

Socio-cultural Dimension of House Form of Magar Community: A case of Thabang village, Rolpa

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Abstract

Thabang is a village which carries deep and strong political and social history. Previous studies were more focused in its political development and agricultural knowledge. Other aspects of this settlement are not given much attention. Thabang has unique settlement pattern and dwellings. The ecological factors of temperature, nature and environment helped shape the traditional architecture of Thabang. In addition to analyzing the effects of modernization processes on Thabang villages from the perspectives of geographical region, cultural spirit, socio-economic condition, and time dimension, it is necessary to discuss how the traditional social structure of Thabang village is reflected in the spatial distribution of dwellings. Finally, it is important to summarize the importance of the spatial environment and architectural spatial structure of Thabang traditional settlements. Magar settlement is a bounded ecological system where missing a single element will break this chain. Festival is one of the most important elements of this ecosystem. Festival is a thread which connects tangible and intangible aspects along with the elements of ecosystem of Thabang village. The major objective is to study magar settlement as an ecological system. Examine the socio-cultural practice of magar community with respect to house form and festivals. The research method combined a qualitative approach with a descriptive interpretative strategy. Through observation, interview, literature review, and conversation with resource people, primary and secondary data collection was carried out. Thirty respondents were purposively selected for questionnaire survey. Questionnaire survey was conducted for data collection. For qualitative analysis interview was conducted. Desired direction for transformation of the settlement needs to be in ecologically responsive architecture which is inspired from its traditional surrounding architecture. Keeping rural people involved in transforming and managing the landscape. A community's streets, sidewalks, parks, buildings, and other public spaces can all be improved through place creation. This includes both private and public locations.

Keywords

Traditional architecture, Festival, Society, Culture

1. Introduction

Magar, currently the third largest ethno-linguistic groups of Nepal has historically been one of the most dominant indigenous groups of Nepal with their specified regions of control like Barha Magarat (Twelve Magar States) and Athara Magarat (Eighteen Magar States) although after 18th Century CE most of their dominions ceased to exist after the unification of the country by an influential King of Nepal, also known as the founder of Nepal. They still don't have the same level of cultural acceptance as other indigenous groups, though.

The cultural construction practices that have been

handed down through multiple generations are included in traditional magar vernacular architecture. This design is closely tied to its environment and cognizant of the unique geographic and cultural characteristics of its surrounds, both of which have a significant influence on it. They are unique and becoming a means of reaffirming an identity. Magars homes are built in the distinctive architectural style of the neighborhoods where they are found, which varies from place to place. The typical architecture is a two-story stone house with a slate or thatch roof. In western communities, many of the smaller structures have an oval or circular shape and are painted with ochre or reddish clay. The Magars are skilled to build

houses, cutting stones and finishing [1].

It is crucial to talk about how Thabang village’s traditional social structure is reflected in the spatial distribution of residences and to examine how modernization processes have affected Thabang villages. In order to summarize the spatial context and architectural spatial structure connotation of Thabang traditional settlements, it is necessary to discuss the general characteristics of these settlements and their architectural spatial form from the perspectives of geographical region, cultural spirit, and time dimension.

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2. Objective

The major objective is to study magar settlement as an ecological system.

- To examine the socio-cultural practice of magar community with respect to house form and festivals.
- To study festival relationship with interior spaces of homes and extended outside spaces like streets, open spaces, agricultural land, forest, water source.

3. Scope / Limitation

The present study covers the area called Thabang which is located in mid-western development region, Lumbini province. It may not be applicable to all Magar villages in Nepal due to its geographical condition and the unique characteristics features of western Magar community, which is sometimes, may be same as of others.

4. Methodology

The study is an interpretative qualitative study in which the researcher travels to the field to watch the phenomena in action. The researcher collects in-depth

field notes, which are later coded and subjected to various types of analysis. The study focuses on people’s subjective experiences and interpretations of the world. For data collection in field, direct observation is done. Questionnaire survey and interactive interviews is carried out.

After data collection, data reduction or coding is necessary. Large data is reduced in volume into manageable chunks. Chunks of similar themes, notes in margin, highlighted and graphic linkage for better understanding and making and following a scheme of codes that could be framed from out of research objectives and questions. Qualitative data is displayed in a form of charts, graphics or tables, maps and diagrams and directed by the analytical process.

