laitpur. Changunarayan Temple (7) and Bhaktapur Durbar Square (3) are situated in Bhaktapur city. These are the seven indispensable world heritage monuments located within a 20 km radius in Kathmandu valley (Ghimire, 2019).

2.5 Stakeholders in heritage tourism of Kathmandu:

WHS has a wide range of managing and administrative stakeholders, including those in departments of transportation, archaeology, urban development, tourism, and securities in Nepal (Chapagain, 2008). In addition, there are foreign institutions, academic institutions, ward-level administrations, international and national NGOs, business organizations, professional firms, local community groups, and traditional culture groups. Their interests are also very varied, ranging from the presentation of culture archaeological objects and sites to infrastructure development, and service provision. Similarly, they are also responsible for administration, financial, environmental, and visitor management of heritage sites.

They also engage in gathering exploratory and instructional knowledge, promoting universal ideals, demonstrating welfare missions, and managing cultural preservation (Chapagain, 2008).

2.6   Heritage management in Kathmandu:

Ancestors in Nepal have developed unwritten rules and traditions for maintaining and administering heritage sites (Subedi & Shrestha, 2023). There were societal norms governing the management and maintenance of these cultural assets, which assigned distinct duties to different people or organizations (Subedi & Shrestha, 2023).

Every monument that has been included on the World Heritage List must follow the integrity requirements. The requirements include the property's integrity or authenticity, its unique global worth, and its appropriate administration. Currently cultural legacy is the reason for the development of monuments. However, clear policies and effective management strategies can increase the liveability, sustainability, safeguarding, and enhancing the productivity of these monuments.

The new constitutions of Nepal (2015) outline fundamental rights and obligations, emphasizing that everyone is entitled to religious freedom and that every religious institution may oversee, manage, and administer its own monuments.

The DOA is the sole government agency authorized to oversee and protect Nepal's heritage sites under the terms of the Ancient Monument Preservation Act (AMPA) (Subedi & Shrestha, 2023). Consultation with DOA must be done before performing any development or entertainment activities within the protected monument zone. Similarly, AMPA states that the construction or repair of any monuments must comply with the standard set by the DOA.

Guthi has played a crucial role in safeguarding Nepal's cultural heritage for several decades. Guthi are the centralized government institutions or corporations that have been responsible for decades for protecting, preserving, caring for religious, historical, and cultural activities. Guthi aims to maintain close relationships between people from different social groups and to manage cultural heritage more effectively. However, the Pashupati Area Development Trust works for the area's strategic and long-term development in Pashupatinath, one of the famous Hindu temples in Kathmandu. This trust is in charge of

organizing social and charitable events, cultural feasts and festivals in the Pashupati region's temples in compliance with conventional religious ceremonies and customs. Additional authority for managing and conserving heritage has been positioned alongside the CDO (Chief District Officer).

The World Heritage Convention (1972) states that the government is in charge of safeguarding and effectively running heritage sites. According to articles by Subedi & Shrestha (2023), Guthi, DOA, and CDO are a few of the administrative organizations that oversee and preserve Kathmandu's cultural heritage. However, to meet UNESCO requirements stakeholders' participation should be emphasized in policies and heritage management.

Table 1: Roles and responsibility of stakeholders in Nepal as per policies

S.N.	Stakeholders	Roles /Responsibility
1	DAO	Administer and conserve Nepal's cultural heritage
2	Guthi	To protect, preserve, and manage Guth's historical sites and conduct cultural activities
3	State government	Formulating the policies and guidelines and reviewing their implementation.
4	Local government	Restoring monuments, building infrastructure, and collecting fees under their authority
5	Trust and committee	Arrange the heritage premises, manage festivals, provide security
6	International agencies	Provide guidelines for restoration and encourage cooperation
7	Local community	Conservation of historic sites and promote traditional approaches for heritage restoration

According to various prevailing policies, the role of DAO is to administer the heritage sites. Guthi is responsible for managing its property. The state government formulate, review, and implement the policies. Similarly, the local government collects the entry fees and is responsible for the restoration of buildings and monuments. There are trust and committees in some heritage sites that manage festivals and provide security. The international organization provides guidelines and foster cooperation. The local

community acts as a conserver of historic sites. The roles and responsibility of stakeholders are not clearly defined and overlapped in the prevailing policies.

3. Theoretical framework:

3.1 Stakeholders theory in general

Stakeholder theory (ST) is a sophisticated corporate and organizational management theory (Mahajan et al., 2023). In 1960, for the first time, Stanford Research Institute initially put forward ST which states that businesses require the support of both shareholders and their interests to sustain and prosper (Mahajan et al., 2023). Later in 1984, ST was used as a foundation work in Freeman's book.

ST has been widely applied in Corporate social responsibility (CSR) related studies. However, Phillips et al., (2003) stated ST is not just a normative theory of CSR but it provides a framework for addressing different stakeholders' interests that may be applicable in diverse areas. The significance of stakeholders in decision-making and approaches to practice effective stakeholder interaction has increased over the years (Kopelman, 2022). Rather than focusing solely on stakeholders, Freeman states that organizations can create long-term success when concentrating on stakeholders' interests (Mahajan et al., 2023).

The discipline of ST focuses on several aspects of the stakeholder and has a variety of perspectives, methodologies. The widespread use of ST has been observed in several sectors, including marketing, tourism, business, accounting, and finance. Donaldson & Preston (1995) investigated three elements of ST in their study. The first approach is the descriptive one, which sets the stage for considering stakeholder claims or concerns and says organizations are made up of different stakeholder groups, each with their interests (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). The second is the instrumental approach which sets a foundation for maintaining a balance between stakeholder and financial interests. It emphasizes the importance of managing stakeholders as it affects financial outcomes (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). The third approach is the normative approach, which solely focuses on stakeholders and consider to reach financial goals (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). The stakeholder's strategic significance to the organization is concentrated by instrumental perspectives. The ethical duties of organizations to stakeholders were highlighted by normative perspectives. The relationship between the organization and stakeholders was looked at from a descriptive perspective (Mahajan et al., 2023). According to Donaldson & Preston (1995), although these three approaches are not related to each other, they support each other and are applied differently in an organization.

3.2 Stakeholder's theory in tourism perspectives:

ST has been applied mostly to CSR issues, stakeholder roles to plan and assist decision-making process in the tourism context. Khazaei, Elliot, & Joppe (2015) investigate the role of immigrants in tourism planning by utilizing stakeholder theory approaches in the management subject. Stakeholder theory, according to their study, focuses on four themes: cooperation amongst stakeholders, flexibility in participation strategy, marginal stakeholders, and diversity within stakeholders (Khazaei, Elliot & Joppe, 2015). Examining stakeholders' involvement in tourism planning and decision-making execute more inclusive consultation and decision-making processes (Khazaei, Elliot & Joppe, 2015).

ST has been also applied to the subject matter of sustainability which is very crucial concept for tourism planning and development. Erick (2007) made an effort to understand the stakeholder's roles in sustainability and apply ST to develop sustainable tourism. Public meetings, tourism advisory boards, and surveys can be methods utilize for stakeholders inclusion in the decision-making process. Stakeholder knowledge, the effects of tourist development, support for tourism development, demographics, attractions, and occupancy rates are used to increase stakeholder participation in a community (Erick, 2007).

3.3 Stakeholders topology:

An article by Michell et al., (1997) contributed to generating a typology that identifies stakeholders and salience by analyzing various attributes such as power, legitimacy, and urgency. Salience stakeholders are categorized based on how different combinations of power, legitimacy, and urgency they possess. If one attribute is present, the salience of the stakeholder is expected to be low and when two or more attributes are present, the salience will be higher (Michell et al., 1997). If managers in any firm fulfill the legitimate interests of stakeholders, they must consider power and urgency (Michell et al., 1997).

Component of stakeholder attributes:

3.3.1 Power:

Michell et al., (1997) defines power as an ability of stakeholder's to influence or impose their will on an organization. The definition by Dahl's (1957) refers to power as stakeholder's ability to influences another to perform work that cannot be done without support. Likewise, power is not difficult to recognize. With power, persons in authority can bring the results they want, although this ability can be difficult to quantify (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1974).

3.3.2 Legitimacy:

According to Michell et al., (1997), Legitimacy refers to the appropriate or valid accusation of stakeholders about the organization. In general, statements based on "the concept of who or what counts" are defined as legitimate (Michell et al., 1997). However, in societal scenarios, the concept of "legitimacy," broadly refers to acceptable and expected social structures or actions, which is often linked with power. For instance, Davis (1973) states power will be lost if not utilized responsibly as perceived by society. In the opinion of Michell et al., (1997), an organization cannot attain salience unless it owns the authority or urgent claim to impose its will on the relationship.

According to Weber's (1947) theory, authority can be created by combining the distinctive attributes of power and legitimacy. Even though the definition of legitimacy is vague and challenging to operationalize, several of its descriptions help identify stakeholders. These include the fact that legitimacy can be defined and negotiated in diverse ways at different social organization levels (Michell et al., 1997).

3.3.3 Urgency:

According to Michell et al., (1997), urgency refers to how quickly a stakeholder's claims need to be responded or given attention. According to Jones (2018), Urgency is determined by analyzing its importance or relationship to the stakeholder and the extent of managerial delay in responding to the claim. Additionally, while timeliness is important, it does not solely decide the urgency of a stakeholder's

claim. While timeliness is important, but it does not declare urgency to a stakeholder's claim or relationship with the manager. Additionally, the stakeholder needs to see their relationship or claim on the company as crucial or extremely important (Michell et al., 1997).

3.4 Stakeholder's categories:

Eight categories of stakeholders are determined logically and conceptually in Michell et al., (1997) model posing one attribute by three, two attributes by three, all three attributes by one and none attributes by one. The categories of stakeholders with different attribtes are presented in figure 4. In this model, those lacking power, legitimacy, or urgency attributes are considered non stakeholders and will be viewed as non-important by the management of the company. The stakeholders that the company should consider are identified and justified by this study. It also serves as the foundation for managers to identify the important stakeholders.

Power

Urgency

Legitimacy

1.Dormant stakeholders

4. Dominant stakeholders

5. Dangerous stakeholders

7.Defenitive stakeholder

2. Discretionary stakeholders

6. Dependent stakeholders

3. Demanding stakeholders
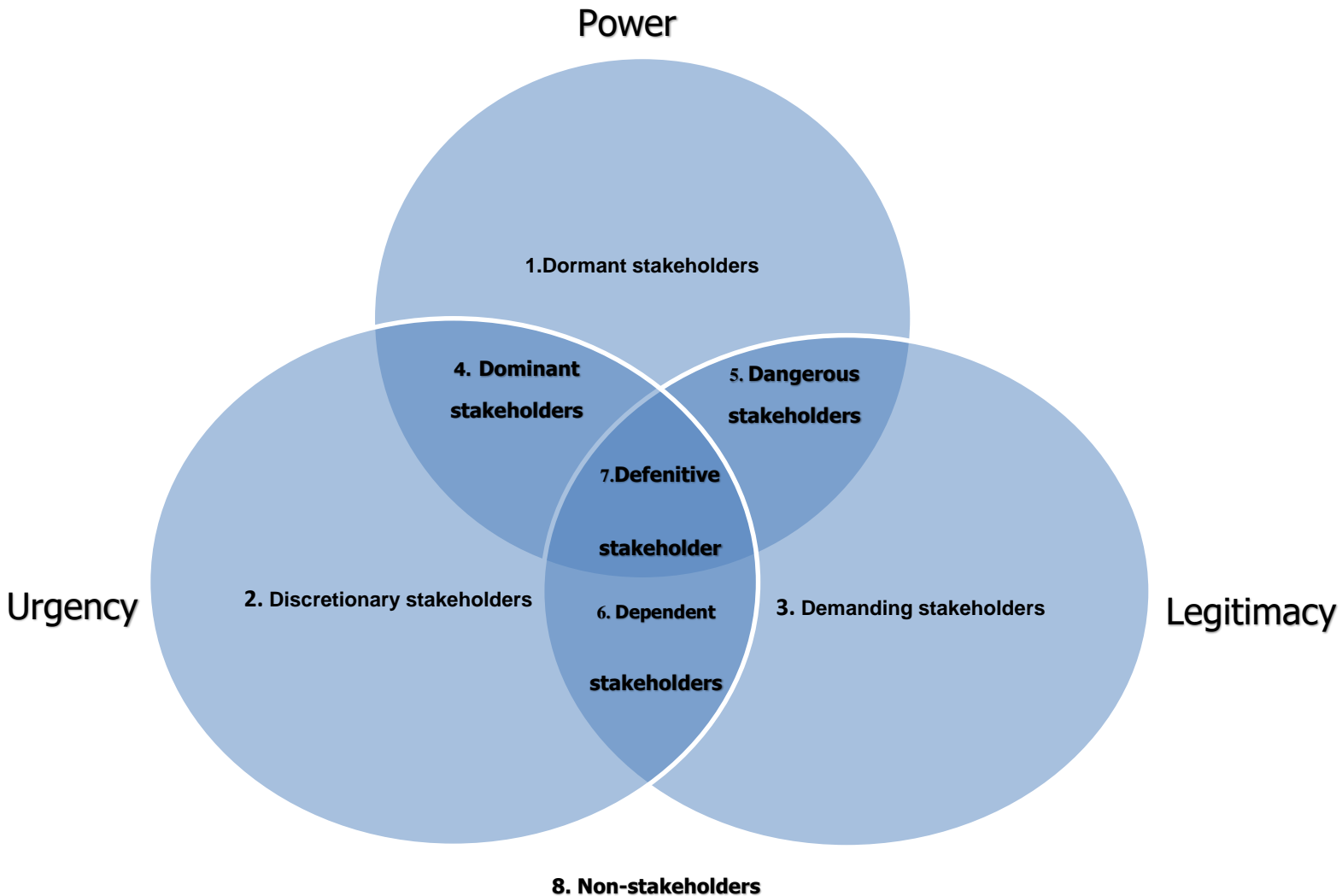
8. Non-stakeholders

Figure 4: Stakeholders categories with power, legitimacy, or urgency attributes from Mitchell et al., (1997)

