

2017

Building Bridges for Health, Education & Hope – Nepal

Ranjit Kayastha

Western Oregon University, rkayastha14@mail.wou.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.wou.edu/maurice>



Part of the [Service Learning Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Kayastha, Ranjit, "Building Bridges for Health, Education & Hope – Nepal" (2017). *Maurice Undergraduate Initiative Prize*. 12.
<https://digitalcommons.wou.edu/maurice/12>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Scholarship at Digital Commons@WOU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Maurice Undergraduate Initiative Prize by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@WOU. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@wou.edu.

Building Bridges for Health, Education & Hope – Nepal

Ranjit Kayastha

Western Oregon University

Building Bridges for Health, Education & Hope – Nepal

Abstract

Transportation and communication stand among the most crucial aspects of the human life. Safe transportation has become a great challenge in most local and urban communities in Nepal due to the poor infrastructural equipment available. Over the years, the people living within and around the mountains have experienced tremendous difficulty in crossing the flooded rivers to various destinations including schools and workplaces. The lack of appropriate and safe means of going over the dangerous rivers has resulted in increased suffering and developmental challenge for the local population. The main concentration of this research is to outline and analyze a research project conducted in the region to determine solutions to the lingering transport problem. The current government has made efforts to mitigate the problem and risks that people face in trying to cross the mountainous terrain to various destinations. One of the development ideas has been the tweek, which has proved very risky especially for children, women and the older adults. The focus of this research undertaking was, therefore, to establish a safer means of transport across the hills that would promote education, health and give the people new development prospects. The innovative idea would involve installation of a suspension bridge to help the residents of Gorkha Huldungbesi district to access services such as education, medical facilities and work in Dhading district. The suspension bridge will provide a financially viable and safe transport for the communities to make gainful interaction to develop education, health and general standards of living.

Table of Contents

Building Bridges for Health, Education & Hope – Nepal	2
Abstract	2
Introduction	4
Image 1	5
Research Problem Statement	6
Image 2	7
Research Purpose.....	8
Research Questions.....	10
Research Design and Methodology	11
Appropriateness of the Research Design.....	13
Internal and External Validity of the Research Undertaking	15
Research Findings and Analysis	16
Image 3	17
Image 4	18
Image 5	19
Image 6	21
Ethical Considerations.....	23
Recommendations	24
Image 7	25
Conclusion.....	26
Reference	27

Introduction

The twenty-first-century advancements in science and technology have seen many countries establishing systems that promote comfort and safety in the lives of the citizens. One of the key areas that has benefited the changes includes the transport and communication sector (Larsen et al., 2013). It is worth noting that the transport and communication sector drives the entire economy of a country. Though there have been global efforts regarding agreements and concessions for standardized transport networks, some countries, especially in the developing parts of the world, have experienced difficulty in making the implementations. The state of transportation in such countries is both deplorable and hazardous to the users who are rightful citizens (Valdiya, 2016). Nepal is one of those countries that face great challenges in providing appropriate and safe transport infrastructure to the citizens. The dilapidated state of transport, especially in regions around the Himalayas Mountains called for this research undertaking. Whether or not the problem is due to government policy or integrity is not our concern. The main focus of this research is to develop a solution for the locals through innovative recommendations to the responsible government bodies.

The inhabitants of districts within the mountainous region of the Himalayas such as Dhading and Gorkha Huldungbesi have, for a long time, experienced difficulty getting across the Trisuli River in their day to day activities (Smith et al., 2017). Young children have to use the trestle system to cross the valley every morning and evening as they make their journeys to and from school. That poses the great danger to the young children as they cross rivers every day. Also using the fabricated boxes or trapeze across the valleys make the transport means a very traumatizing experience for the young children. The problem becomes even worse since the

movement of the cable from one river bank to the other takes a significant amount of time. Children cannot get to school on time, which puts them behind in their classes.



Image 1

Instances of accidents that leave injury to the involved individuals have been common in the regions, and locals have no option but to use the transport means at their disposal (Larsen et al., 2013). Poor transportation mechanisms such as the one depicted in the Himalayan region in Nepal need concerted efforts from both society, academia, and government to establish safer and more reliable movement of people and goods to various places with much ease. My concern, therefore, goes a long way in making the long-awaited step in helping the locals in this mountainous region to access better means of transport (Smith et al., 2017). The research undertaking took great concentration and concerns on the life of children, women and elderly members of the district areas who cannot make their journeys comfortably due to deplorable

transport and communication. Considering that the Millennium development goals, as well as the Strategic Development Goals, focus on the quality of life, the efforts are in line with the goals and anticipations of the twenty-first century.

Research Problem Statement

The major problem encountered in the study population is the issue of appropriate and safe transport from one side of the hilly region to another. Locals in the districts of Gorkha Huldinbesi and Dhading have to use dangerous and inappropriate transport techniques and facilities to cross the Trisuli River as they go about their daily business. The young school children are among the most affected by the deplorable state of transport across the dangerous river (Smith et al., 2017). The children have to use the cable and improvised wooden boxes or trapeze to cross the dangerous river every morning as they go to school and every evening as they strive to get back home. The consequences of the state of transport are that children are finding it hard to maintain schooling due to the difficulties that they have to encounter every day. The education progress is, therefore, under threat from the dilapidated state of transport and that calls for urgency in handling the matter. Parents also experience difficulty crossing the river to various activities, especially the routine work-related commuting every morning and evening (Talchabhadel & Sharma, 2014). The sick people go through serious challenges in trying to access medication on the other side of the valley as they lack the physical ability to hold on the cable as they get shipped across the river.