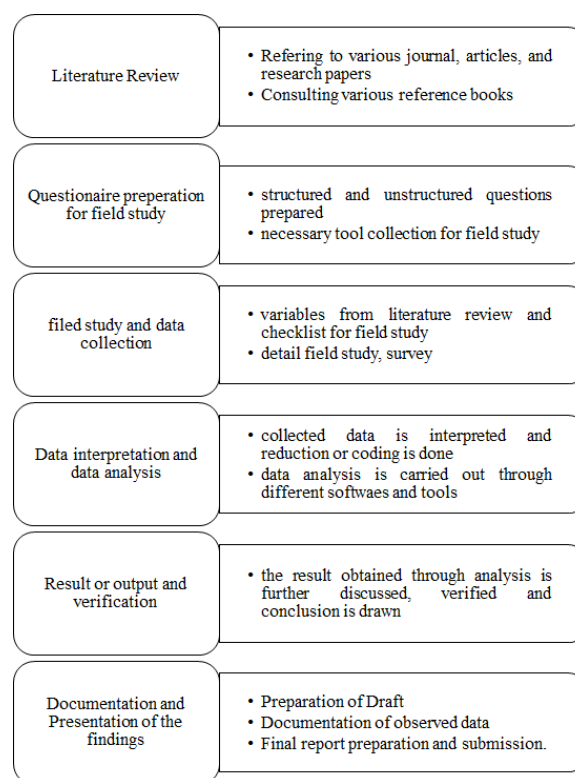


Figure 1: Methodology

5. Literature Review

According to [2] data around 79 percentof the populations were residing in rural area in 2021. This data shows that maximum number of people still lives in rural area. Urbanization is happening in core city areas in rapid way, creating many opportunities as well as problems for human lives and settlements. Problems like degraded environmental quality, overcrowding, housing quality, slum, limited

sanitation, and limited access to water, unemployment, waste disposal and urban crime cause very low quality poor conditions. Nearly 430,000 families reside in substandard housing in Nepal, according to government statistics. In Nepal, there is a significant imbalance between the supply and demand for excellent, reasonably priced housing. Based on a rough estimation, about 70,000 new homes per year would need to be built to close the housing gap in Nepal (Devkota, 2018). To address the above problems, development of rural settlement, ecological and regional design can be the solution of this problem.

After rapid industrialization and development of transportation, in the name of functionalism the housing and buildings lost their cultural and symbolic dimensions. Houses and architecture needs to be localized and informed by their place. Just the impacts of geographical or climatic factors are not enough. As with traditional vernacular design, it should also draw on social and cultural aspects that support the importance of habitat by fostering thriving housing cultures, places, and ways of being in the world.

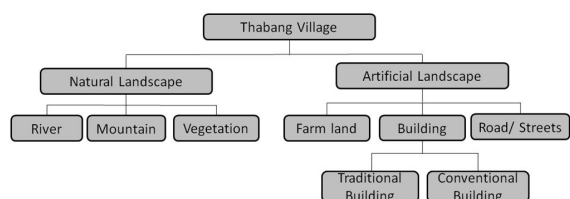


Figure 2: Thabang Village and its components

Settlement Pattern of Magar

Buildings are not isolated objects. It belongs to the physical setting and the social context and in turn reshapes them the context too. In simple definition, group of buildings and their distribution pattern makes a settlement. Settlement pattern of any given area is the result of multiple factors. Topography and climate are the two major influences on settlement patterns. The primary determinant of the rural settlement patterns in a peasant society is the agricultural system practiced. Factors influencing the type of rural settlements are physical, ethnic or cultural and historical or defense.

5.1 Magar an Ethnic Group

Scholars argue that because magar cast live in central region of Nepal they were called Magar. So they

believe that Magar word originates from word ‘middle’. It is found that Magar were addressed by various designation or title around the various parts of Nepal and other countries.