In Figure 4, latent stakeholders also refer as the low salience class lie in areas 1, 2, and 3. They include dormant, discretionary, and demanding stakeholders. They are identified as they have only one attribute. Those lying in areas 4, 5, and 6 are moderate salient stakeholders and called expectant stakeholders. Dominant, dangerous, and dependent stakeholders are categorized into expectant stakeholders. They are identified as they hold two of the attributes. Highly salient stakeholder also known as definitive stakeholders lies in area 7 and they have the combination of all three attributes. Those having none of the three attributes lie in area 8 and known as non-stakeholder.

3.4.1 Dormant Stakeholders:

Power is an important quality of a dormant stakeholder. Although dormant stakeholders can exert influence over a company, their influence is not used because they lack a valid connection or pressing demand (Michell et al., 1997). Most stakeholders do not communicate with the company very often. Obtaining any between urgency or legitimacy attributes increases the silent aspects of such stakeholders (Michell et al., 1997).

3.4.2 Discretionary stakeholders:

Although discretionary stakeholders lack urgency and influence over the company, they do have a low legitimacy attribute. The important thing about discretionary stakeholders is that, no organization is under any obligation to actively interact with these stakeholders, in the absence of power or claim (Michell et al., 1997). Those who lack power or urgency are deemed discretionary stakeholders.

3.4.3 Demanding stakeholders:

In situations where urgency is the only significant attributes of the stakeholder, it is considered as demanding (Michell et al., 1997). They are individuals with pressing claims who lack authority or power. The urgency is insufficient to project the claim when stakeholders are not able to obtain the power or legitimacy attributes to elevate their demand.

3.4.4 Dominant stakeholders:

Managers will be influenced by the expectations of any stakeholders whom they consider to be legitimate and powerful. There will be a process in place for dominant stakeholders to recognize the value of their connection with the company. Although they are given a lot of attention by managers, dominant stakeholders are by no means the only ones that managers should or do interact with (Michell et al., 1997). They have been attempted to establish as the only stakeholders that matters.

3.4.5 Dependent stakeholders:

Dependent stakeholders are those who rely on others to carry out their will (Michell et al., 1997). They have urgent legitimacy but no power. As a result, they are used both in controlling management values and for advocacy or guardianship of other stakeholders. The dependent stakeholder advanced into the most salient stakeholder when they adopt urgency or power (Michell et al., 1997).

3.4.6 Dangerous stakeholders:

A stakeholder becomes dangerous to the company when they lack legitimacy and exhibit forceful or aggressive behavior, despite having urgency and legitimacy (Michell et al., 1997). Despite their considerable urgency and power, these stakeholders' claims might not be taken as seriously. These stakeholders' actions pose a risk to the people and organizations involved as well as the relationship between the stakeholders and the manager. To grab the opportunity to mitigate the dangers, these stakeholders should be identified without acknowledging them (Michell et al., 1997).

3.4.7 Definitive stakeholders:

When a stakeholder demonstrates all three qualities: strong power, strong legitimacy, and strong urgency, they are considered to be definitive stakeholders (Michell et al., 1997). These stakeholders usually hold the highest significance and require prompt attention. Any anticipated stakeholders may turned into definitive stakeholders when they obtain the missing attribute.

3.4.8 Non-stakeholders:

Those having none of the attributes are classified as non-stakeholders whose role does not influence any organization (Michell et al., 1997).

3.5 Stakeholder management process:

Freeman's (1984) Stakeholder Salience Model is one of the well-known and applied methods for identifying, analyzing, and managing stakeholders. This model based on Freeman concentrates on

power, legitimacy, and urgency attributes to determine stakeholder influence (Mitchell et al., 1997). The Stakeholder Salience Model offers a structured method that helps in identifying the degree of attention and engagement needed for each stakeholder group. By utilizing the stakeholder salience model, a study by Park & Lee (2015) proposed stakeholder management process with three steps as presented in Figure 5.

First Step: Stakeholder Identification and Analysis

Second Step: Stakeholder Management Strategies and Implementation

Third Step: Stakeholder Management Evaluation
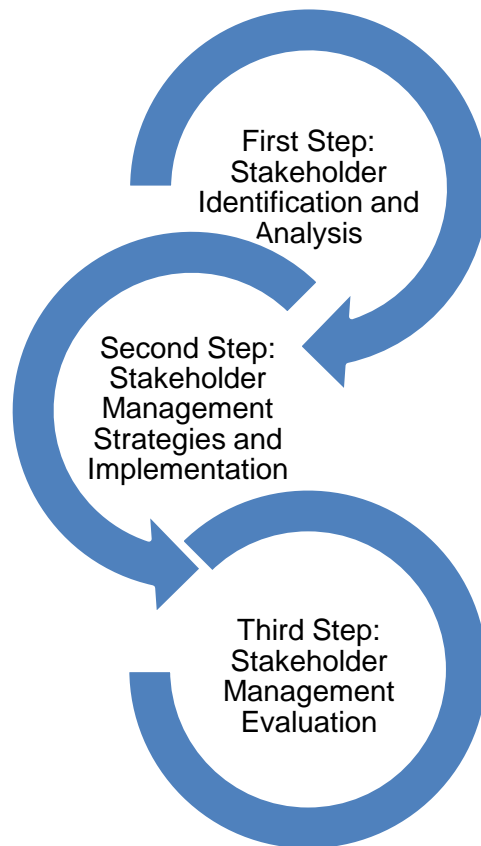
Figure 5: Stakeholders management process from Park & Lee (2015)

Stakeholder identification and analysis is the first step. Stakeholder management strategies and implementation is the next step, and the third step is stakeholder management evaluation.

3.5.1 Stakeholder identification and analysis

Analyzing and classifying the stakeholders is the first stage. Every stakeholder whose claims or interests could impact the organization must be included in the list. Moreover, powerful stakeholders possess strong levels of dedication and interest, which empowers them to encourage civic engagement in support or opposition to an organization. Stakeholders' claims and actions regarding specific concerns are accepted by society if they are seen as socially, legally, culturally, or ethically acceptable (Park & Lee, 2015). To effectively manage stakeholders and their claims, companies must analyze the validity of a group and its claims (Park & Lee, 2015).

3.5.2 Stakeholder Management Strategies and Implementation

Building and maintaining positive connections with key stakeholders is the next step for organizations once they have been identified. Every identified stakeholder's interest should be considered to support an organization in maintaining its relationship with them (Park & Lee, 2015). It is recommended that organizations try to build their constituency by locating, enlightening, and inspiring stakeholders possibly having the power to influence or impact them. Continuous management of stakeholder's claims and monitoring efforts are required to stop an unanticipated threat (Park & Lee, 2015).

3.5.3 Stakeholder Management Evaluation

Lastly, a business should assess its performance during the process of developing and putting into practice of stakeholder management plans (Park & Lee, 2015). Surveys, interviews, audits, analyses, and observations are useful methods for evaluating the output and results of stakeholder management (Park & Lee, 2015). Identifying and analyzing stakeholders, developing and implementing stakeholder management strategies, and evaluating them should all be repeated regularly (Park & Lee, 2015).

3.6 Stakeholder's engagement in heritage management:

The nature of heritage management has undergone a significant transformation throughout time. The preservation of historical resources was the primary priority of heritage management in the 1970s, visitors were the focus of attention in the 1980s, and resource allocation took center stage in the 1990s

and 2000s (Rahman, 2013). Focus has recently shifted to management methods that seek to protect and preserve valuable assets to enhance the experience of visitor (Rahman, 2013).

Heritage management encompasses several different activities from the conservation to the enhancement of cultural heritage. The ideals, motives, and expectations of visitors and the management of heritage facilities have often been the focus of heritage management (Rahman, 2013). In the global context of heritage sites, Kunkaew (2015) divides heritage management into the management of resources, accommodation, souvenirs the environment, culture, marketing, and tourism policy.

To be effective, heritage tourism needs to be carefully planned, developed, managed, and marketed (Nuryanti, 1996). Enhancement efforts, such as organizing exhibitions and offering tourist services, are meant to guarantee that heritage may be accessed and appreciated by as many people as possible. Protection makes sure that they are not destroyed for economic reasons (Boniotti, 2023). To ensure that cultural heritage assets are managed effectively, local governments should promote management by being active in the planning of spatial development, awarding concessions and licenses, creating laws about business operations, and enforcing trade standards, and product quality (Goral, 2015).

The field of heritage management is acknowledged for its growing complexity due to the challenge of identifying the best practices for both conservation and management (Rahman, 2013). Heritage management becomes increasingly problematic due to the ownership associated with the heritage and, conflicting values and interests. Additionally, there are issues with heritage tourism such as sustainable tourism development having concerns about carrying capacity, managing stakeholders, and community involvement (Mandić & Kennell, 2021). As indicated in smart governance, well-established destinations have superior performance in several areas, including stakeholder involvement, citizen participation, and decision-making.

The heritage management field is acknowledged for its growing complexity due to the challenge of identifying the best practices for conservation and management (Rahman, 2013). According to Kunkaew (2015), the development of policies and the promotion of cultural tourism involves three distinct categories of stakeholders: government organizations, business owners, and the public government organization manages the nation's tourism destinations and towns' cultural heritage under UNESCO's guidance. A business owner encompasses not only the service provider but also the entertainment and

educational institutions. They are regarded as components of the assistance in augmenting cultural tourism to advertise the outstanding services offered to guests (Kunkaew, 2015). The public approved government administration and comprehended it.

Various attempts have been made to study stakeholders and their role in heritage management. Kunkaew (2015) made an effort to research on stakeholders particularly emphasizing on managing world heritage sites. Stakeholders could engage in the management process rather than just listening and watching it. Countries with highly centralized models are under increasing pressure to open heritage management to private local partners and reduce government engagement (Boniotti, 2023). Hence, the participation of stakeholders with relevant expertise and who are interested in the decisions has increased (Mateja et al., 2015). Method involving the public and commercial sectors, nonprofits, and private person's viewpoints from a range of sociocultural, architectural, economic, and conservation can be beneficiary (Nuryanti, 1996). Public-private collaborations that are proactive and dedicated from a non-economic perspective can facilitate the effective management of cultural assets (Boniotti, 2023). Such collaboration could be beneficial especially in the heritage management field due to the relationships between preservation, and enhancement-related activities.

It is essential to select and involve many stakeholders in the heritage management and decision-making process (Mateja et al., 2015). Furthermore, identifying stakeholders who are eager to develop the heritage is essential for successful and effective heritage management. Stakeholder integration in management relates to the achievement of collaborative strategic planning, developing a responsible tourism and enhancing products related to cultural heritage (Moreno et al., 2019). To maximize the heritage values and meet market expectations, stakeholders must activate a participatory mechanism that results in the creation of a cultural tourist product (Kunkaew, 2015).