Image 2

Attaining reasonable health, therefore, becomes very problematic and in most instances, people die because of lack of effective mechanisms to take care of urgent health care needs. The problem of transport also impacts the weaker members of the resident community (Valdiya, 2016). Elderly individuals are, especially, affected by the poor means of movement available in the area. The inability to join others in important functions and developmental activities on the other side of the valley leaves them socially and psychologically affected. Therefore, the lack of an efficient transport infrastructure in the area affects the social, financial, educational and psychological aspects of the citizen's life (Smith et al., 2017). That calls for an urgent response to ensure a better life for the people. The innovative idea to make a suspension bridge for the locals in the districts is one of such interventions.

Research Purpose

The rising concerns by the inhabitants of the Himalayan districts of Dhading and Gorkha Huldungbesi called for careful consideration of the plight of these people from an academic study perspective (Larsen et al., 2013). The residents face a great problem, and the primary concern of the research is to show the intricate aspects and dynamics of the transport problem and develop mechanisms to establish a better system for them. Interacting with the locals and getting the reality of the existing problem was the main technic in ensuring sufficient information on the problem (Talchabhadel & Sharma, 2014). Pushed by the suffering and difficulties faced by children at a tender age as they try to obtain some education, the purpose of the study also involved solving the transport problem using a technique that will give rejuvenated hope for the population.

The government of Nepal has had some proposals to establish a safer means to traverse the hilly terrain, but little progress has resulted from such plans. The purpose of the research is also to furnish the authorities with appropriate information regarding the possibilities that exist (Dahal et al., 2013). The tendencies to procrastinate or look at the transport problem from a multi-million expenditure perspective is what the research process endeavors to help the responsible bodies to avoid. The study seeks to make it evident that a decent means of movement can get developed using available materials and at a pocket-friendly cost. Asserting the possibility of better lives for the populations living in the Himalayas is also a key consideration and intention of the research work.

The locals also benefit from the research undertaking in that their problem gets approached from a technical perspective to reveal the possibilities that exist concerning the improvement of existing systems for better developmental prospects in the region (Valdiya, 2016). Developing a

solution that would see the community transit towards a better life through efficient transportation infrastructure is a task that stands as the major pillar of the research undertaking. The anticipated results have to portray a recognizable transformation of lives for the children, parents and even the elderly members of the Nepal Himalayan community. It is important to understand that the government has set similar ideas to construct a bridge for the people (Smith et al., 2017). The idea of a suspension bridge for the two districts in the Himalayan environs is, however, very significant because of the direct effect that it would have on the community. The residents of Gorkha Huldungbesi and Dhading districts would reap great benefit from the research process, especially, regarding the creation of a totally different environment of existence for the inhabitants.

Most research undertakings would only help matters by providing information for future references. The truth of the matter is that such information may never find application to solve the problem on the ground (Larsen et al., 2013). That makes such research work scantily beneficial to the people in the given community and may prove time and resource consuming for no gainful purpose. Since the main concern of this research is to construct a suspension bridge for the benefit of the people, the expenditure on material and labor would prove worthwhile both in the short term and long term existence of the local communities. The time taken in collecting viable information is also worthwhile because of the important support that such information would have on the entire development of the suspension bridge (Talchabhadel & Sharma, 2014). In a nutshell, the purpose of the research leading to the project is to save the lives of the people from risky daily interactions with a deplorable transport system that has been around for the last many years.

Research Questions

There was a need for appropriate research questions to handle the problem with utmost effectiveness. That works to drive the interview and interaction undertaking with the inhabitants of the region (Smith et al., 2017). For the most effective development of a solution to the inhabitants, it is important to sample a few of the most comprehensive research questions. The precise selection would ensure that the research problem gets attended to using as few research questions as possible (Valdiya, 2016). For this research undertaking, four research questions found the appropriate link to the problem of a poor transportation system in the Nepal districts of Dhading and Huldungbesi. The questions give a general heading to the solution-seeking process and help in tackling the transport challenge from the various available points of view.

1. What are the most destructive ramifications of the cable transport across the Himalayan valleys to the children, women and feeble elderly members of the inhabitant community?
2. What efforts have the existing authorities and government made in seeking a working and long-term solution to the problem of a lack of a safe transport system for the residents?
3. How will the various members of the affected community including children, parents, and visitors benefit from the establishment of a safe means of transport across the dangerous rivers in the Himalayan districts?
4. What compromises would the government, the people as well as visitors to Nepal have to make to facilitate and support a successful transition from the old deplorable transport system to a new and more efficient one?

Research Design and Methodology

The nature of the information that would support an appropriate solution process for the problem of transport across the rivers in the Himalayan communities determined the research design. The fact that the locals are the most hit by the lack of a safe means to traverse the valleys implied that a qualitative research design was appropriate (Larsen et al., 2013). The research involved structured interviews and survey activities supported by the inhabitants. Case studies of other regions in the world that faced or still face similar issues also proved supportive in developing an appropriate solution for the citizens of the Nepal districts in the Himalayas region. Through interviews, crucial historical and situational information surfaced to bolster informed decision on the transport mechanisms across the risky river valleys. The interviews got structured in a manner that a comprehensive interview sheet provided the interaction questions with the involved people in their homes.

Through the interview sheets and one on one interaction, many locals came up to supply critical information concerning their struggle with the cable transport. The interviews involve categorization of residents into children, adults and elderly to ensure that the information obtained held the diversity of opinion and emotion (Valdiya, 2016). It was clear that doing the common interview would only result in general information. The process of determining the specifics of people's challenges on the poor transport system needed very categorical information about the effects on each group of individuals in the communities. A qualitative approach using the interview technique also ensured that development benefited from first-hand information from the affected population (Talchabhadel & Sharma, 2014). Though the first-hand information was important for the research undertaking, there was a need for a comparative study in establishing relative facts

from other communities affected by the same situation. In that case, the case study approach was employed as a background study to develop a conclusive solution as a comparative effect from other places in the world.