After the study of magar clan by [3] it is concluded that the “Real Magar” or original magar were probably the most powerful, influential, prestigious, successful, and dominating tribe among the three or more set of tribes who lived closely in the western hills of Nepal in historic times, influencing the rest of the neighboring tribes to take the “Magar” title. The particular trait of western Magars adding suffix bang to name place, major cluster can be seen in Pyuthan, Rukum, Rolpa, Baglung and Myagdi district of Nepal and minor cluster can be seen in Dhading, Chitwan, Gorkha and Makwanpur district.

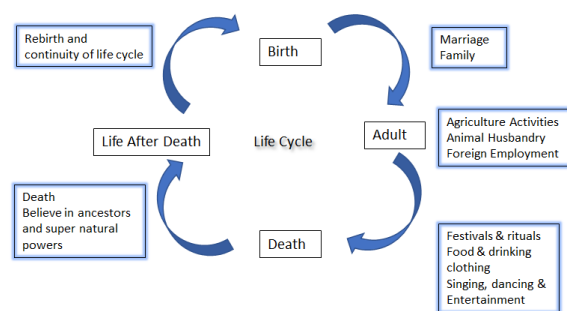


Figure 3: Lifecycle of Magar People

5.2 Culture

Culture is as transmitter of life and ways of life which transmit life across generations or time. Culture is a set of intellectual (non-material) and physical (material) accretions of the past that have potential to /condition the society’s behavior and nature.

Tangible Culture: Physical objects made, preserved, and passed down through generations in a civilization are considered tangible cultural expressions. It comprises works of art, architectural landmarks like buildings and monuments, and other material manifestations of human ingenuity that have been given cultural significance in a culture. Along with the arts and literature, it also encompasses lifestyles, human rights, and value systems, traditions, and beliefs.

Intangible Culture: Non-material accretions (intangible culture) can be seen as knowledge systems that is passed on from generation to generation, practice and application of such knowledge gives life to the material expressions and instill life in these

living cultures have worldviews constructed through these activities. They also provide identity and distinction to the home society. Cultural practices also include artistic expression (such as oral history, language, literature, performing arts, visual arts, and crafts) (e.g. traditional healing methods, traditional natural resource management, celebrations, and patterns of social inter-action that contribute to group and individual welfare and identity).

5.3 Society

People don't typically live alone or apart from one another. Instead, people prefer to live in neighborhoods with neighbors who share their race, country, religion, or other cultural traits. An organization and way of life are shared by members of a human community. A nation or a country is held together by a group of families, clans, toles, castes, and ethnicities.

It is impossible to comprehend human society without comprehending human culture, as every aspect of a person's social conduct, including domestic, economic, political, legal, moral, and religious behavior, is influenced by the culture of his or her group. Man's social behavior differs qualitatively from that of animals. Culture is the characteristic that separates all human groups from animal groups. Without culture, it is impossible to comprehend the nature of human civilization and the evolution of human social life. Culture is the distinctive feature that separates human groupings.

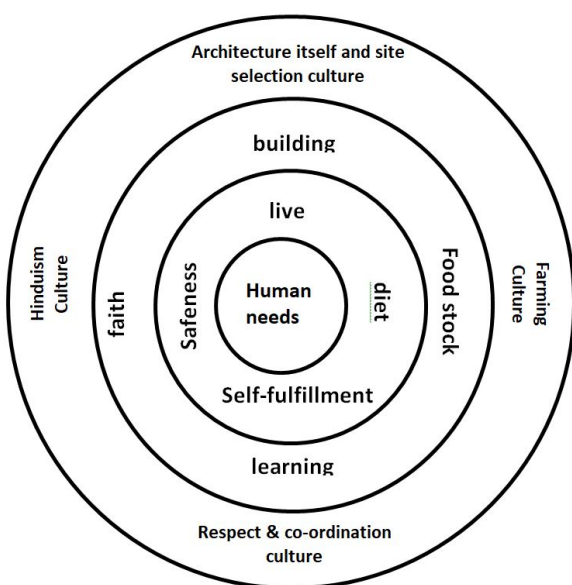


Figure 4: Relationship between Man and Culture [4]

Maslow's demand hierarchy theory states that human needs can be broken down into five categories, from the least to the most important: physical needs, security needs, social needs, respect needs, and self-realization needs. In addition, one can construct four circles to represent the relationship between village people and culture. The first circle alludes to man, the most intelligent being in all of nature, who has the ability to modify and alter the natural world. It serves as the foundation of the entire cultural system and is also its most active component. The second circle is concerned with the desire to satisfy people's own material and spiritual requirements, including those related to housing, food, safety, and self-realization. The forms are discussed in the third circle. That is, building site selection and architecture itself culture, farming culture, Hindu culture, mutual respect & co-ordination and so on[4].