Additionally, Stakeholder engagement could better WHS situation through innovative approaches in city planning, development of new tourism activities, construction, renovation, and alteration of monuments. It also provides stakeholders with opportunities to be involved in all phases of the development process: planning, carrying out, and assessing (Kunkaew, 2015).

4. Methodology:

The purpose of this study is to identify the salient stakeholders, as well as their potential role in the effective heritage management process of Kathmandu Valley. Beyond the primary objective, this study investigates the current state of stakeholders in WHS. It is also intended to study issues caused by inefficient stakeholder engagement and provide suggestions for enhancing heritage management through stakeholder engagement. The study research process including methodology, data collection, and data analysis will be addressed in this chapter. At first, the research approach is outlined, then the data collection procedure is presented and finally, the data analysis process is described.

4.1 Research approach

This study uses a qualitative approach, including qualitative interviewing for data collection and thematic analysis for data analysis as presented in figure 6.

Thematic analysis

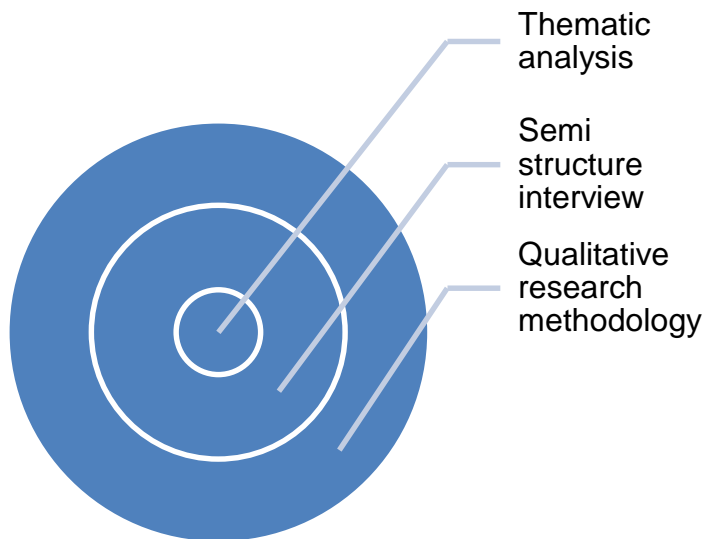Semi structure interview

Qualitative research methodology

Figure 6: Research approach

Qualitative methodology was used in this study. The data was collected by Semi structure interview (SSI) and thematic analysis was used to conceptualize the data.

There are several approaches used in research to collect and understand data. The use of qualitative research methods has grown in popularity among researchers. Psychologists first employed qualitative research methods when they discovered that analyzing human behavior using numerical data was time-consuming process (Pathak et al., 2013). Since then, additional study areas have also adopted qualitative research. Currently, there is an enormous amount of tourism research that has been done using qualitative methods. Approaches to qualitative research have significantly advanced and are becoming accepted in the field of tourism studies (Wilson & Hollinshead, 2015). Denzin & Lincoln (2005) states that qualitative research relies on interpretive and critical processes that challenge universalizing and all-knowing truths. A qualitative technique is selected when the investigation goal is to comprehend a greater understanding and exploration of real-world issues (Corner et al., 2019).

Qualitative research is about finding explanations for social phenomena by focusing on social factors. In other words, it comprehends the social environment and focuses on the description, and interpretation of evolution of new theories and concepts of subject matters (Hancock et al., 2001). Qualitative research examines why and how factors of human behavior influence it. In social science, qualitative research methodologies have been established to help researchers examine social, cultural and social issues (Toloie et al., 2011). The goal of qualitative research is to add conceptual and theoretical information to knowledge by exploring the meanings of the data set (DiCicco & Crabtree, 2006).

Qualitative research methods are frequently employed when there is a lack of existing understanding of a complicated phenomenon or there is incomplete knowledge that cannot be resolved by making physical measurements (Kyngäs, 2020). Qualitative research is a humanistic or idealistic method that produces non-numerical data and focuses on comprehending a research question (Pathak et al., 2013). Qualitative approach is used to understand perspectives, experiences, behavior and attitudes of people. The objective of qualitative techniques is to comprehend a particular subject matter from perspective of the person experiencing it. (Vaismoradi et al 2013).

The purpose of this study is to identify the salient stakeholders, as well as their engagement role in the effective heritage management process of Kathmandu Valley. Therefore, to learn more about perspectives of stakeholder engagement from individuals and organization associated heritage, a qualitative approach was adopted.

4.2 Data collection

Semi-structured interview (SSI) was chosen as the data collection method for this study. In qualitative research, SSI is an important method for data collection. SSI is frequently used in data collection to enable digging more information from respondents and providing explanations from responses. Additionally, it offers useful forum for exploring respondents' viewpoints, beliefs on complex and delicate subjects (Galletta, 2013). The primary benefit of SSI is that it permits the investigator to freely explore any important ideas that may come up throughout the interview (Adeoye & Olenik, 2021). This can result in deeper understanding of the subject matter. It combines open and closed ended questions with additional questions (Adams, 2015). When several open-ended questions need to be followed up on, SSI works incredibly well for a variety of useful tasks. For example, participants can answer them however they prefer. In this study, SSI was chosen because the interview participants should get the chance to give their complete perspectives on stakeholders, their attributes and engagement.

The interview was divided into three sections with sub-questions related to heritage tourism, stakeholder identification, and heritage management. Additional questions were asked when participants provided some important aspects that led to a deeper perspective on subject matters. Interview questions were created based on the literature reviewed. At first, 15 questions were formed to be asked to the participants. However, similar types of questions were merged and finally, 12 questions were prepared. One question was added at the very end because it was related to stakeholder's roles in heritage management. These 13 main questions were categorized into 3 sections: heritage tourism, stakeholder identification, and heritage management as presented in appendix 2. Those with expertise, interest, and experience in heritage tourism, its stakeholders, and heritage management of Kathmandu were identified and chosen for interviews through purposeful sampling. When studying a specific subject with qualified experts, purposeful sampling, and a sort of non-probability technique is applied (Tongco, 2007). When randomization is problematic due to the size of the population, the researcher selected a sample from the general population (Etikan et al., 2016). Most of the study interview participants are working in the tourism industry and are relate to the heritage tourism of Kathmandu. Some of them are tourism business owners, workers in tourism governmental bodies, local people living near heritage sites, and lecturers of heritage and cultural studies. It is expected that the participants have profound knowledge and experience in the subject matter of heritage sites that could be helpful for this research purpose. Table 2 presents some general information about the interview participants. To ensure the confidentiality

of interview participants, personal details are not shared. The participants are categorized as P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7 and P8. Their profession, the type of organization they are involved with, and their place of residence are also presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Information about the interview participants

Interview participants (P)	Profession	Type of organization	Place of residents
P1	Trust member	Heritage Area Development Trust	Gaushala, Kathmandu
P2	Representative of community group (Guthi)	Private guthi	Maru, Basantapur, Kathmandu
P3	Administrative officer	Governmental tourism organization	Dhading, Nepal
P4	Business owner	Souvenir shop	Swyambhu, Kathmandu
P5	Resident		Thimi, Bhaktapur
P6	Owner of travel company	Travel Company	Lazimpat, Kathmandu
P7	Tour Guide	Travel Company	Patan, Lalitpur
P8	Lecturer	Private university	Kuleshwor, Kathmandu

Initially, it was estimated that the number of interview participants would be around 12. All the participants associated with some kind of organization were contacted through email. Participants from resident, religious, or community groups were contacted through personal contact. However, some of the possible participants did not respond to the email. 10 participants showed interest in the possible interview. Some of the interested participants did not take part in the interview because of their busy schedules and less knowledge of heritage tourism. Then negotiation about the possible date and time for an interview with 8 interested participants was done. Most of the participants requested interview questions before the interview to prepare themselves and gather in-depth understanding. Hence interview questions were emailed before the interview. Before the interview, the participants received

information on the ethics of the study and how data would be utilized. Ultimately 8 interviews were conducted. Face-to-face interviews were not feasible, thus all of the interviews were done over WhatsApp video call. All the interviews except with the owner of a travel company and tour guide were conducted in Nepalese. Nepalese language was used because it would be convenient for participants and more detailed information on subject matters could be gathered. The interview lasted for around 26-34 minutes. The interview date and duration are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Interview Information

Interview	Interview date	Interview duration
P1	20.2.2024	34 minutes
P2	22.2.2024	26 minutes
P3	28.2.2024	31 minutes
P4	1.3.2024	26 minutes
P5	2.3.2024	29 minutes
P6	5.3.2024	32 minutes
P7	8.3.2024	32 minutes
P8	9.3.2024	28 minutes

The interviews were conducted flawlessly and no technical error was experienced. As all the participants were somehow associated with the heritage tourism of Kathmandu and interview questions were provided before the interview, it was possible to conduct the interview properly. The researcher greeted the participants and gave a quick overview of the topics including heritage, stakeholders, and heritage management, at the beginning of the interview. Then the researcher shortly presented the study ethics and asked permission to record the interview for academic purposes. The interview participants were assured that no personal details would be disclosed during the research process. All the participants allowed to record the interview. Whenever needed, further sub-questions were asked to gain deeper information on the subject matter.

4.3 Data analysis

An abductive approach, which combines an inductive and deductive approach, was applied in this study. It involves open coding, category creation, and conceptualization. When using an abductive approach, observation does not explain or present an entirely new case of an established theory (Henninger et al., 2024). In particular, it tests established theory against the raw data. In this study, themes are developed through open coding of raw data from interviews and tried to connect with the theory. For data analysis, thematic analysis (TA) is used in this study. It is about finding, evaluating, and summarizing themes generated from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). TA can provide a more approachable analysis as a researcher is not required to have in-depth theoretical and technological expertise. The thematic analysis looks at various discourses impacting events, realities, meanings, and experiences. It also reports participant's experiences, meanings, and reality. TA is an impartial, reliable qualitative approach that gives researchers the essential expertise and knowledge required to conduct a variety of qualitative analyses (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). TA is a technique used for finding and reporting patterns using prior themes based on theory or creating new emergent themes (Costa et al., 2016).

TA includes six data analysis processes as presented in Figure 7 (Braun & Clarke, 2006). TA starts with the data familiarization phase in which the researcher transcribes the interview, and reads over the transcripts multiple times to gain a sense of the entire material (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). The next stage is collecting data relevant to codes and themes. The following step is comparing the emergent coding clusters concerning the complete data set. Verifying the theme relates to both the emergent code and the complete data set is done consequently. Refining the details of every theme that the analysis presents and giving each theme precise titles and definitions is done next. Reporting the outcomes of earlier phases is a part of the last step of data analysis. This stage involves performing an analysis of emergent themes and connecting the findings to the study topic and the literature (Vaismoradi et al., 2013).
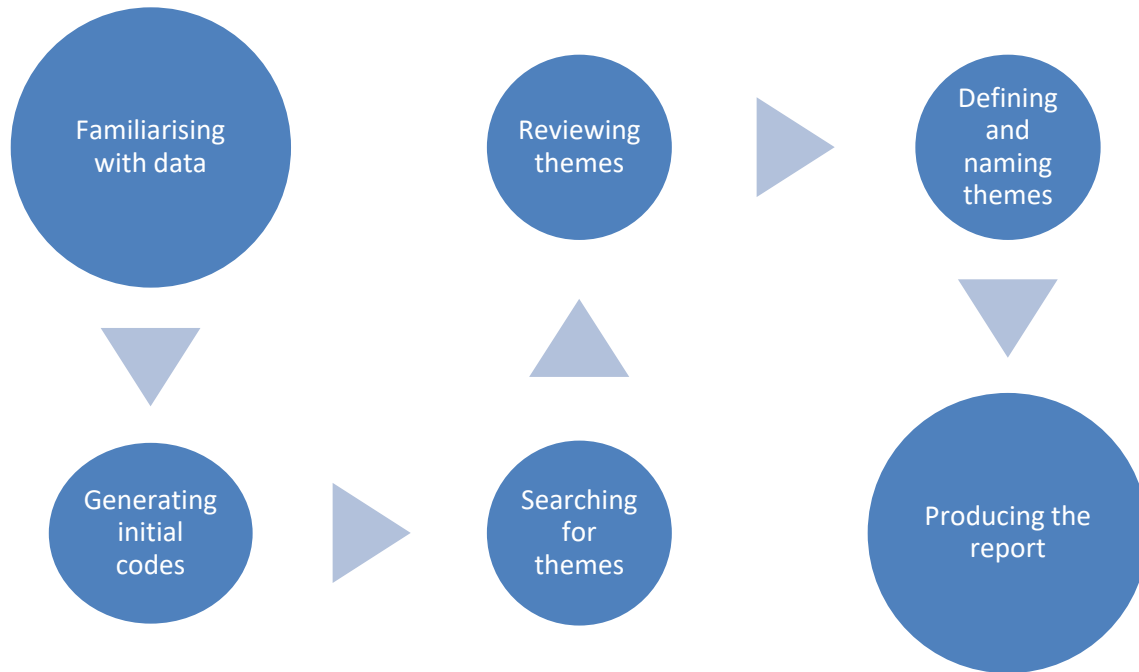
Figure 7: Data analysis process in thematic analysis. Adapted from Braun & Clarke (2006)

To begin the data analysis, all the interview records were manually transcribed one by one. It was noticed that manual transcription took more time but it presented clear transcribed interview data at the end. According to Yu et al., (2010), the manual transcribing method significantly increases the accuracy of recognizing all kinds of data. ATLAS.ti software was used for the analysis of the data. All the transcribed interviews were uploaded and careful reading was performed several times. Then various quotes along with the topic were developed according to the meaning drawn from the participant's interview. Later, quotes having information on related topics were merged and separated. The key themes were developed and titles with the meaning of these generated themes were created.