To further develop the information base for the research, there was a need to also involve the people in a survey using survey sheets (Valdiya, 2016). Through the survey sheets, the locals were able to give their perspective and opinions concerning the existing problem. Some of the intellectually versed members of the Himalayan population also contribute a great deal of information about the possible solutions that would set a new transport facility for the community. The qualitative nature of the research design also ensures as a comprehensive involvement of all parties as possible. Apart from the concentration on the plight of locals who struggle with deplorable transport to and from school, hospital or work, there was a need to involve the local authorities.

The authorities have the necessary information on the trends in transport as well as any programs in the line of obtaining a working solution for the people (Larsen et al., 2013). Using the qualitative approach gave room for extensive consultations and discussions with various stakeholders to establish the most effective implementation idea. The final result of the qualitative approach is an improvement of the transport mechanism for the inhabitants of Gorkha Huldungbesi and Dhading districts. The children find a comfortable way to school while the parents become facilitated in their work. Medical emergencies would get the urgent attention that they deserve, which would save many lives. The qualitative research design, therefore, proved most effective for the purpose of this research undertaking due to the seamless capability that it offers to the information gathering and interaction process.

Appropriateness of the Research Design

Through the qualitative research design, a lot of personal information gets obtained from the affected population. The interviews, for instance, employ a qualitative information gathering procedure that ensures the contribution of as many members of the society as possible (Valdiya, 2016). Through the division of the respondents into groups according to age and experience, children and adults can give their personal accounts of what they face everyday basis as they commute to and from school or work environments. The interviews, therefore, prove appropriate in developing a comprehensive coverage of the problem of transport across the dangerous rivers in the Himalayas regions. The appropriateness of the qualitative research design also gets exhibited in the structured interview sheets that strive to cover every issue related to the people's traction problem. Every facet of the existing problem is crucial in the eventual decision towards solving the transport challenges.

The qualitative approach to the research problem and accompanying research questions give an illumination of the intricacies that need attention in establishing a society that appreciates life in its immediate residential environment (Valdiya, 2016). The comparative nature of the case studies inculcated in the research process also played a substantial role in ensuring relevance of any decision that emanated from the process. A glimpse of the state of transport in other regions with similar economic or topographic attributes would give significant input to the development of the suspension bridge for the locals of Nepal (Khanal et al., 2015). Governmental concerns and efforts to improve the education, health and general life of its citizens also feature very prominently in the case studies used in research undertaking. The design serves the process establishing a

working educational life for the people of Nepal through the openness that it brings into the development efforts.

The qualitative research design also depicts a great deal of appropriateness in dealing with the problem at hand through the ease of engagement that it establishes (Smith et al., 2017). The interview sessions benefited from the advantageous input of the qualitative design that ensured effortless engagement with the interviewees. Establishing factual information in such kind of environment proves viable with the qualitative interview approach. Qualitative information goes a long way in setting precedence in the region to restore transportation sanity and safety across the hazardous rivers of the Himalayas regions. Such information also goes a long way in creating a stream of knowledge for any development matters that attached to the general well-being of the people inhabiting the rough terrain in Nepal (Valdiya, 2016).

The efficiency and eventual success of the suspension bridge construction would largely depend on the input of the qualitative research design in offering relevant background and futuristic information (Talchabhadel & Sharma, 2014). Any activities in and around the bridge preparation, construction and utilization process reaps great benefit from the qualitative research design. Using this research design was, therefore, a prudent decision to ensure that every step of the development process utilizes the most informed information supply as well as technically and economically viable implementation scheme (Larsen et al., 2013). Other research designs such as the quantitative and quasi-experimental would have made the entire undertaking rigorous for purposes that would majorly serve the investigative functions rather than the actual implementation. Though some portions of the process would employ certain aspects of mixed research designs for completeness, the use of the qualitative approach still maintains its usefulness in the eventual success of the whole undertaking

Internal and External Validity of the Research Undertaking

The development of this research expedition sought to ensure strict adherence to the internal and external validity attributes. The research undertaking took a structure that made it possible to establish crucial information from the people without the risk of confounding variable along the way (Smith et al., 2017). The research process proves to possess internal validity in that the only independent variable is the nature of transport. The dependent variables include the state and quality of education, health and general living standards of the inhabitants of the Himalayan districts of Dhading and Gorkha Huldungbesi. The fact that there is only one independent variable makes the entire undertaking fruitful and reliable in establishing an intuitive and long-term solution to the transport problem (Valdiya, 2016). The solutions derived from the existing problem are also very relevant within the internal confines of the affected communities. Such a solution proves beneficial to the people right from the children to the adults and elderly members of the society. The independent variable of transport means, therefore, relates directly to the general life of the people in the region (Talchabhadel & Sharma, 2014). That means that a solution can now get developed just by analyzing the nature of the independent variable and making an adjustment to elicit the desired effect on the dependent variable which is the quality of life in the affected area.

Regarding the external validity of the research exercise, there is the need for the undertaking to show a direct relevance and applicability to similar communities that lack efficient transport systems. The implementation solution in the environments outside Nepal is possible and viable because of the rigor involved and sufficiency of information backup on the development of the suspension bridge. The problem encountered by the residents in Dhading and Gorkha Huldungbesi districts of Nepal are common across most places with mountainous topographies

(Valdiya, 2016). The depth of this research would, therefore, play a very significant role in ensuring that information obtained can find application and implementation in other localities with similar features. The replicability of the research undertaking, therefore, points to the fact that it is externally valid and feasible. The impact of this research also gets felt within the Western Oregon University community in the sense that it opens minds to the plight of other communities outside the United States of America. The entire research undertaking from inception to the implementation of a solution for the locals of the districts in Nepal plays a significant role within the WOU community in imparting ideas and case studies for future developments in other communities (Larsen et al., 2013). The research also proves significant to the general field of academia and governance which are external to the affected community in Nepal and the Western Oregon University. Ideas generated and recommended from the process would play a big role in transforming the social, economic and political perspectives of leaders and citizens towards challenges in the communal vicinity.