The study of a traditional magar house is used to illustrate the model, with the emphasis on how social values such as religious convictions, the relationship between male and female figures, family structure, the social standing of the family, neighborhood ties, and social values in magar tradition interact and coexist to create form in the settlement. A four-part model that illustrates the connection between architecture and social elements and the interaction between the house shape and socio-cultural aspects has been used to describe this relationship. This model can be used as a methodological tool for exploring and understanding the relationship between a particular culture and its architecture and also to learn about the value and meaning of specific architectural artifacts [5]. Magar

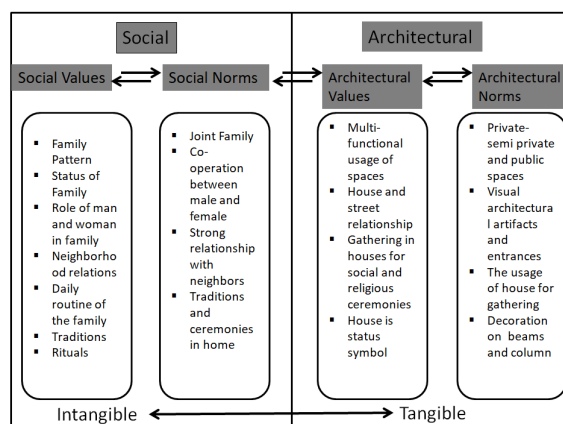


Figure 5: Relationship between social values and architectural artifacts of Thabang Village

people have deep culture spirit of living together. Magar settlements or community is dense and

crowded. In early stage Magar people used to hunt the animals and search the food like yam etc such practices are still yet as for entertainment. Building can be seen as a product of human activity. The typology of houses, wooden carving, private-semipublic-public spaces, daily life in these spaces, the use of spaces while gathering, large openings and decoration are some of the artifacts that needs to be studied.

Similar to joint families in Nepal, the residential unit should be able to meet the evolving needs of the quickly expanding family, depending on the household's financial situation; the house would extend or subdivide to create new living areas. In this situation, house would grow and adapt to the new situations like living organisms.

5.4 Socio-cultural Dimension

Sociocultural is something that involves the social and cultural aspects which means common tradition, habits, patterns and beliefs present in a particular group or community. Culture is the way of living as individual and ways of living together in co-existence with nature, society and economy. Rural cultures are closer to nature and interact with it prioritizing social life.

Social structure is based upon common values and symbol systems. Societies are not static and as they change over time, due to the changing demography, coming in contact with others, in migration and out migration compositing, their cultural values and social practices change. These changes of values are getting pronounced in traditional societies with traditions, beliefs and intangible valued developed out of earlier contexts. Socio-cultural sustainability strives to preserve the cultural environment, transfer construction cultures, foster social cohesion, foster innovation, and acknowledge intangible values.

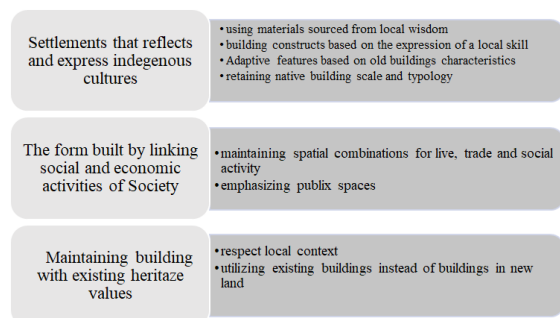


Figure 6: Socio-culture ecology of the settlement complex

5.5 Problems

With the change and development in technology and inventions in different fields, its direct or indirect impacts can be seen in most of the sectors whether it is agriculture sector, education sector, health sector or housing sector. With the ease of transportation and availability of material, some sort of urban and industrial transformation can be seen in rural areas. Rural transformation is a complex process in the rural areas. The repercussions of this process go beyond the economic and even beyond the agricultural sector's development, with some having detrimental effects in many rural communities. The rural transformation trends and driving forces are :