Various topics from the transcribed data were highlighted then initial codes were formed. From the cluster of these codes, four common themes among the interview data were generated as presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Themes, codes, and topics

Theme	Code	Topic
Current stakeholder's situation in Heritage	Disagreement and conflict	Disputes among stakeholders
		Disputes of ownership
Stakeholders in the heritage site of Kathmandu	Governmental organizations, local government, international organizations, committees or trusts, local and community groups, business groups	DOA, KMC, UNESCO, Guthi, Pashupatinath Area Development Committee, and travel agency
Stakeholders identification	Powerful stakeholder	Responsibility
		Controller
		Directing others
		Authority
		Leader
		Owner
	Legitimate stakeholder	Legally working
		Holder of Interest, concerns, and claim
		Encouragement and support
	Stakeholder with urgency	Approaching authorities
		Demanding
		Tourist generator
		Preserver of sites
	Supporting stakeholders	Directors
		Organizer
		Advocator
		Financial supporter

Stakeholders' engagement and its role	Collective work	Participation of several stakeholders
		Public and religious groups' involvement
		Stakeholder's viewpoint gathering
	Issues in engagement	Restriction on the decision-making process
		Limited to financial and labor contribution
		Lack of consultation
	Stakeholders roles	Demand for clear and comprehensive regulation
		Monitoring and safeguarding
		Effective management and Marketing
		Demand for more participation
		Developing infrastructure and facilities
		Fundraiser

The themes that emerged from the data are the current stakeholder's situation in heritage, stakeholder identification, stakeholder engagement, and its role. The table present generated topics, codes, and themes for this study.

5. Findings:

The goal of this study is to identify the salient stakeholders, as well as their engagement role in the effective heritage management process of Kathmandu Valley. Eight semi-structured interviews with the major actors of heritage tourism in Nepal were conducted to find out the current stakeholders' situation in heritage, salient stakeholder, their engagement, and roles in heritage management. In this chapter, the major findings under themes are presented.

5.1 Current Stakeholder's Situation in Heritage

This chapter presents the current stakeholder's situation of heritage sites of Kathmandu. It provides some valuable insight by introducing problems, challenges, and conflicts between stakeholders. Disagreement and conflict are commonly witnessed in the management of WHS. Disputes among stakeholders were pointed out by the majority of interview participants. Conflicts among stakeholders in Kathmandu are arising frequently. Conflicts are caused when a stakeholder tries to implement new regulations and initiates management activities without proper consultation. One interview participant gave the example of banning marijuana on temple premises causing major conflict between stakeholders.

Conflicts are usual among stakeholders in heritage sites. We also face many conflicts repeatedly. Sometimes conflicts occur between small businesses running the side leading to the temple. Some time, with Guthi and various religious groups. For example, we tried to ban consumption of marijuana completely on temple premises but sadhu or Hindu saint groups demanded that consuming marijuana is a religious practice for them. (P1)

Disputes of ownership for heritage sites were other key issues figured out by participants. Disagreements are caused as each stakeholder wants to take control over heritage sites. However, there is no single policy stating the actual owner of heritage sites in Kathmandu. Such ownership and rights issues are causing disputes in the heritage sites of Kathmandu.

Some many key stakeholders try to take control of heritage sites. Also, there is no accurate rule or policy that states ownership of heritage sites. Many times, conflicts have been observed between Guthi, local

people, DOA, and municipalities. They claim that heritage management should be handed over to them. (P8)

5.2 Stakeholders in the heritage of Kathmandu

Various stakeholders are working in the heritage sites of Kathmandu. Some main stakeholders support heritage management in this region. All these eight interview participants mentioned some major stakeholders in the WHS of Kathmandu. Half of the interview participants listed Local government, federal government, and non-governmental organizations as major stakeholders that have roles in heritage tourism in Kathmandu.

The community and government authorities are the two key stakeholders engaged in the Kathmandu Valley's management and conservation efforts. There are different levels of government authority including local and federal government. Various institutions including the Department of Archaeology, ward offices, local governments, and Guthi Sansthan are recognized as key stakeholders which belong to either government or community authorities. (P6)

Similarly, six major types of stakeholders with separate roles and interests have been identified illustrated in Table 5. The majority of interview participants listed Governmental, community groups, local people, religious groups, committees or trusts, and international agencies as key stakeholders having major roles in heritage tourism in Kathmandu.

There are many actors or stakeholders in the heritage sites of Kathmandu. I should categorize key stakeholders into governmental, community groups, local people, religious groups, and various committees or trusts. (P8)

Table 5: List of stakeholders in Kathmandu Heritage Sites

	Governmental organization	Local government	International organization	Area development or committees and trusts	Local community and religious groups	Business groups
P1	X	X	X			X
P2	X	X	X			X
P3	X	X	X			
P4	X	X	X			X
P5	X	X	X	X	X	
P6	X	X	X			X
P7	X	X	X	X	X	
P8	X	X	X	X	X	

Diverse types of stakeholders were pointed out by interview participants. DAO or KMC comes under governmental organizations. Local governments have been listed as metropolitan city, wards. Similarly, international organizations include UNESCO. In terms of non-governmental organizations, stakeholders like small business associations, area development management, and conservation committees or trusts are working in Kathmandu. Some interview participants pointed out community groups such as Guthi, private owners, and local peoples as key stakeholders in heritage sites. All the participants agreed on DOA as key stakeholders in Kathmandu's heritage sites.

5.3 Identification of salient stakeholders

This chapter analyses powerful, legitimate, urgent stakeholders in Kathmandu according to the attributes they possess. Besides that, those stakeholders supporting heritage management are also identified.

5.3.1 Powerful stakeholder:

For the identification of powerful stakeholders, interview participants provided several factors that demonstrate powerful attributes. Table 6 demonstrates stakeholders with factors such as controller,

responsibility, influencer, directing others, authority, leader, and ownership that summarize the powerful stakeholders in heritage sites of Kathmandu Valley. Heritage sites in Kathmandu are controlled by different stakeholders. Similarly, there are stakeholders responsible for heritage management. Some powerful stakeholders are influencing the heritage management and activities of other stakeholders.

Table 6: Factors contributing to powerful stakeholders

Factors	Governmental organization	Local government	International organization	Area development or committees and trusts	Local community and religious groups	Business groups
Controller	X	X		X		
Responsibility	X			X		
Directing others	X		X	X		
Authority	X	X	X			
Leader	X			X		
Owner					X	

The controlling factor was mentioned by the vast majority of interview participants as the powerful attributes exercised by stakeholders. Area development management or trusts and conservation committees have been controlling the preservation, reconstruction, and maintenance of heritage sites. One of the interview participants P4 produce an example of how one of the heritage site's renovation works was controlled by management and the conservation general committee.

Swayambhu Management and Conservation General Committee mostly controls the heritage management, preservation, and renovation works. The committee has been maintaining the historical site and is in charge of keeping it clean and safe. For example, the last time when storm affected the stupa, this committee renovated it within 3 months. (P4)

DOA is a very controlling and powerful stakeholder in the heritage sites of Kathmandu. DOA controls the preservation activities of major heritage sites. Similarly, the DOA is also controlling the construction,

renovation, and management of monuments in heritage sites. In Kathmandu, anyone willing to reconstruct or modify monuments in heritage sites must get approval from the DOA first. The DOA is so powerful that without their approval, any stakeholders who initiated building infrastructure or reconstruction could face fines and punishment.

DOA must grant a permit to start any work related to change, management, or renovations to private monuments. Everyone who disobeys faces fines and imprisonment, even if they are private and Guthi. Construction activities including roads, buildings, sewage, and buildings need DOA approval in advance. It shows the power and influence of DOA regarding heritage preservation and management. (P5)

Local governments including municipalities and wards are also exercising some control over the administration, development, and management of heritage sites. Such controlling activities include collecting entry fees, cleaning, and running day-to-day activities and facilities in heritage sites. Other examples of such controlling activities of local government include upgrading roads and parking space management.

So far I know, that municipalities and wards hold control and influence over various management and administrative activities in heritage sites of Kathmandu. They collect entry fees from visitors and manage cleanness, run day-to-day activities and facilities of heritage sites, and restore and reconstruct monuments. (P7)

Area development management or trust has been recognized as the controlling stakeholder in one of seven heritage sites in Kathmandu. Such Area Development Trust in some heritage sites like Pashupatinath and Boudhanth stupa is directing all other authorities that are supporting the management works like cleaning, providing security, and organizing rituals.

Responsibility is another powerful attribute exercised by stakeholders. When asked about the stakeholder's responsibility on heritage sites of Kathmandu, central government policy-making responsibility was mentioned. Likewise, heritage decision-making is found to come under the responsibility of the central government. Further, the central government is equally responsible for establishing rules and regulations regarding heritage management. However, some power has been decentralized to various other stakeholders.

In the past, the government was centralized so all the major decisions used to be made by the government. Now different stakeholder performs tasks according to their duties, rights, and responsibilities. In my view point, the central government is still powerful and establishes policies and rules along with monitoring the management activities of heritage sites. (P7)

Some interview participants also added that the DOA is a responsible stakeholder for managing, preserving, and protecting temples, monuments, and historic buildings. On the contrary, there has been some argument that the area development trust or committee is mostly responsible for heritage management and organizing services for devotees during festivals.

However, Pashupati Area Development Trust has been conducting regular celebrations and is in responsible for overseeing the destination. (P1)

During the analysis of powerful stakeholders, many interview participants described the directing attributes of some key stakeholders in various activities. They considered Area Development Trust, UNESCO, and DOA direct stakeholders in the heritage sites of Kathmandu. Stakeholders like community members, local government, and other organizations are directed by the Pashupati Area Development Trust in the religious temple of Pashupatinath. There was also a case where, despite two stakeholders in charge of heritage management, both were directed by UNESCO. This pointed out the absolute power of UNESCO in the heritage sites of Kathmandu.

Here, KMC and DOA are in charge of two parts of the area of the monument. However, both stakeholders are governed, monitored, and directed by UNESCO. (P2)

Some stakeholders were also identified as influencers by interview participants. Government bodies such as DOA and KMC are influencing stakeholders. Most decisions are taken by government bodies and they control and influence the heritage management of Kathmandu. However, both these stakeholders consult with UNESCO for managing heritage. Local governing bodies like Municipalities and wards are considered as influencing stakeholders running day-to-day management and administrative works.

As Kathmandu was listed as a dangerous site before, UNESCO is continuously influencing on heritage management and conservation. Most of the decision made by DAO or KMC is taken in consultation with UNESCO. (P2)

So far I know, that municipalities and wards hold control and influence over various management and administrative activities in heritage sites of Kathmandu. They collect entry fees from visitors and manage cleanness, run day-to-day activities and facilities of heritage sites, and restore and reconstruct monuments. (P7)

A leader is a stakeholder in charge of major heritage management works. Four major monuments of Kathmandu Valley are led by DOA and KMC. There has been conflict regarding authority and the leading role of stakeholders. DOA is in charge of the split western parts and KMC is in charge of the eastern parts in the Kathmandu Durbar Square. Many interview participants argue that KMC is an authorized stakeholder in heritage sites. Similarly, some management and conservation committees oversaw cleaning and safeguarding roles in some heritage sites.