Research Findings and Analysis

The entire research sought to obtain crucial information from the affected residents and eventually use it in developing a solution. The findings of the process included the responses from the various categories of individuals used as respondents in the interviews as well as the intellectual opinions of the authorities and technocrats in the regions affected (Smith et al., 2017). The findings could get classified into three categories. The groupings include findings from the school going children, findings obtained from parents and other elderly members of the community and findings from the special groups that offer intellectual input to the information collection process. The priority in the findings of this research expedition goes to the young children who suffer the negative effects of lacking a safe and convenient means of transport to and from school.



Image 3

The children came in large numbers to offer information concerning their feelings and disappointment with the deplorable nature of transport across the Himalayan valleys to school (Valdiya, 2016). The interview session for the children took a population of school children from Gorkha Huldungbesi and Dhading districts. The qualitative nature of the research process did not necessitate a specification or limitation of numbers, but the population of children from both schools totaled 150. From the group of children, the interviews ensued with separate one on one interviews as well as common question-answer sessions (Talchabhadel & Sharma, 2014). The findings of the interviews indicate some challenges that the children feel are due to the poor means of transport to and from school. All the children acceded to the fact that they do not like the mechanism that they have to employ every day as they attend school and other functions on the other side of the river banks.

Nine out of ten of the children confessed to fear while crossing the dangerous river on the fabricated wooden boxes and trapezes. The rest accepted that the transport means to and from school was indeed hectic and inconvenient for them (Larsen et al., 2013). All of the school children attested to the fact they have suffered punishment in school for failing to arrive at school on time.

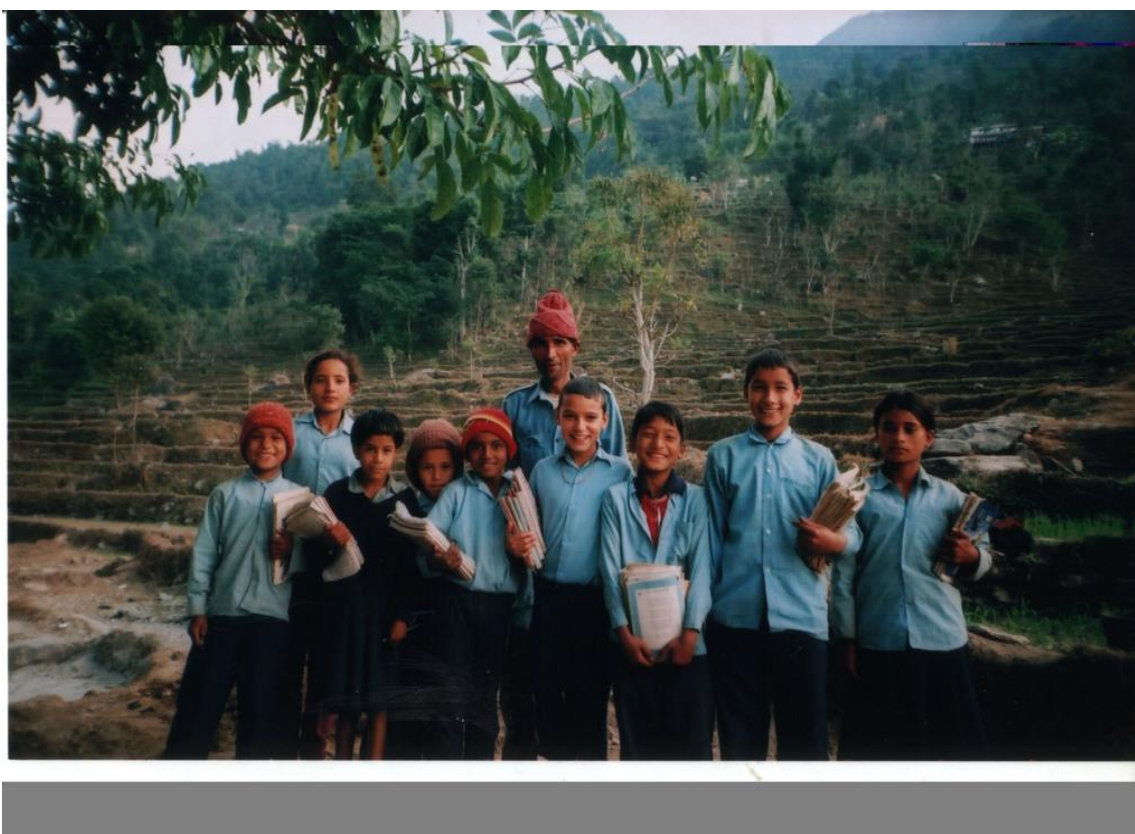


Image 4

The negative feelings as a result of that rough interaction with teachers due to late arrival in school made the children cite the cable transport as a disservice to them. Seven out of ten children reported that they had occasional mishaps when crossing the cable using the improvised means (Hearn et al., 2017). Some of the situations were near so scary that they trembled all the

way to the other side of the river. Some cases have been reported where children fell off the wooden boxes after they failed to hold properly to them as they crossed the river. One boy, for instance, narrated how he saw his friend collapse as they hurriedly traversed the Trisuli River one cold morning in July 2014.



Image 5

The expression of dejection on the faces of the young children made the facts clear concerning their difficulty every time they wanted to cross the cable line bridge. Most of the young girls shared how they occasionally felt nauseated when crossing the bridge (Smith et al., 2017). Eight out of ten of the girls who attended the interview session said that they sometimes wished school did not exist because of their fear of the deplorable state of affairs in the route to school.

During the flooded season, the river poses so much scare and danger to the tender age children that some had to cry for their parents to accompany them across the river. The traumatizing effects on the kindergarten kids also became apparent during the interview session where seven of children between six and nine years of age gave their experiences on the cable line bridge (Valdiya, 2016). What the feeling of utter confusion and scare as the children first rode across the bridge was a typical case of the children below nine years. That contributed a great deal of impetus to developing a solution that would save future children from the trauma of having to go across the dangerous river on improvised boxes (Perera et al., 2015). The responses from the children indicated a great sense of concern for the state of transport among the community members who do not have an option but to continue using the cable line across the Himalayan valleys.