- population growth
- climate change and resource degradation
- globalization
- urbanization
- rural-urban linkage
- migration and mobility
- agricultural modernization

Changes in demographic composition, socio-economic attributes and residential distribution can be seen in rural settlements. Organizational, technical, and environmental developments are directly reflected in demographic shifts. Globalization, economic restructuring, innovations in farming, closeness due to communication and transportation improvements all have implications of demography of rural settlements. Employment prospects are closely tied to migration into and out of rural areas. Agriculture is still the dominant profession of villagers. The changes in rural population have been coming from the shift in economy. The economy is shifting away from agriculture as a source of resources and toward services as corporate farms replace family farms. Other reason is technological development and communication. Young people are leaving rural areas after school graduation for new opportunities and old people are migrating in rural areas.

5.6 Changes / Transformation of Rural Society

Physical changes:

1. Transformation of agriculture land pattern

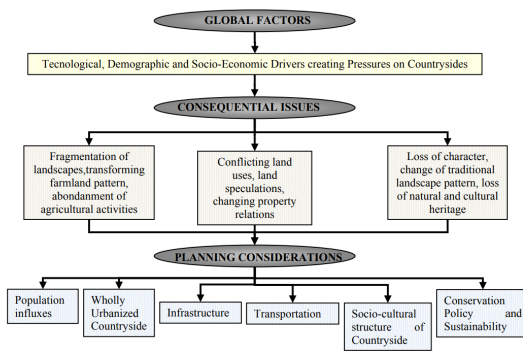


Figure 7: the conceptual diagram of the causes and consequences of transforming countryside [6]

2. Loss of particular settlement character
 3. Modernization
 4. Visual quality
 5. Construction Technique
 6. Loss of memory, knowledge and skills
- Socio-economic changes
1. Economic changes
 2. House form, building services and settlement pattern
- 2.8. Desired direction for changes
1. Ecologically responsive architecture
 - Understanding the natural environment
 - Solution grow from place
 - Ecological accounting informs designs
 - Design with a nature
 - Everyone is a designer
 - Make nature visible
 3. Continuity of vernacular reflection in new design of house and public spaces
 4. Rural place making

6. Study Area

Western Nepal's Rolpa district contains the settlement of Thabang, which is surrounded by a huge panorama of valleys, gorges, river basins, and forested mountains. The municipality of Thabang is located in Lumbini Province's Rolpa District. It lies on the lap of historical hill, Jaljala (3639m) which the government of Nepal

recognized as the tourism destination for its natural beauty and political significance. It is 35km away from district headquarter Libang.

6.1 Site

The region of the Thabang is the mountain region with a temperate climate. The village is located in a terrain of relatively gentle slope but which falls steeply towards three sides. At east and west are ravines of Dontho khola and Rhi khola. While at south is Thabang stream flowing from east to west. Thabang River is a wide expanse filled with river boulders. The boulders supply the village stones for building works. In the uphill, a few hours by foot, are forests of pine and cedar. Roofing slates are transported from farther away, half a day on foot. The area around them has been converted into stepped terraces for growing maize, vegetables, fruits, local cereals.

Site has a great importance for vernacular buildings. There is a high influence of site on house form. The houses of Thabang village are oriented to the east and south direction. Important general aspects of the influence of site on house placement in a spiritual sense include the position of the cremation site, historical places, and sacred water supplies. Despite of hilly contour land, the form of the buildings are unchanged.

6.2 Festival

The agricultural civilization supported by the climate of the settlement. They worship and celebrate different aspects of nature which relates to life like deurali puja, sinia puja, bhumiya puja, than (agricultural household tools), and ancestors. Bhumeya puja is the major festival of magar community which starts from Asar 1 for a week. But the preparation starts one month before from the Jestha. There is a celebration of the storage of summer foods and they worship for the better crops for the monsoon.