The most important government agencies in charge of overseeing and maintaining the heritage sites, especially these four monuments: Hanuman Dhoka Durbar Square, Swayambhu, Pashupatinath, and Bouddhanath are the DAO and KMC. (P1)

Regarding authority or influence over historic management in Kathmandu, there had been misunderstandings. The route that leads from Maru to Ason split the authority over the monuments; DOA is in charge of the eastern portion, and KMC is in charge of the western portion. (P2)

Ownership also demonstrates the power attributes of stakeholders. In terms of ownership of heritage in Kathmandu, there are some religious communities or groups and as an owner, they make major decisions and manage some Kathmandu heritage sites.

In Kathmandu Valley, heritage sites are managed and owned by religious or community groups known as the. It is guthi that controls decisions in heritage sites. (P8)

As can be seen in the results described above, governmental organizations are enormously powerful stakeholders in the WHS of Kathmandu. DAO under the Governmental body controls, manages, and leads the major WHS. DAO is also responsible for making major decisions and directing other stakeholders. Similarly, area development or committees and trusts are equally powerful in the WHS of Kathmandu. In some WHS like Pashupatinath temple, Swyambhunath, and Boudhanath stupa, such committees or trust exercise powerful attributes as presented in Table 6. Local government shows some power as well. For example, some portions of Kathmandu Durbar Square is controlled by KMC. Some

power attributes are demonstrate by international organizations. Mostly, UNESCO is internationally authorized to direct stakeholders in WHS. Some religious communities or groups own, and manage some less popular heritage monuments in Kathmandu.

5.3.2 Legitimate stakeholder

During an analysis, four factors emerged from interviews that contributed to the identification of legitimate stakeholders. Table 7 illustrates legitimate stakeholders with factors such as legal working, holder of interest, concern, and claim, encouragement, and support in heritage sites of Kathmandu Valley. These four factors were mentioned by most of the interview participants and contributed to the identification of legitimate stakeholders. There are some legally working stakeholders for heritage management in Kathmandu. Similarly, some stakeholders also hold interests, concerns, and claims regarding heritage issues. Additionally, there are encouraging and supporting stakeholders which aided in identifying legitimate stakeholders.

Table 7: Factors contributing to legitimate stakeholders

Factors	Governmental organization	Local government	International organization	Area development or committees and trusts	Local community and religious groups	Business groups
Legal working	X		X			
Holder of interest, concern, and claim,					X	
Encouragement, and support						X

DOA and UNESCO have been legally working for the preservation and maintaining heritage sites. Nepal government considers DOA as a legal stakeholder. However, globally UNESCO is considered to be a legal entity. UNESCO is the international legal stakeholder that has been safeguarding the authenticity of monuments globally. DOA falls under the Nepal government and it is a legal body that grants approval

and preservation of monuments. According to interviews, the DOA is a legal stakeholder in national scenarios and UNESCO in international contexts.

In terms of legal stakeholders, I would say there is UNECSO and DOA. UNESCO is an international body that ensures heritage is authentic and preserved well and development does not hamper it. On the other side, DOA is a Nepal governmental body that looks after all the monuments of Nepal. To make any change on the heritage sites, approval should be taken from DOA. (P8)

Guthi, a community or religious group has been recognized as a legal entity for taking care of monuments in Kathmandu. Additionally, Guthi also has valid interests, claims, and concerns on diverse various topics such as preservation, conservation, or proper development of heritage sites. Similarly, the local community including residents and religious belief followers are analyzed as legitimate stakeholders.

Area management trusts or committees are working under the government of Nepal on the Swyambhunath stupa, Pashupatinath temple, and Boudhanath stupa. Furthermore, the local government is also legally managing heritage sites situated under their territory.

The private sector and Guthi are the stakeholders having various interests, concerns, and claims regarding heritage issues. Guthi has a very close relationship with the heritage management of Kathmandu. Due to this, they express legal interest, and claims and voluntarily participate in the preservation and progress of heritage sites. Adding to this, Guthi Corporation also organizes various religious ceremonies, festivals, and celebrations in heritage sites of Kathmandu. Guthi holds legitimate interest and claims for preserving and conserving heritage and rituals.

Guthi Sansthans conduct religious ceremonies and celebrations, manage important religious and cultural heritages, and protect monuments and other religious structures. In this regard, Guthi is recognized as a stakeholder holding legitimate interest and claim in subject matters of heritage sites. (P5)

However, marketing efforts and financial support from the private sector such as travel agencies, and NTB have been rarely acknowledged. Private tourism businesses are interested in supporting sustainability and responsible tourism. They advocate and encourage better facilities and infrastructure availability in heritage sites. Similarly, religious groups, Buddhist followers, and Guthi raised their voices on religious matters and heritage management. All these stakeholders are legitimate stakeholders aiming to eliminate religious issues for improving heritage sites.

As demonstrated by the findings outlined above, legitimacy attributes were shown by DOA as a governmental organization, by UNESCO as an international organization, by Guthi as local and religious groups, and some small business organizations. Globally, UNESCO is the international legal stakeholder and DOA is considered a legal body in the Nepalese context. Similarly, Guthi is legitimately raising claims and concerns on various WHS topics. In addition, private tourism businesses show legitimacy by advocating for sustainability and responsible tourism.

5.3.3 Stakeholder with Urgency:

Stakeholders with urgency hold claims that require immediate attention. Various stakeholders in Kathmandu Valley hold some urgent claims. They are raising urgent concerns and issues concerning heritage sites. Generating tourists is one major concern for stakeholders in Kathmandu. Some people view the preservation of Kathmandu's historical sites as an urgent issue. Local people, community, and religious groups like Guthi are demanding stakeholders that raise concerns and issues in topics such as rituals and festivals. However, such urgent claims are neglected as they do not reach out to governing bodies of heritage management.

I think residents and religious groups come with various urgent claims but cannot reach us for many reasons. (P1)

Surprisingly, urgent claims of tourism governing bodies such as NTB have been neglected in Kathmandu. Despite making various marketing and taking initiatives for heritage preservation, their serious issues are not emphasized. There is a huge importance of NTB for promotional works of heritage and enhancing the satisfaction of visitors. However, NTB is limited as the promotional body of tourism and neglected in heritage sites of Kathmandu. Visitors or tourists are generated with efforts of travel agencies, their associations as well as by promotional work of the NTB. This major factor of generating visitors has been neglected in the tourism industry. Similarly, there are serious issues that need to be solved immediately in WHS of Kathmandu like encroachment and safety issues. Concerns raised by small business groups have been neglected by the governing body in heritage sites.

In my viewpoint, the Nepal Tourism Board has been neglected in heritage tourism. We have been actively working to market heritage tourism and taking initiatives for heritage preservation. We demand better heritage management so that visitors are satisfied and promote positive word of mouth. But we are always thinking of it as a promotional body. (P3)

I should name our association of small businesses that have been raising various issues like road encroachment by illegal street vendors and safety issues. However, this committee has not focused on solving this problem. (P4)

Local people have complete knowledge about heritage subject matters so resulting in demand for more proper management and conservation. Local people and the community have been demanding stakeholders and preservers for heritage. Local people and the community have been demanding stakeholders and preservers for heritage. They raise voices and concerns against any wrong deeds against heritage subject matters.

Yes, local people have been neglected mostly. But local people always act like the preserver of heritage, religion, and culture. They take care of heritage sites and speak if anything is going wrong on heritage matters. I have seen many small heritage monuments managed and looked after by local people. (P8)

As demonstrated by the findings mentioned above, Urgency is shown by Local people, Guthi, and religious groups. They are raising concerns about rituals and festivals in the WHS of Kathmandu. Business groups like travel agencies and NTB are raising the urgency for proper heritage tourism promotion and increasing the satisfaction of visitors. Local people and the Newar community are similarly demanding for preservation of WHS. Both these stakeholders, local people and business groups are urgent stakeholders demonstrating three major factors as presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Factors contributing to Urgent stakeholders

Factors	Governmental organization	Local government	International organization	Area development or committees and trusts	Local community and religious groups	Business groups
Demanding					X	
Tourist generator						X
Preserver of sites					X	

Three factors contributed to the identification of business groups, local community and religious groups as urgent stakeholders.

5.3.4 Supporting stakeholder

Besides neglected and demanding stakeholders, there are some supporting stakeholders as well in the heritage sites of Kathmandu. Directing, organizing, advocating, and financial supporting factors were discussed by half of the interview participants. Heritage sites need financial aid or support from some stakeholders. DOA who looks after the royal palace of Kathmandu receives financial aid from UNESCO. Local wards or municipalities collect entry fees from visitors or tourists and they use this fee to support financial aid for heritage preservation.

UNESCO provides some financial support to DOA. So basically I can say indirectly UNESCO is more powerful than DOA. (P3)

Support and aid also come in terms of direction besides the financial part. DOA and local governments continuously receive direction from UNESCO.

Heritage sites are managed overall by Government bodies like DOA and local governments like municipalities. International organizations like UNESCO direct DOA as a supporter of conservation and renovation works. (P1)

Heritage management is more challenging during the organization of the biggest festivals in Kathmandu. Such management of heritage sites during the organization of festivals would not be possible without Guthi and local community involvement. Therefore, Guthi and the local community support DOA and KMC for successfully organizing these festivals.

In Kathmandu Durbar Square, DOA and KMC are responsible for managing heritage sites. But without the support from Guthi and the local community, major festivals of Kathmandu like Indrajatra are impossible to organize. (P2)

Advocating for heritage preservation is another type of support. Besides financial support, UNESCO also advocates for better heritage sites in Kathmandu.

Table 9: Factors contributing to supporting stakeholders

Factors	Governmental organization	Local government	International organization	Area development or committees and trusts	Local community and religious groups	Business groups
Directors			X			
Organizer				X		
Advocator			X			
Financial supporter		X	X			

Four factors contributed to the identification of local government, international organization, area development or committees and trusts as supporting stakeholders.

5.4 Stakeholder's engagement:

This last chapter explored stakeholder engagement in effective heritage management. The interview participants provided the current scenario of stakeholder engagement in Kathmandu. Stakeholder's roles in the heritage site's effective management are also presented. At first, numerous factors of engagement are explored. Then the prevailing issues for hindering stakeholder engagement are highlighted. Finally, the stakeholders' roles in minimizing these obstacles and emphasizing engagement are discussed.

5.4.1 Collective work:

Interview participants brought some stakeholder's collective works in the heritage periphery. Some of these collective works focused on coordination, participation, involvement, and gathering of viewpoints between several stakeholders. The major stakeholders collectively work in the heritage sites of Kathmandu. The reason for continuous collective work between stakeholders such as government, and local communities is to avoid occurring any conflicts or issues.

Yes, DOA and municipality consult with the local community and people about the topic of management and conservation because they know if they do not listen to these groups, various issues may occur in upcoming days. Also, they want to make sure heritage is preserved and it is authentic. So these local groups and people have in-depth knowledge about their heritage and culture. (P8)

Mostly coordination is rectified by governmental bodies like DAO, and local wards in heritage sites. Central government coordinates with other governmental organizations like the Department of Urban Development, the Development of Cultural Tourism, and the Building Construction Department to improve heritage sites.

The stakeholder engagement process also includes a collection of various viewpoints of stakeholders. The knowledge posed by local people and groups regarding heritage topics is immense. Therefore, the involvement of public and religious groups is beneficial for the long-term functioning of heritage management. Although collecting every stakeholder viewpoint is advised, it is impossible to prioritize every stakeholder. The reason behind that is a lack of mechanism, method, and platform for proper consultation.

5.4.2 Issues in Engagement:

There are several stakeholders directly and indirectly connected to the heritage sites of Nepal. Unfortunately, the consultation process between these stakeholders is still missing. Consultation among stakeholders is one of the important steps for effectively managing heritage monuments. More than half of the interview participants highlighted lack of consultation as a key issue in stakeholder engagement. Stakeholders are complaining about the difficulty of not having any consultation process. One of the interview participants provided an example of how stakeholders are neglected in the consultation process of heritage. The stakeholders are trying to get the opportunity or platform for a consultation. One interview participant mentioned lack of consultation while making decision. Consultation that might lead to making major decisions in world heritage sites is out of reach for locals. Most of the interview participants agreed that insufficient collaboration among the stakeholders is hampering the development and preservation of the site.

Proper consultation between various stakeholders is still lacking. For example, I do not remember when NTB participated in consultation meetings with DAO, KMC, or any governing body recently. (P3)

Sadly, there are no opportunities for the locals to take part in WHS management and decision-making. (P5)

5.4.3 Stakeholder's roles:

This study aims to examine stakeholder roles and engagement for effective heritage management. All the interview participants provided their insight into stakeholder roles and engagement needed for effective heritage management during interviews. Such roles are presented in the table 10.