Findings from the adult respondents also brought to light very hefty matters surrounding the problem under consideration. A group of parents from both districts volunteered their time and information for interviews and survey sessions (Larsen et al., 2013). The population used for the interviews comprised of 110 men and 65 women between the ages of twenty and fifty years. It is worth noting that the community structure does not give much social freedom to women and that accounts for the disparity in the number of men and women involved in the research. One of the most emphasized issues concerning the poor transport system across the valleys was the inconvenience caused by work-related activities. Both districts i.e. Dhading and Gorkha Huldungbesi had similar complaints from residents who felt the pinch from the inability to move to work with desired convenience and safety (Smith et al., 2017). 85% of the men confirmed that they have a very difficult time every morning when going to work on the opposite side of the Trisuli River (Talchabhadel & Sharma, 2014).

Most of the men also reported that they find it very painful to breathe as they cross the river due to the high humidity levels over the river surface. Crossing the cable line bridge in improvised boxes or trapezes, therefore, proves difficult for those who have asthma or any respiratory aberrations. Fifty percent of the men also confessed to being scared as they traversed the dangerous river. They fear for their lives and the lives of their families if an accident happens as they go across to the other side (Valdiya, 2016).



Image 6

Though most of the men indicated that they have acclimatized to the condition, there was a consensus that there was the need for change to improve the deplorable state of affairs in transport across the river. The women were most affected by the fact that their feminine attributes do not allow them to operate on the cable line bridges with ease and convenience. Nine out of ten women

confirmed that they have always had great fear for their lives when using the risky transport across to the other side.

All of them indicated their distaste and disappointment with the bridges as they pose a tremendous danger to the lives of all family members using them. The elderly generation was not left behind in the research expedition (Larsen et al., 2013). A group of 50 older adults that include both men and women contributed very crucial information regarding the danger encountered across the Himalayan region. All the older adults agreed to the fact that the means of transport across the river was very poor and risky for all people. They also agreed with each other that the deplorable bridge system hindered them from social and economic activities in other regions of the valley (Khanal et al., 2015). Their general concerns involved complaints to the authorities and humanitarian agencies to come to their rescue. The intellectual respondents hinted that the poor transport system had resulted in degenerated progress in social, economic and psychological aspects of the community (Valdiya, 2016). The compiled volume of findings from the field orchestrated for the decision to construct a suspension bridge to save the communities in Dhading and Gorkha Huldungbesi districts from the retrogressive effect of the existing transport system across the Trisuli River.

Ethical Considerations

The process of conducting the research process and eventually developing a feasible solution for the people requires strict adherence to some ethical aspects. The purpose of such considerations is to ensure that every step of the implementation process follows given values and policies that control life in the communities involved (Smith et al., 2017). The implementation should seek appropriate permission and approval from the responsible authorities such as government and professional authorities. No work should start on the research process or the final construction without proper communication and consultation with professional parties. Another ethical consideration that should get adhered to are the issue of allowing the respondents to give candid responses without manipulation (Rasul, 2014). Some of the issues affecting the communities are apparently obvious, and that calls for restraint in obtaining the information.

It is important to allow the research process to take a natural course where the only information used in the implementation is that given by the respondents (Valdiya, 2016). Any form of manipulation or suggestive influence on the interviewees is unethical and could result in a research process that does not solve the problems on the ground. Another ethical consideration is on the state of the suspension bridge. The bridge should get designed and constructed to ensure that the decency or the locals get enhanced. Since it passes over a river, it should have a solid opaque floor to preserve the dignity of female users from other people operating in the river (Smith et al., 2017). Ensuring safety for every user appropriately summarizes the entire issue of ethical consideration in this project as that makes the difference between the suspension bridge and the initial cable line bridge.

Recommendations

The recommendations that arise from the rigorous research expedition get directed to the authorities and the suspension bridge construction team. One of the recommendations is to develop the suspension bridge in a manner that would offer a safe transport facility for many years to the inhabitants of the Himalayas region (Valdiya, 2016). Since the major concern for constructing the bridge is to improve the lives of locals, the development team should ensure that the entire exercise appeals to the current and future transport needs of the people. Though the idea is to develop a cheap solution to the problem, it is important for the development team to take careful safety considerations to prevent a situation where anything obtained cheaply becomes expensive in the long run. Losing lives to bridge accidents should be a thing of the past through employment of standardized material in constructing the suspension bridge (Larsen et al., 2013). The process should also make use of experts who understand that the bridge would serve people from all walks ages and walks of life. Establishing a professional team to execute the deliverables on the bridge would ensure an effective solution for the people to commute across the bridge to their academic, economic and social activities.

An idea of the suspension bridge recommended for construction to solve the transport problem



Image 7

Conclusion

The entire process from incubation of the idea to eventually getting a suspension bridge for the people is indeed a hectic and involving undertaking that needs a great deal of patience and commitment. The time, money and effort invested in the process are worthwhile and conforms to the saying that it is better to build a bridge than a wall (Mukherji et al., 2015). Though the development process in this research expedition focuses on infrastructural components of the inhabitants, the final results prove that connecting communities brings a better life to every member. It is, therefore, appropriate to assert that any process that brings a social, economic or political connection to a given community is highly well come. Since the activities leading to better transport in the society have direct implications on the people, a concerted effort is necessary for ensuring a comprehensive inclusion of every member of the involved community (Osberghaus, 2017). Both intellectual and physical input is important in the development of a better bridge for the Himalayan communities in Nepal. The running idea in the entire research process is that there is need to utilize academic and professional ideas in developing innovative structures to solve existing problems. That conforms to the classical intentions, role, and functions or education to the general society. Every effort to ensure a better life for the common citizens is, therefore, a welcome idea in any society. The innovative suspension bridge construction process is one of such efforts that focus on making life better for children, adults and even the elderly members of the society.