Magar do not worship idols, this is the reason no temple and shrine can be seen in the village. But their intangible belief can be felt from their cultural practice, where not only magar but other communities equally participate. Bhumya puja means worshipping the mother earth. Farmers and peasants celebrate Bhumeya puja, as demonstrated by the festival's unique usage of new crops in its meal rituals. It is celebrated with enthusiasm in the settlement and is a reminder of their agrarian roots. Rituals are

characterized by repetitive and highly symbolic features like dance forms of Nokabange dance. Every dance step replicates the daily life of the people and nature. Like milking the cow, plantation in field, blooming of flowers, skinning the vegetables, growth of plant, door locks of house and so on. Magar society has its own set of rituals. The location of the performance can be one's home or a public area like a river bank, well, hill, field, or water tank.

The group of multhangi dancers goes to the Jaljala Mountain to worship and collect the flowers while returning from Jalajala. While returning they follow the certain route. Next day, they spend that night in Jaruwapani in temporary shelter, where nokobange dance performance is performed. The next stop is Gobang khola, near the village. From this place namkaha starts, where running partners are selected in Dhupibang. After the running completion in Dhundhkhola, they finally enter into the village. Firstly they visited to the village leader house (mukhiya), after than in priest (jhankri) house, thereafter while performing their dance in streets of village they move to the Namchun site (offerin site), for the offering of goats.

These festival activities preserve the community pride, learning new things, strengthen relationships. While celebrating different rituals in different locations, it brings vitality in community. Spaces are maintained properly and community development occurs. It attracts visitors which stimulate growth of tourism and other businesses in community. carries the culture's massage into the present and the future while preserving it. Relation of people and buildings with environment can be seen from ritualization of spaces through festivals.

Dalijiye Roka magar explains that "For bhumeya puja, before few weeks nokobange dance group is formed. They practice starts at aangan of their house or in the open space at community. Agriculture and household chores are completed as quickly as possible so that people can enjoy this festival worry-free. For some special food item, preparing rice flour, preparing leaf plate, hand woven cloths during the festivals are prepared in aangan and mahira. The entire cutting thing like khukuri, hasiya, kodali, bancharo are kept clean and prepared for the festival. All the streets, aangan, open spaces and homes are kept clean and tidy."

Bhadra Gharti Magar explains that "before the day of

Asar 1, dance group goes to Jaljala Mountain to bring seasonal flowers and leafs, on the way they worship trees, mountains, rivers. While returning they stay in different locations like Jorpani, Dhundhkhola,, Gobang, Dhankilathing. When they return to the village they go to the priest house and dance, than they go to the offering site called namchung. During their way to namchung, they go through the streets performing dance rituals and singing the nyaho songs. Every house hold joins them on the streets."

6.3 Typology of Spaces

Thabang is a place which is similar to dense urban area, the compact settlement and spaces makes it that way. The interacting public spaces for people are market, square, streets, aangan, agriculture land where agriculture activities, gathering and festival activities take place. These activities differentiate the private space of house, into semi private spaces like Mahira(semi-enclosed front perch) and aangan, into public spaces like square and streets. Streets works as a linkage between private and public spaces, pedestrian movements is highly influenced by building details; the streets are not monotonously designed. Spaces in this settlement can be seen as street space, nodal space and spaces formed between house and streets called aangan. The aangan are used for agriculture product, ladies making threads for hand-woven cloths. Aangan is also used for social gathering during festivals and social functions. Street itself used spaces for daily activities by farmer, used by human for lifecycle rituals and movement during festivals.

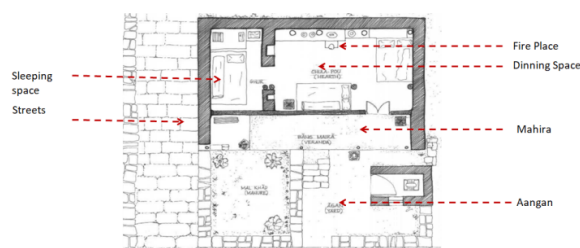


Figure 8: Typical House of Thabang [7]

6.4 Typology of Buildings

Climate has a determining role in the creation of built forms. In Thabang, the main effect of climatic influence is that the house door is faced away from the wind. Previously there were no provisions for cross ventilation, due to cold wind in winter. Most of the

Table 1: The types of spaces in Magar Settlement

Types of Spaces	Functions
Aangan	- Festival & social functions - Utility area, sun drying cloths, grains
Mahira	- Household goods, dhiki, jaato - Semi-public space for guest and social-interactions
Store / Kitchen / Bed Room	- Storage space for firewood, agriculture products - Private space for daily life activities & needs
Agriculture Land	- Major source of economy - Design of house is based on agriculture
Artistic Decoration on Beam, Column, Door & Window	- Traditional mythological stories are displayed through the carvings - Animal, plant, bird, man and woman are carved

houses are identical in form and type although each house looks similar, there are individual variations. In traditional buildings, builder used to work in a limited economy, limited materials and limited technology. In the limited technology and material their building shows high performance and limited waste.

response to the characteristics of the region, its general climate, micro climate, typical materials and topography.