Table 10: Stakeholders' engagement and its role in heritage management

Stakeholders role	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8
Emphasising on issue	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Monitoring and safeguarding	X	X	X	X				
Effective management and Marketing	X		X		X		X	
Demand for clear and comprehensive regulation	X				X	X		X
Demand for more participation		X				X	X	X
Developing infrastructure and facilities			X	X			X	
Fundraising				X			X	

Eight different roles, topics stakeholders and their engagement could emphasize on for enhancing heritage management in Kathmandu. The table demonstrate different roles each interview participants mainly emphasized on.

Emphasizing on Issue:

The majority of interview participants came up with stakeholder roles by emphasizing various issues heritage sites are facing. Interview participants wanted stakeholders to prioritize and broadcast the sensitive religious issues. The conservation and management process of heritage sites is another issue that needs to be raised. Similarly, there is a gap in transparency and quality of construction works in

heritage sites. There is a high demand for emphasizing the quality of works by utilizing traditional methods and materials for the reconstruction of monuments. Similarly, the local community is emphasizing raising issues causing problems to heritage, religion, and rituals. One of the interview participants working on heritage sites of Kathmandu pondered that the development of visitor facilities should be emphasized by stakeholders.

Local people are very much sensitive to religious matters. Locals should speak about these matters with the government. If they do not speak, heritage may lose religious importance. (P1)

The local community raises concerns, and questions about various issues including procedures of conservation and management. They always offer their expertise, and viewpoint to management as they have in-depth knowledge about heritage and tradition. They advocate in support of transparency in the heritage management process, high-quality work, and community involvement and awareness. (P2)

Residents demanded that monument renovation cannot be constructed with basic building materials instead traditional materials should be used. They should raise such demands to the concerned authority. (P4)

Demand for clear and comprehensive regulation:

Some half of the interview participants pointed out that the stakeholder's role is to demand clear and comprehensive regulation that helps in achieving effective heritage management. From the interview data, it can be said that lack of clear regulations stating the exact power and responsibility of different stakeholders are causing various problems and disputes. Therefore, all authorities or related stakeholders of heritage sites should demand for ensuring clear regulations for heritage management. Similarly, the existing policy does not include the interests of major stakeholder's especially private heritage owners and local people. The prevailing policy needs to be upgraded that acknowledge the stakeholder interest, address the development and preservation of heritage sites. One interview participant came up demanding for single policy that guides all stakeholders. As presented in the research background chapter of this study, there is no single clear act or policy directing the stakeholders and causing confusion between them.

A clear legal and institutional policy that meets the common interests of private property owners and local people is necessary to be formulated. This reduces tension among the heritage management authorities and local inhabitants. (P5)

Yes, my recommendation would be to upgrade the heritage policy that addresses both the development and the preservation. Including the interests of all stakeholders is equally crucial in that policy. (P6)

Monitoring and safeguarding:

When speaking about the roles of stakeholders, half of the interview participants came up with monitoring and safeguarding responsibilities. Local people are monitoring every work and decision affecting heritage preservation and management of their heritage. These locals are safeguarding the heritage monuments to ensure that they are not damaged and lost. Similarly, local people in the community have also been safeguarding festivals and rituals in the heritage periphery. One interview participant provided an example of how local people monitor the renovation works and ensure authenticity by emphasizing traditional building materials. Hence to ensure the effectiveness of heritage management, all major stakeholders should continuously play monitoring and safeguarding roles.

Local people are very much sensitive to religious matters. They are always monitoring our work and the decisions we make that affect heritage preservation and management. They have guarded the Pashupatinath temple to ensure no monuments are stolen. (P1)

Residents participate in various campaigns for proper heritage management. They also sometimes clean the stupa premises. They demanded that monument renovation cannot be constructed with basic building materials instead traditional materials should be used. (P4)

Effective management and Marketing:

Stakeholders need to demand effective management along with good marketing efforts for heritage sites. This role is important as the number of visitors or tourists can be increased with effective management and marketing efforts from stakeholders. NTB is responsible for the promotion, and marketing of heritage ensuring visitors are satisfied and spreading positive word of mouth. In addition to the NTB role, local people can contribute to the smooth running of heritage by interacting with heritage site management. Common problems of heritage management can be solved with the effort of stakeholders. One interview participant brought a stakeholder role in managing congestion at heritage

sites during peak season. For instance, a tour guide may avoid overcrowding during sightseeing in heritage by not taking guests for briefing at packed monuments, rather they can indulge guests for a while and wait for the right time.

Personally, as a guide, I encourage my guests or visitors to perform sustainable travel behavior. For example, I brief my guest at first, that we should only use a dustbin bin to throw water bottles or brochures if we wish. I also encourage them not to buy plastic souvenirs. I try to reduce overcrowding by not taking my guests for briefing at monuments packed with other guests already. I try to reduce the negative impact on historic places while increasing the enjoyment and satisfaction of visitors. This may lead promotion of our heritage sites. (P7)

Demand for more participation:

Community engagement is limited to financial and labor contributions only. It is time to rethink the current method of community engagement, which focuses only on financial and labor contributions. The community must be involved in all consultations and must actively participate in the decision-making process. The core community is the group of people who have been utilizing the heritage site for generations but consultation is out of reach for them. Hence, there is a demand for the local Newar community to participate in the consultation, planning, and conservation process of heritage. There are diverse groups of stakeholders in the heritage sites of Kathmandu and a high demand for partnership and collaboration. Such partnership consultation in heritage can be strengthened through meetings and workshops.

During the organization of festivals only, the community is allowed to participate. They contribute by volunteering and pulling chariots. They also donate money to the temple and organize festivals. (P2)

Developing infrastructure and facilities:

All the interview participants mentioned the issue of lacking infrastructure and facilities in WHS. Developing infrastructure and services should be a motive of heritage governing bodies. The role of NTB in providing information and facilities to tourists in WHS is highly commendable. Collected entry fees from WHS need to be utilized to improve facilities for tourists. One interviewee talked about examples of lacking parking spaces, restrooms, and signboards for visitors in WHS and added that trust or committees should take the initiative to manage these facilities.

As a leading tourism organization, NTB runs multipurpose information and help centers in most of Kathmandu's historical sites. We want to ensure that visitors get proper information and practice responsible tourism activities. Developing tourist-friendly infrastructure and services is something that heritage governing authorities need to be aware of. (P3)

Fundraising:

The fund has been a key factor and a most needed resource for proper heritage management. The stakeholders have a vital role in raising funds for heritage management and preservation. Legal business vendors around WHS pay tax to the government and the government uses this fund for the betterment of heritage. Similarly, funds are generated from entry fees in WHS and can be utilized for running daily management and restoration of heritage. Major stakeholders in Kathmandu need to accelerate the fundraising role to ensure effective WHS.

So far I know, that municipalities and wards collect entry fees from visitors and manage cleanness, run the day-to-day activities and facilities of heritage sites, and restore and reconstruct monuments. (P7)

6. Discussion and conclusions:

6.1 Discussion of findings:

The objective of this study was to investigate the identification of salient stakeholders with different attributes and their engagement in effective heritage management in Kathmandu Valley. This study also provided insight into the present condition of stakeholders in heritage sites. Conflict between stakeholders and problems or challenges caused by stakeholders' ineffective engagement were also highlighted. Lastly, the roles of stakeholders in improving heritage management are also discussed in this study.

The current situation of heritage sites in Kathmandu showed negative aspects like conflicts between stakeholders. This finding matched with study of Chapagain (2008) which states disagreement and conflict have been a common issue and witness in heritage sites of Kathmandu Valley. Frequently disputes and conflicts are witnessed among stakeholders in Kathmandu. Conflict is caused by differences in beliefs between stakeholders. There has been an issue of banning marijuana on temple premises causing major conflict between Hindu saint groups and managing trust. Similarly, activists and locals disagreed with DOA in the reconstruction process who used modern materials and approaches instead of traditional ones.

Stewardship and ownership contribute to conflict and tension (Kim et al, 2023). This statement has align with the study finding because disagreement was witnessed caused by ownership, and rights issues in Kathmandu. Disagreement is commonly seen while one stakeholders tries to control and manage of heritage sites without emphasizing on view point of other stakeholders. Stakeholders with owning and running authority of the heritage sites in Kathmandu has not been addressed properly by current policy. Stakeholder engagement and cooperation are essential to overcoming obstacles and issues (Aas et al, 2005). However, such coordination and consultation among stakeholders rarely occurs in Kathmandu.

According to the findings of this study, six categories of key stakeholders have been identified. They are the list of stakeholders active in the heritage management processes of Kathmandu. Previously, Chapagain (2008) addressed that the national government, international agency, and community are involved in Kathmandu Valley heritage management. Briefly, governmental organizations, local

governments, international organizations, trust or committees, local communities, religious groups, and business groups have been identified as major stakeholders working in heritage sites of Kathmandu Valley from the study findings. This study contributes to the existing understanding by providing comprehensive classification of salient stakeholders of Kathmandu with analysing attributes.

The governmental organization is classified into federal governments, the Ministry of Tourism, DAO, and NTB. Likewise, local government includes KMC, municipalities, and wards. International organizations have a variety of stakeholders such as donor Agencies like UNESCO. According to interview participants, there are organizations like trusts, committees, and area management authorities that come under public and private collaborated organizations. Swayambhunath Management and Conservation General Committee and Pashupatinath Area Development are some names of such organizations. Local indigenous Newar people, and local communities like Guthi, Hindu, and Buddhist religious groups are also supporting heritage management and emphasizing heritage conservation. Additionally, business groups are identified as major stakeholders in Kathmandu and include travel agencies, their associations, and businesses operating in heritage sites.

Although six key stakeholders have been identified according to this study's findings, it was interesting and challenging to analyze highly salient stakeholders in the heritage sites of Kathmandu. Analysing various attributes posed by stakeholders such as power, legitimacy, and urgency creates stakeholder's topology (Michell et al., 1997). This topology helped in identify the salient stakeholders in Kathmandu.

The identification of powerful stakeholders was analyzed according to numerous factors that came up from interview participants. Stakeholders with controlling, responsibility, directing others, authority, leading, and ownership factors summarized the powerful stakeholders in heritage sites of Kathmandu Valley. According to Michell et al., (1997), power is a stakeholder's capacity to impose influence or impose their will on an organization. Factors that came from interview findings, aided in determining the influencing or imposing ability. Stakeholders in Kathmandu exercise controlling activities like preservation, reconstruction, and maintaining heritage sites. Heritage sites in Kathmandu Valley have trust, committee, or area management authority overlooking the management of monuments. DOA is controlling the preservation activities of heritage sites. Similarly, the DOA controls the construction, renovation, and management of monuments in heritage sites. Any stakeholders willing to construct, or modify monuments in Kathmandu heritage sites must receive permission from DOA.

In addition to these two stakeholders, local government exercises controlling activities like administration, development, and management of heritage sites. The local government in Kathmandu collects entry fees, cleans, runs day-to-day activities and facilities in heritage sites. In heritage sites of Nepal, the central government namely the Ministry of Tourism is responsible for establishing rules, regulations, and policies related to heritage management. Similarly, heritage decisions are also made by the central government. Some interview participants agreed DOA as a responsible stakeholder for managing, preserving, and protecting temples, monuments, and historic buildings of Kathmandu.

There are powerful stakeholders providing direction regularly to stakeholders managing heritage sites in Kathmandu. Area Development Trust, UNESCO, and DOA are found as directing stakeholders in the heritage sites of Kathmandu. Stakeholders like community members, and local government are directed by Area Development Trust in some WHS in Kathmandu. In some WHS, two stakeholders KMC and DOA are in charge of looking after monuments separately, however, both stakeholders are directed by UNESCO. In most heritage sites, DAO directs and grants permission for constructing and modifying monuments in the region. In many cases, major decisions regarding heritage management are influenced by another stakeholder in Kathmandu. Decisions are influenced by government bodies like DOA and local governments like KMC in heritage sites. However, it was found that both these stakeholders consult with UNESCO and such consultation influences the major decision.