Reference

- Larsen, J. K., Ussing, L. F., & Brunø, T. D. (2013). Literature review of advantages and disadvantages of pre-planned construction projects. In *Proceedings of 2013 PREBEM Conference on Logistics & Operations Research*.
- Valdiya, K. S. (2016). Quaternary Developments in Himalaya. In *The Making of India* (pp. 795-815). Springer International Publishing.
- Smith, P. J., Brown, S., & Dugar, S. (2017). Community-based early warning systems for flood risk mitigation in Nepal. *Natural Hazards and Earth System Sciences*, 17(3), 423.
- Talchabhadel, R., & Sharma, R. (2014). Real Time Data Analysis of West Rapti River Basin of Nepal. *Journal of Geoscience and Environment Protection*, 2(05), 1.
- Khanal, N. R., Mool, P. K., Shrestha, A. B., Rasul, G., Ghimire, P. K., Shrestha, R. B., & Joshi, S. P. (2015). A comprehensive approach and methods for glacial lake outburst flood risk assessment, with examples from Nepal and the transboundary area. *International Journal of Water Resources Development*, 31(2), 219-237.
- Mukherji, A., Molden, D., Nepal, S., Rasul, G., & Wagnon, P. (2015). Himalayan waters at the crossroads: issues and challenges.
- Perera, E. D. P., Hiroe, A., Shrestha, D., Fukami, K., Basnyat, D. B., Gautam, S., ... & Tanaka, S. (2015). Community-based flood damage assessment approach for lower West Rapti River basin in Nepal under the impact of climate change. *Natural Hazards*, 75(1), 669-699.
- Osberghaus, D. (2017). The effect of flood experience on household mitigation—Evidence from longitudinal and insurance data. *Global Environmental Change*, 43, 126-136.
- Rasul, G. (2014). Why Eastern Himalayan countries should cooperate in transboundary water resource management. *Water Policy*, 16(1), 19-38.

Hearn, G. J., & Shakya, N. M. (2017). Engineering challenges for sustainable road access in the Himalayas. *Quarterly Journal of Engineering Geology and Hydrogeology*, 50(1), 69-80.

Dahal, R. K., & Bhandary, N. P. (2013). Geo-disaster and its mitigation in Nepal. In *Progress of Geo-Disaster Mitigation Technology in Asia* (pp. 123-156). Springer Berlin Heidelberg.

Building Bridges for Health, Education & Hope

Building Bridges for Health, Education & Hope – Nepal

Analysis

Ranjit Kayastha

Motivation, Lessons, and Challenges in Constructing the Bridge for the Locals in Nepal

The idea of building a bridge for the Nepalese citizens hit me like a tornado after witnessing the suffering and indecency that the locals, especially women and children, faced in villages around the river of Trisuli. I felt it was the appropriate time to take the responsibility to provide relief to the people by finding a working and long-term solution to the transport problem across the dangerous river. I have also worked as a social worker in the Gorkha region for over three years. During that period, I encountered unbelievable challenges among the people in the marginalized villages in the Gorkha Huldungbesi and Dhading districts. I also watched videos of young girls and boys trying to cross the River Trisuli, and my heart went out to the poor kids. Watching the kids holding on to the steel cables, clutching their books beneath their armpits and dragging their bodies across the large river was excruciatingly painful for me.

I could not imagine the difficulties that the sick people faced when they have to cross the river to find medical help on the other side of the river. Most of them lose hope of ever recuperating. They die untimely leaving behind their loved ones. For most of the inhabitants, such hardships and challenges seem normal. They have become, somewhat, immune to hardships and incompetent government services, but I felt that I could do something on the transport system across the river. I strongly believe that setting up a safe and improved transport mechanism across the river could improve education, health and general quality of life for the residents and in the end bring hope to the entire society.

As I did the background search and research on the bridge construction process in the area, I learned many lessons about life and its significance to various communities. One of the most outstanding lessons that I learned is that every human being has a part of them that stretches

them beyond imaginable ability to solve a problem for the benefit of others. I was so engaged in the project that I occasionally forgot to get some food during lunchtime. I learned that with the right motivation, human beings could make life better by using innovative innovations and solution-seeking research projects. I also learned the virtue of flexibility and perseverance under hardship. The people in the villages expressed a lot of confidence and real drive in their lives even in the face of numerous challenges. At first, I was rather sad to see their living standards, but that changed when I realized that they had so much hope and life in them as we went about the project preliminary stages. I learned that no matter what life gives me, I have to face it with optimism and positive spirits to make everything bearable.

The project, however, exposed me to some challenges, which I had to overcome to secure a successful end to the good work I had started. One of the most glaring problems during the project implementation was getting the authorities to approve the construction. There was a general notion that the intervention to construct a safer and more decent bridge for the locals would alienate the people from their leaders in government. The process of getting the authorities to understand took the skills of negotiation and involvement. I was able to overcome the problem by letting the governmental authorities to contribute labor and a fraction of the finances. Another challenge was getting the residents to understand that they needed help with the existing transport system. The fact that the people had become accustomed to the cable bridge made it difficult for them to see the necessity for an improved transportation system across the Trisuli River. To overcome the challenge, I had to document some video clips from other regions in the world that had similar bridges.

The comparative visual exercise created a desire in the Nepalese locals to have an improved and safer means of crossing the broad river. There was also the challenge of working in adverse

climatic conditions in the cold Himalayas region. I understood that the benefits of constructing the bridge for the villagers would far outnumber the difficulties that I would have to encounter to realize it. That gave me the impetus to wake up every day in pursuit of future improvement in education and health in a bid to establish hope for the people.