7. Data Collection

S. No.	1 st Generation house	2 nd Generation house	3 rd Generation house	4 th Generation House	5 th Generation house
1.	This house does not have any windows or openings except a door. Small holes can be seen which is used for natural lighting.	These houses have windows and openings. These are more decorative and double story.	Buigal can be seen in these types of buildings	The wide front veranda which was both a functional and symbolic space of the earlier house form is now reduced to a passage with usual wooden balusters and horizontal rails.	With the changing time and weather these wooden planks were replaced by CGI sheet.
2.	The plan of the house is a single hall; fire place is located in the center. Around the fireplace people sleep, sit which is used for multiple purposes.	These building also do not have buigal the uppermost floor.	Ground floor is used for kitchen and storage purpose. First floor is used for sleeping and top floor is also used for storage.	The house form is not simply of I shape like that of the earlier form, but also of L shape.	With the ease of transportation and availability of new material RCC buildings are increasing in Thabang.
3.	The roof is covered with wooden planks.	One of the features of this house is on the bracket walls that close both ends of the front verandah.	Third house type will invariably have multiple windows of larger size than those of the second type.	Stairs are placed inside the house block giving the house a different façade appearance.	
4.				There are larger windows, of two to three panels, in the façade with protecting iron bars fixed in the window frame	

Figure 9: Typology of Buildings

In 2nd and 3rd generation building, Mahira can be seen in both ground and first floor. They work as intermediate between outdoor and indoor, shades the walls and windows and provide the possibility of continuing the ventilation of the house during violent rains. These buildings are just not individual solutions but group solutions which represent the culture and

As per the central line theorem (CLT) typically, sample sizes of 30 or more are seen to be adequate for the CLT to hold[8]. For data collection 30 households were purposively selected for unstructured interviews and five key informants for structured interview. Cluster sampling was done where the whole population was divided into three clusters. Each cluster was a mini representation of the population. Changes or transformations of the village are not in the desired direction. The changes are as follows:

Changes or transformations of the village are not in the desired direction. The changes are as follows:

Physical changes:

- Agriculture land is converted into plots and transportation network has been developed through it. The data shows that 90 percent responded that there is no land for further building construction.

- People perception regarding the changing scenario Thabang, 83 percent people agreed that the village is extremely transforming. 66.67percent people are feeling bad where as 23.3 percent thinking it better than before also 10 percent people are feeling good looking at the transformation of village, they think it is the symbol of development and prosperity

Construction technique

- 50 percent think that local materials are easily

available where as another 50 percent think it's not easy. For 50 percent non-renewable materials are easy and without any bothersome system.

- In the study area, 60 percent buildings are vernacular and other 40 percent is conventional and hybrid type. Looking at the preference of material for new construction, 40 percent wants to build new RCC building. 37 percent want to build in traditional way where as 23 percent wants to build in hybrid style.
- 67 percent people are satisfied with their current living way and house design or layout. 33 percent are not satisfied.
- The reasons for changing construction technology are globalization, transportation, bothersome new tax rules, new trend, and symbolism of prosperity. The changing building materials due to transportation and access, influence of city life, tough and bothersome local system and material replacing due to new technique.