Power can be also observed from authority and leading roles. DOA and KMC are identified as in charge of Kathmandu Durbar Square. There have been incidents of conflict regarding authorized stakeholders between these two stakeholders due to the existence of improper policy. It stated DOA oversees the western parts and KMC is in charge of the eastern parts of Kathmandu Durbar Square. In terms of seven WHS in Kathmandu Valley, ownership is not granted to one single stakeholder. However, there are some least popular heritage monuments belonging to some religious communities or groups also called Guthi. They own, manage, and make major decisions for these monuments.

The legitimacy attribute was analyzed by several factors such as legal working, holder of interest, concern, claim, encouragement, and support that came up from interview analysis. Legitimate stakeholders were identified as valid, appropriate, and responsible stakeholders. According to Mitchell (1997), legitimacy is a concept about who and what matters. The factors such as who is legally working, what interest, and concern claims stakeholders have, and what support they are contributing to the identification of legitimacy. Globally, UNESCO is the international legal stakeholder that has been safeguarding the authenticity of monuments and DOA is considered a legal body that grants approval

and preservation of monuments in the context of Kathmandu. Similarly, Guthi was also named as legitimate stakeholders raising valid claims and concerns on topics such as the preservation, conservation, or development of heritage sites in this region. Guthi also organizes various religious ceremonies, festivals, and celebrations in Kathmandu Valley. Guthi with some religious follower raises their voice concerning religious matters and heritage management. Private tourism businesses also advocate, encourage for better facilities and infrastructure in this region. They support sustainability and responsible tourism as well.

Some stakeholders demonstrate urgency attributes through their approaching, demanding, tourist-generating, and reservation factors. These findings of the study also correlate with Michell et al., (1997) which advocate that some claims of stakeholders require attention and need to be addressed quickly. Local people, Guthi, and religious groups are demanding and raising concerns about rituals and festivals. However, such concern does not reach out to the managing bodies of heritage in Kathmandu. Through the findings, it has come up that the major marketing issues and initiatives are raised by NTB but unfortunately, they have been neglected. Despite making various marketing and taking initiatives for heritage preservation, their issues are not emphasized. Although NTB is important for promotional works and the satisfaction of visitors, NTB is always limited as the promotional body of tourism only.

Similarly, the efforts of travel agencies and the association of travel agencies in generating visitors for heritage in Kathmandu have been also neglected. Local people and the Newar community have been deemed as demanding stakeholders as they act as preservers of heritage ensuring their authenticity. Some interview participants provided examples where the community raised voices or concerns about wrong construction methods during heritage restoration. It had been argued that nobody has complete knowledge like local people and community regarding the subject matter of Kathmandu's heritage. Unfortunately, the concerns of locals are neglected by the governing body in heritage sites. It has been observed that heritage in Kathmandu even neglects serious issues like encroachment and safety.

Heritage sites in the valley require support in terms of direction, organization, and finances. UNESCO provides financial aid for the management of heritage in Nepal. Money collected from entry fees by local wards or municipalities in WHS also support financially for preservation. Besides, financial aid, UNESCO also directs and provides support to stakeholders operating in heritage sites. In addition to financial and direction support, they also advocate for proper heritage preservations in Kathmandu.

Who are the highly salient stakeholders in the heritage sites of Kathmandu Valley?

According to Mitchell et al., (1997), dormant stakeholders possess complete power and impact on the organization. In the heritage sites of Kathmandu Valley, DOA holds extreme power by controlling the preservation, construction, renovation, and management of monuments in heritage sites. Any stakeholders willing to construct or modify monuments in Kathmandu heritage sites must receive permission from DOA, hence they are exerting influence as well. Similarly, this study finding agreed with Subedi & Shrestha (2023) stating that DOA beholds both power and legitimacy attributes in heritage sites of Kathmandu. DOA is the only legitimate government body authorized to manage and preserve the Nepalese cultural heritage. Hence, they are considered as salient stakeholders in Kathmandu. When dormant stakeholders gain either urgency or legitimacy, they become more salient (Mitchell et al., 1997). However, DOA lacks urgency attributes in the WHS of Kathmandu.

Private business organization in heritage sites of Kathmandu holds some degree of legitimacy. They advocate for better facilities and infrastructure in this region as well as promoting sustainability and responsible tourism. According to Mitchell et al., (1997), discretionary stakeholders have low legitimacy attributes but they do not have urgency and influence attributes. Private business organizations in WHS of Kathmandu lack urgent and influencing attributes.

Local people of Kathmandu are demanding as well as important stakeholders having complete knowledge regarding the heritage of Kathmandu. Demanding stakeholders lack authority or power but they have pressing claims creating some urgency (Mitchell et al., 1997). Locals of Kathmandu act as preservers of heritage to ensure authenticity during construction and restoration. However, locals lack power and authority in the WHS of Kathmandu.

Dominant stakeholders are any stakeholders having legitimate and powerful attributes and they are given enough attention by the organization (Mitchell et al, 1997). UNESCO is a powerful stakeholder in the heritage sites of Kathmandu, they direct stakeholders working in heritage management. Decisions from DOA and KMC are taken after consulting with UNESCO.

NTB is a tourism governing board in Nepal. Despite making various marketing and taking initiatives for heritage preservation, they lack power and authority in heritage site matters. However, they are involved

in promotional works of heritage and assisting in increasing visitors' satisfaction. Stakeholders with no power but have urgency and depend upon another stakeholder to fulfill their demand are dependent stakeholders (Mitchell et al., 1997). They lack power, but they hold urgent and legitimate claims.

Sometimes religious groups in Kathmandu have shown dangerous behavior. The banned consumption of marijuana for religious groups during the biggest Hindu festival in Kathmandu caused intense conflict. Dangerous stakeholders have considerable urgency and power, these stakeholders' claims might not be taken as seriously. To avoid repeating such danger and conflict, dangerous stakeholders like religious groups demand must be identified and acknowledge.

Guthi demonstrates all three attributes that definitive stakeholders hold: strong power, strong legitimacy, and strong urgency in the heritage sites of Kathmandu. According to Mitchell et al., (1997), stakeholders with all qualities hold the highest significance and require prompt attention.

Figure 8 illustrates stakeholder categories with having one, two, or three attributes of WHS in Kathmandu, based on Figure 4, page number 19 adopted from Mitchell et al., (1997). Guthi hold all three attributes and are considered definitive stakeholders. Heritage sites in Kathmandu need to emphasize Guthi because they have been identified as the most salient stakeholder in the WHS of Kathmandu. UNESCO, NTB, and religious groups are considered expectant stakeholders holding two attributes. UNESCO belongs to an international organization while NTB is a governmental organization. Latent stakeholders compromise DAO, private business organizations, and local people. All these three stakeholders hold one or two attributes and identified as silent but below Guthi while for WHS of Kathmandu.

Power

Legitimacy

Urgency

1. DAO

4. UNESCO

5. Religious groups

7. Guthi

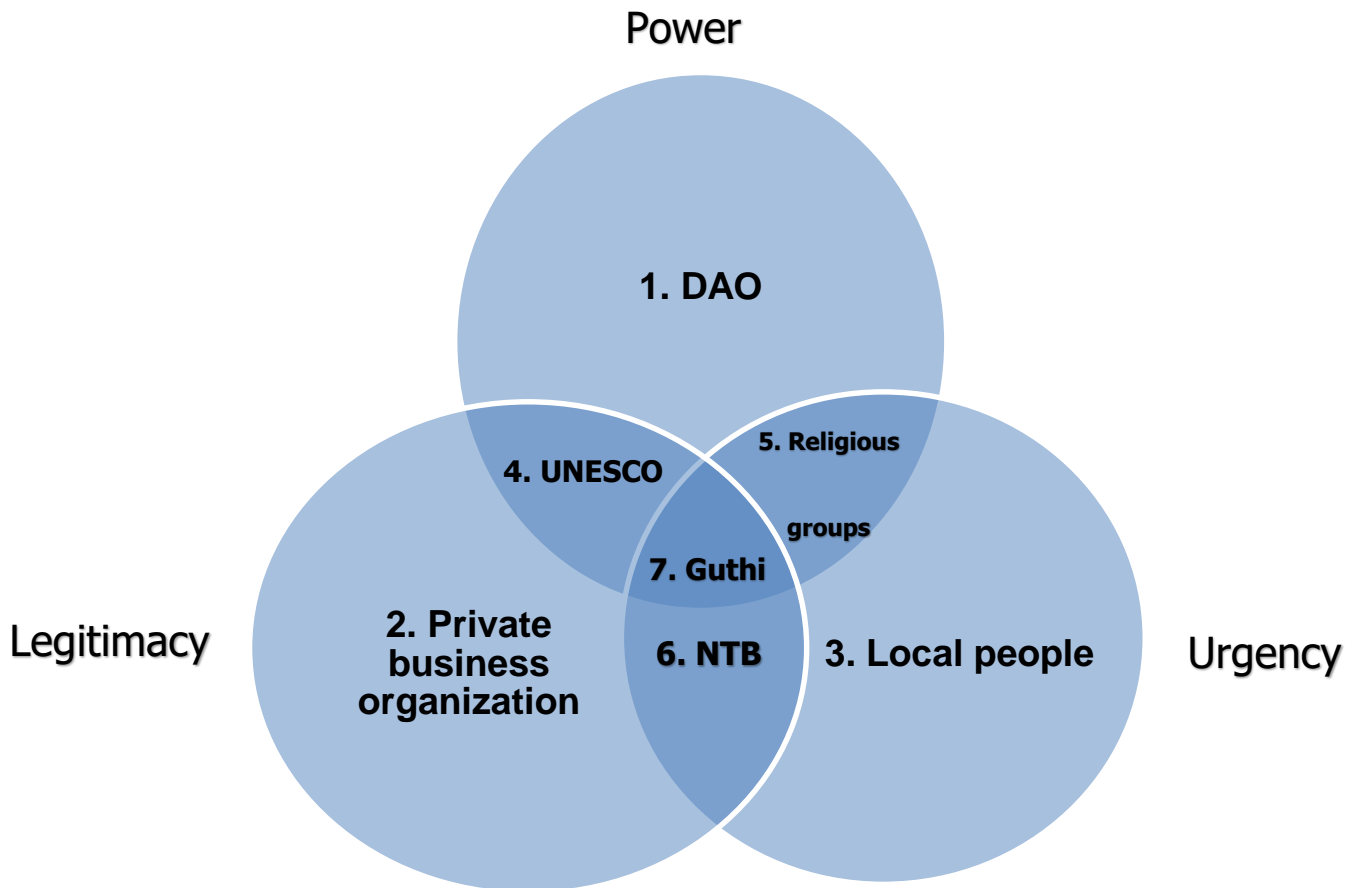2. Private business organization

6. NTB

3. Local people

Figure 8: Stakeholders categories in the context of WHS in Kathmandu. Adopted from Mitchell et al., (1997)

Different stakeholders should engage in heritage management. Such engagement is beneficial due to the dependency on preservation and enhancement related activities to stakeholders. According to the Kunkaew (2015), stakeholder engagement makes heritage sites better through city planning, development of new tourism activities, construction, renovation, alteration, and providing involvement in the planning of heritage. The findings emphasize developing a single policy and the facility in WHS of Kathmandu through stakeholder's engagement align with this statement.

In terms of Kathmandu, the collection of different stakeholders' viewpoints aids in functioning of heritage management. Collective work such as coordination, participation, involvement, and gathering of all

viewpoints among stakeholders is being carried out to avoid conflict or issues in Kathmandu. However, heritage management is becoming complex due to conflicting viewpoints, values, and interests among stakeholders. Power and ownership are creating problems in engagement and collaboration amongst many stakeholders (Neudoerffer et al., 2008).

Consultation and engagement among stakeholders are important steps for effectively managing this heritage (Mateja et al., 2015). Nevertheless, such a process is still missing in heritage of Kathmandu. There are many key stakeholders neglected in the heritage consultation and decision-making process (Subedi & Shrestha, 2023). This argument also holds true for Kathmandu's heritage sites. The lack of engagement methods and platforms for stakeholders is a hindrance to the effective operation of heritage sites.

Stakeholders need to engage to raise sensitive issues like transparency and quality work in heritage management and construction works. Similarly, their engagement could ponder emphasis on the development of facilities for visitors. Stakeholders in Kathmandu demand for formulation of a single heritage policy and upgrading its regulation to address the development and preservation of heritage sites. Heritage sites, renovation activities, and rituals need to be continuously monitored and safeguarded by stakeholders.