On Dec 2016, I went to Nepal to begin my project. The 1st phase included getting knowledge about the two districts and how people are living with very little means of resources due to a lack of transportation. It took me 2 hours 17 min on my motorbike to reach the project site, which is about 75.4 km away from the capital of Nepal, Kathmandu, where I live. I went there and it took me few hours to find the exact location. I talked to the local people about the issue and heard from them about the difficulties they have been facing. Everything I had seen on television and youtube videos I was able to live and experience. After that, I started making documents to prepare for the project. I reached out to many social organizations in Nepal for help. Then I needed to know the cost to make a bridge there. My family has always been supportive so I went with them to various locations where there was already a bridge. We went to several locations and found out the cost and time. My dad knew some engineers who shared helpful information. The vacation was very short, as I had to come back to the USA. After coming here, I did all the necessary work through the Internet and phone, talking with people to make sure that all the documents were ready. Again in the Spring break, I went to Nepal because to finish the remaining work. The first thing I did was to visit Gorkha and Dhading District and the Village Development Committees (VDCs). “A Village Development Committee in Nepal is the lower administrative part of its Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development. Each district has several VDCs, similar to municipalities but with greater public-government interaction and administration.” I had a meeting with the ward members, ward chief and VDC chief and the

Secretary of the VDC from both the districts. I explained to them about my project and they accepted my proposal and decided to help me if I needed any help from them. Then I started my next step to make all the social organizations in Nepal know about my project. I have been working as a social worker for many years. I have been involved with Leo and Lions Clubs and various NGO's (Non-Governmental Organization) and INGO's (International Non-Governmental Organization) of Nepal. I have talked to various club Presidents who have assured me that they will help me in raising funds in the future for the project. The major help I got for the project was from Interact District 3292 Nepal and Bhutan. They have been a part of the project since the beginning of the project. I also attended the Interact District Conference to let more Interactors and Rotractors know about the project. Interact District representative Itr. Ms. Natasha Thapa has signed an agreement for making sure the Interact District will be doing fundraising programs the whole year for the project. Then I did some more paper works and have submitted my proposal to the Government of Nepal. However, the government of Nepal works very slowly. I have not received any decisions from them. I am waiting for their response. As soon as I get the response, I will begin the project. The fun part of this whole project is that I had the opportunity to travel the world. Because Nepal is on the other side of the globe, I traveled through east once and I traveled through West once. Traveling for 45 hours on the plane was not fun but getting to see my family was. When I saw the happy faces of the people in the village when they knew about my project was the best moment for me. I did have some hard time to collect all the information and getting to set up the meeting with the concerned officials of Nepal. Unfortunately, I lost the camera in the river, which had many images and memories of the project.

This project has given me a different perspective about life and it has made me change the way I used to think about life. I have gained many pieces of knowledge throughout the project, which will be very fruitful in coming future for me. I always feel good if I can bring a smile on someone's face. All my fundraising programs for this project will have the slogan "Smile for Miles".

Various pictures from various different location for research of my project



I have a smile on my face but I was so much scared when I ride the Tween.



Tween from the main Highway.



Got experience of both “Tween” and “Jhulunge Pool (Bridge)”







Me with my family at one of the location where we went to get more information about the bridge.





Another Tween, which I found few miles away.

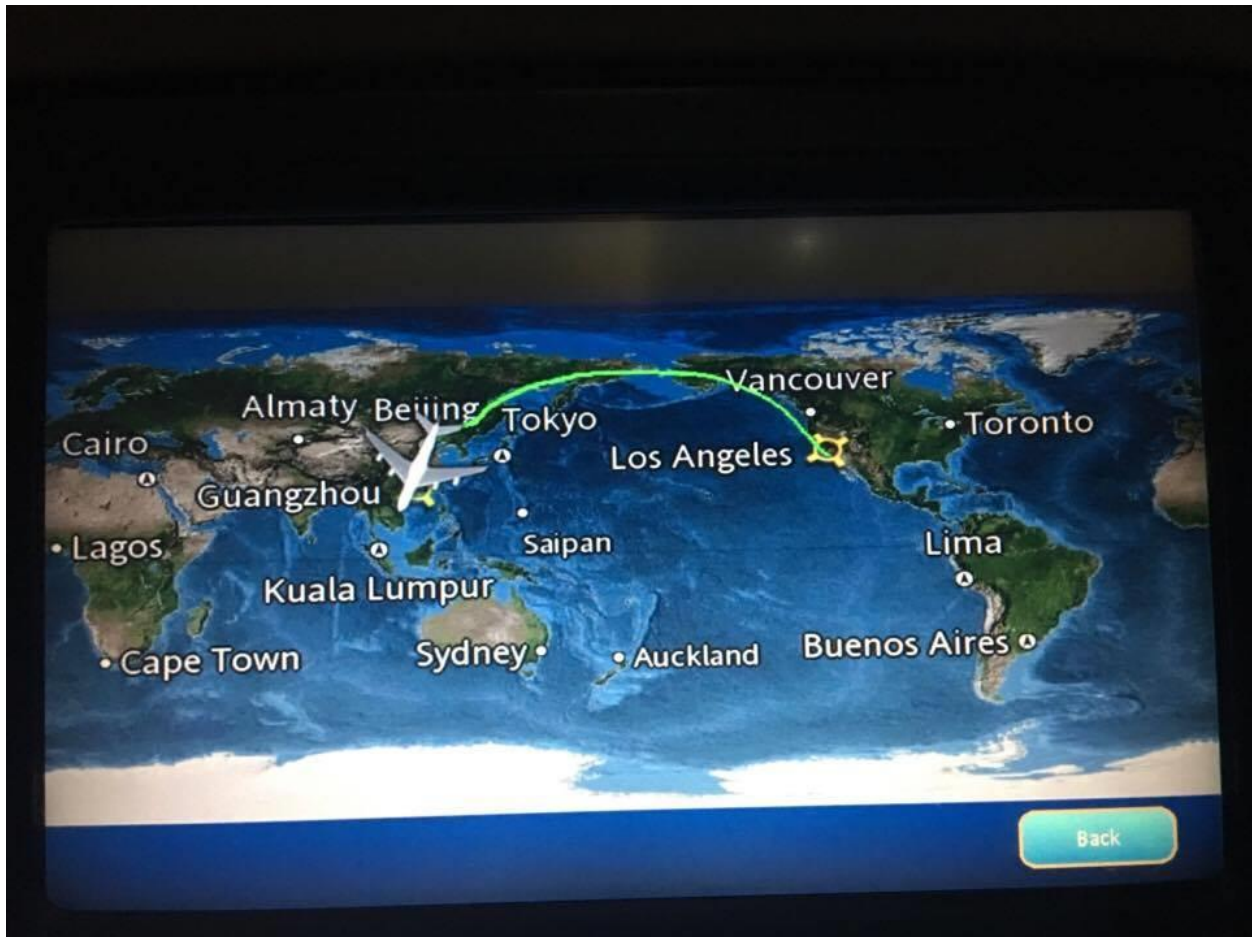




Attendent the 4the Interact District Conference 2016-17 which was held at Godawari from March 31st- April 3rd.



With District Interact Representative 3292 Nepal & Bhutan, Interactor Ms. Natasha Thapa.



Travelled the whole world around within my two visits to Nepal.

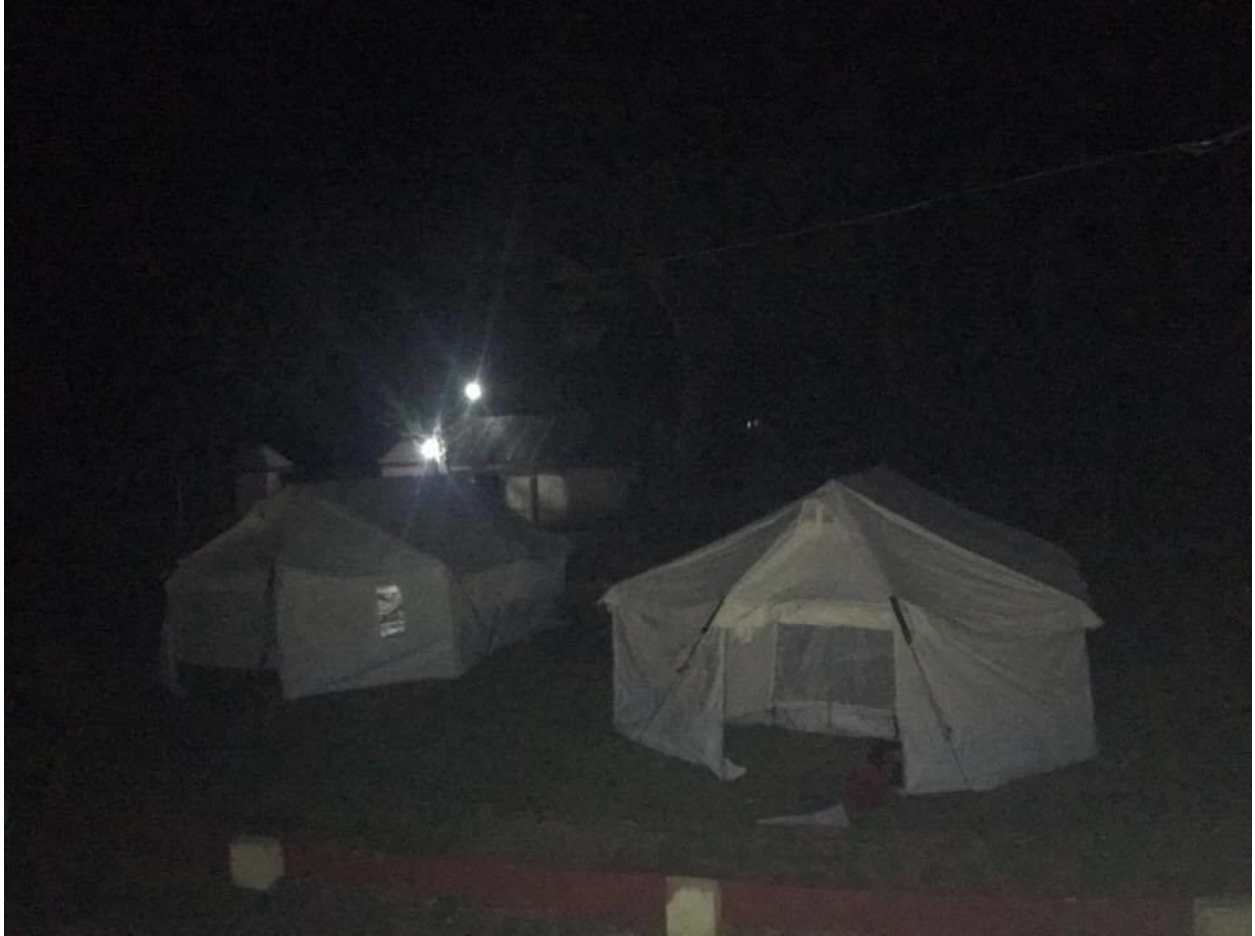
The first trip was from Portland-New York-Abu Dhabi-Nepal

The second trip was from Portland-Los Angeles-China-Nepal.

The total hours of flight is 35 to 45 hours with two stops.



Kathmandu, The capital city of Nepal from the flight.



Had an amazing experience staying in the tent in Gorkha for few days, as it was my first time staying in a tent.



Some people from the Huldingsesi gabisa gather to know more about the project.



The School from the main Highway.

The name of the School is “Shree Chandrodaya H.S School & Multiple Campus”



The entrance of school where the students are heading to the school. The students walk from hours from their home at Gorkha Huldinbesi Gabisa cross the tween walk again for miles and come to study at Dhading where the school is located.