Stakeholder's efforts for effective management and marketing could bring a high number of visitors and ensure satisfaction to them. Various efforts such as managing congestion at heritage sites during peak season might aid in effective heritage operation. Stakeholder engagement is limited to financial and labor contributions only. Engagement might act as a means for making decisions process with their active participation. Adding on, stakeholders has a key role in developing and demanding for better facilities and infrastructure in heritage sites. Stakeholders in Kathmandu need to emphasize on proper utilization of generated funds from visitors to heritage management and reconstruction.

6.2 Theoretical conclusion:

Prior research has shown that the national government, international organizations, and local community are involved in heritage management of Kathmandu Valley (Chapagain, 2008). This study listed stakeholders as governmental organizations, local governments, international organizations, trust or committees, local communities or religious groups, and business groups. However, the identification of

the stakeholders holding different attributes was not studied in Kathmandu Valley. This study utilized the stakeholder theory by Michell et al., (1997) for the identification of silent stakeholders.

The study demonstrated that area development, trust or committee, DOA, UNESCO, and Guthi are immensely powerful stakeholders in Kathmandu. UNESCO, Guthi, DOA, and private businesses hold legitimacy attributes as well. Similarly, Local people, Guthi, religious groups, travel agencies, and UNESCO were stakeholders having urgency attributes. As per the study findigns, Guthi is the only stakeholder with power, legitimacy, and urgency attributes. The study identified that Guthi which belongs to the local community and religious groups is the most salient stakeholder in WHS of Kathmandu Valley. Similarly, this study also demonstrates the present condition of stakeholders, the challenges of heritage tourism, and the roles of stakeholders in improving the heritage management of Kathmandu Valley. In the same way, conflict has been witnessed because of ownership, right issues and lack of coordination or consultation among stakeholders in WHS.

The roles of stakeholders are essential for the effective management of the Kathmandu Valley's heritage. Stakeholders need to emphasize more engagement in raising sensitive issues, development of the facility, formulation of a single policy, and demand for more stakeholder participation in WHS management of Kathmandu.

6.3 Managerial Implication:

This study's findings have some managerial implications. Earlier research states an organization can create long-term success when concentrating on stakeholders' interests (Mahajan et al., 2023). According to Donaldson & Preston (1995), stakeholders and their interests are considered to reach financial goals. However, this study shows that stakeholders' interests are not concentrated in the WHS of Kathmandu. Hence, major stakeholder's interest should be identified and acknowledged by heritage management bodies.

Prior research on stakeholders concentrated on the diversity of stakeholder groups, less powerful stakeholders, flexible participation strategies, and collaboration between stakeholders (Khazaei, Elliot & Joppe, 2015). This study provides a beneficial heritage management process that includes the identification of key stakeholders and their roles of stakeholders in enhancing the WHS of Kathmandu. In terms of Kathmandu, governmental organizations, local governments, international organizations, trust

or committees, local communities and religious groups, and business groups have been identified as diverse groups of stakeholders. This study also showed that there are lapses in the current heritage policy of Nepal. Especially the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders are not clear and overlap. It is recommended to amend the policy as per the identification of salient stakeholders by this study.

Similarly, the finding brings forward that the interest of less powerful stakeholders is neglected and all-inclusive consultation along with proper collaboration between stakeholders is missing in WHS of Kathmandu. Prior research proves identifying actual stakeholders and their role can support sustainable heritage development (Erick, 2007). The findings from this study agreed with this by identifying local community and religious groups as major stakeholders with a demand for ensuring the authenticity of WHS. They have been demanding authentic methods and materials for the reconstruction of heritage.

This study would help the WHS of Kathmandu to avoid inclusion in the World Heritage danger list in the future. Identifying salient stakeholders with different attributes and their inclusive participation in the heritage management plan would be beneficial. Such identified salient stakeholders are given more attention and prioritizing of their interests might be fruitful in minimizing the conflict prevailing in the WHS of Kathmandu. The findings of this study investigated the challenges stakeholders encounter and their roles for the heritage sites management and development.

According to Coccossis (2016), the popularity of tourism is determined by the amount and quality of heritage in certain destinations. This study could help to increase the liveability, productivity, and attractiveness of Kathmandu by highlighting present conditions, problems of heritage sites, and stakeholder's roles for improving heritage management. When major stakeholders are identified, heritage management emphasizes acknowledging their valuable interests and viewpoints to improve the condition of the heritage sites. They are also included in the consultation process leading to making vital heritage decisions. The identified major Stakeholders in this study have emphasized developing proper facilities, authenticity and formulation of single heritage policy. Single heritage policy indicating the roles and ownership of major heritage sites leads to minimize conflict among stakeholder and improve the satisfaction level of visitors in Kathmandu. This study finding stated that stakeholders have vital role for safeguarding and raising issues related to authentic method and materials used during heritage reconstruction. Similarly, identified stakeholders also emphasized for proper utilization of funds and entry fees to the betterment management and restoration of heritage. All these initiatives could help to

improve sustainability of WHS of Kathmandu valley. Overall, these findings would help heritage governing bodies in formulating strategies with inclusion of stakeholder interest that could support proper functioning and achieving tourism goals.

6.4 Evaluation of the study:

Qualitative thematic analysis was chosen as an analysis method for this study. The evaluation of qualitative analysis is often demonstrated by authenticity, conformability, credibility, transferability and dependability terms (Elo et al., 2014). Trustworthiness is a term often used for evaluating qualitative analysis which aims to support attentive worthy study findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Any researchers need to make sure these five terms are appropriately identified and described to set up trustworthiness.

Authenticity is the degree to which researchers provide a variety of fair and true manner realities Conformability is the agreement on the accuracy, relevance, or significance of the data. Credibility refers to the assurance of effective data addressing the aim. Transferability relates to the idea that findings can be applied or generalized. The last term dependability shows the stability of data across time and in various contexts. The researcher needs to consider trustworthiness in the collection of data, sampling, and the selection of a suitable analysis method (Elo et al., 2014).

Regarding this study, semi-structured interviews were utilized to gather the data. The semi-structured interview is the best approach to gathering data addressing the relevant research issues. As this study used abductive analysis, the interviews were intended to be as semi-structured as possible. This could result in the authentic gathering of raw data which could generate wide categories and themes. Asking the correct questions through the semi-structured interview aids in better explaining the topic under study. To gather an in-depth understanding of the topic, interview participants were made familiar with the interview subject and questions. To avoid manipulation and leading the interview participants, interview questions were intended not to be broad and provide with detailed explanations of the questions. All these efforts aid to ensure authenticity and conformability of the study.

Interview participants were aware that the interviews would be used for study purposes and that they were being recorded. Face-to-face interviews were not possible, so all the interviews were conducted virtually. It can be argued that face-to-face interviews might produce different data. However, latent

content such as laughing, silence, and posture were not analyzed, hence it is assumed that the result is not affected.

To ensure credibility, it is important to choose the best sampling method to ensure selecting the proper interview participants. Purposeful sampling was used in this study to identify and select the right interview participants who have the best knowledge concerning the study topic of heritage tourism, its stakeholders, and the heritage management of Kathmandu Valley. However, the reader may find it challenging to assess the trustworthiness of the study if all information about participants is not provided, which is a drawback of purposive sampling. In this study, to ensure the privacy of interview participants, no personal details were disclosed. For example, instead of the name of the organization participants belong to, only the type of organization is provided.

To demonstrate the trustworthiness of the study, an explanation of the concepts or categories created should be provided (Elo et al., 2014). Topics, categories, and themes were developed utilizing a thematic analysis by Braun & Clarke (2006). All the interviews were transcribed manually and then analyzed using ATLAS.fi. To ensure transferability, this study's results should show similarity with previous literature, especially about missing consultation processes among stakeholders, and the need for a single heritage policy.

It is equally important to ensure the findings would yield the same result if similar participants are studied on the same topic (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To ensure the dependability of the study, this study intended to identify the right participants with ample knowledge of heritage and select the best sample size. Although it was intended to have at least 12 interview samples, only 8 interviews were conducted. Nevertheless, those interview participants were working in WHS of Kathmandu and owing similar types of organizations in the tourism industry. Therefore, the findings and results are estimated to be somehow similar. The conclusions may not stand for long-term viewpoints because they are based on the respondents' current beliefs about the recovery process from the pandemic, tourism crisis, and reconstruction phase.

6.5 Limitations and suggestions for future research:

Although this study provided valuable insight into stakeholders, their identification, and their engagement in the effective heritage management of Kathmandu, there are some limitations of the study. Firstly, the interview data were transcribed manually. Manual transcribing demand for greater expertise and proficient listening, typing, and editing skills in addition to terminology knowledge of subject matter and focus group. Furthermore, the author may misunderstand certain terms, expressions, or meanings of the interview data while doing manual transcriptions. Additionally interview questions were provided to the participants prior the interview, this might have affected gathering participants own perspectives on the study topic. It can be argued they might have consulted with others to gather the interview answers. Lastly, the interview sample size might be insufficient to draw conclusions about the entire population.

This study can serve as a valuable foundation for further research. To represent the entire population, a study using quantitative methodology with survey method for data collection could be performed. In this survey, large data from those having heritage sites knowledge of Kathmandu could be done. Similarly, in the future stakeholder management process could be further investigated by analyzing strategies and evaluation for stakeholder management in WHS of Kathmandu. The stakeholder categories included non-stakeholders having no attributes and did not hold any influence. Future research could help to identify such non-stakeholders and their importance in the WHS of Kathmandu if they exists. Furthermore, it would be equally interesting to identify stakeholders and their role for improving the sustainability of WHS of Kathmandu in more detail. In future, similar study could be done on different tourist destinations in Nepal. For instance, it could be interesting to investigate stakeholder's identification and their engagement in Pokhara, a tourist capital city of Nepal.

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Appendix 1: Invitation for interview

Dear mam/ sir

My name is Kiran Khadka, and I am currently pursuing my Master's Degree in Tourism Marketing and Management at the University of Eastern Finland. I am writing for an interview request with you as a part of my research thesis entitled "Stakeholders Identification and engagement for enhancing heritage management in Kathmandu valley".

My research aims to explore the identification of stakeholders and their role in the heritage management process of the Kathmandu Valley. Your knowledge and experience with the Kathmandu Valley heritage sites make you a perfect fit to offer insightful opinions and to improve the scope and quality of my thesis.

The main focus of the interview will be on issues like stakeholder engagement and management of heritage sites. It will likely require about twenty to thirty minutes to finish the interview. Your involvement in this interview would be extremely helpful for my academic endeavours and I sincerely appreciate your consideration and time.

I assure you that the information you provide will be kept at the highest confidentiality and used only for academic purposes. Furthermore, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or requests related to the interview process.

Regarding schedule, I am flexible and can adjust to fit your availability. Please let me know when it will be most convenient for you, and I will make the required plans. I appreciate you for your consideration. I would be delighted to speak with you further about my thesis and am looking forward to hearing from you.

Warm regards,

Kiran Khadka

Appendix 2: Interview questions:

Section	Aim	Interview questions
Section 1: Heritage tourism	In this section, some basic information and background about the participants are collected. Such basic questions about heritage importance and the recent condition of stakeholders in heritage sites would help participants to feel at ease and engage more in the interview.	1. Could you provide basic information about yourself? What is your profession and do you have any personal association with the heritage sites of Kathmandu? How
		2. Why heritage is important to the Nepalese tourism industry?
		3. How is the current stakeholder's situation in Nepalese heritage?
Section 2: Stakeholders identification	This section focuses on the stakeholder's perspectives. The motive of this section is to gather information about potential stakeholders and identify stakeholders having power, legitimacy, and urgency attributes. This section will explore the previous problems, challenges, and disputes related to stakeholders.	1. Who do you consider as a key stakeholders in the heritage sites of Kathmandu?
		2. Can you identify individuals or groups that hold significant influence or control over decisions related to heritage management in Kathmandu?

		3. How do different stakeholders exercise their power in influencing the preservation or development of heritage sites?
		4. Which stakeholders are widely recognized as having legitimate interests or claims in heritage site matters? Or are there legal stakeholders that have a keen interest in the management of heritage sites?
		5. How are conflicts among stakeholders resolved?
		6. What are the immediate threats or challenges facing heritage sites in Kathmandu that stakeholders perceive as requiring urgent attention?
Section 3: Heritage management	This section aims to provide information on heritage management practices, local community involvement, and	1. What is the role of stakeholders in managing the heritage sites?

	recommendations for improving heritage management, including effective stakeholder engagement.	2. Does consultation take place among stakeholders? If so, what are the procedures for consultation?
		3. How is the local community member's participation in the heritage management in Kathmandu?
		4. What thoughts and suggestions do you have for Kathmandu's heritage management?