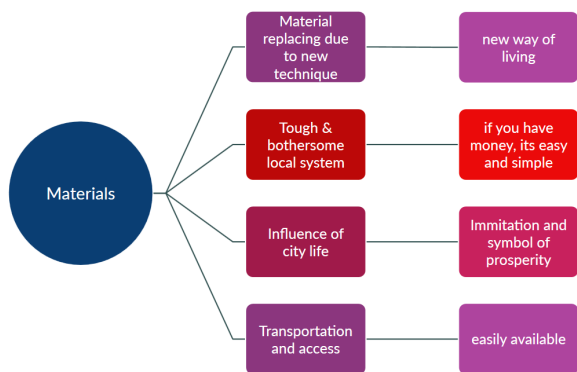


Figure 10: Mind map analysis of materials as per interview

The interview suggests the factor that emphasized upon the changing construction technology through the key terms Globalization, transportation. One of the local answered that, “This entire lantern house, you can see here. In the past people used to build houses of stone, mud and wood with the use of local manpower and available technology. These days due to tough and bothersome system with high tax, people find easy to get other material like brick, cement and rod, although all the material are locally available. Also the influence of city life and lifestyle, they are trying to imitate. It is a symbol of well to do family.”

House form

- Looking at the family type, nuclear families are increasing. From the study it is found that most of the

young children are migrating in new districts and foreign countries. They visit only during the festivals or any other occasion. Now the new generation also starts to live separately in a separate house due to which the houses form and layout is also changing.

- Maximum no of people believe that the city life is influencing the villages and interior spaces of the houses that are connected with transportation.



Figure 11: Thabang Village of 2006 [9]



Figure 12: Thabang Village of 2022 [10]

Building services

- Building use and services are changing. These days solar electricity, direct water tap in individual house, toilets and septic tank, drainage system are some of the new changed building services. Animals like pigs are not allowed inside the settlements to make the city cleaner and visually pleasing.

Socio-economic Changes:

- As per the data, maximum no of people are still engaged in agriculture as their primary occupation.

Agriculture is since the major source of income.

- Not like in the past, people are just involved in agriculture. These days’ people are attracting toward foreign employment, business and jobs.
- The monthly income also shows that people are having good amount. 47 percent people have monthly income between 25000-50000. 43 percent still having less than 25000 per month. Other 10 percent is having very strong income generation. The source of good income is foreign employment.
- In the past people used to spend money on cloths, food, and festival or entertainment activities. These days, spending money on education of their children and health is the major concern.

The profession shifting is happening due to traditional agriculture system, lack of opportunities, lacking land for agriculture and inflation.

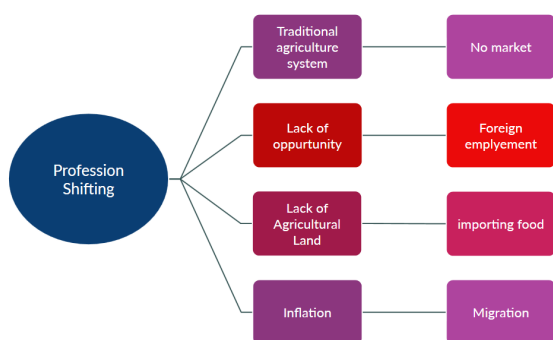


Figure 13: Mind map analysis of profession shifting as per interview

The interview suggests the factor that emphasized upon the profession shifting through the use of key terms such as traditional agriculture system, lack of opportunities, lacking land for agriculture and inflation. One of the local said that, “Now a day with the export of new building material, new labors are also coming from outer districts. In my opinion, it is not good thing. First priority should be the people of Thabang. I am doing this wooden furniture works from the very early age. In the past, it was good source of income. But, it is quite hard to sustain here. My son is in abroad, because of lack of opportunities here”.

The socio-cultural practice of magar community with respect to house form and festivals

House is the first place where all the preparation for festival takes place. For any festival, house is prepared

firstly. House is cleaned and purified before any ceremony. It is believed that some impurities and negative energy is cleaned before any ceremony. In a magar community, house is incomplete without aangan. Aangan is the most important open space in front of the dwelling where people gather, sing and dance, performed many rituals. In a large feast, aangan is used for dining and cooking purpose. Streets are important. They are just not for movement but they have great cultural and social values. People of Thabang use streets as per their wish like children play, elderly people get together, youth sit and chat. There are different routes for different ceremonies. From birth to death, there are specific streets for movement.

Food, cooking and festival are interconnected. Like in Bhume puja, before worshipping and sacrificing he goat cooking anything inside the house is not allowed. Dalijiye Roka magar explains that “For bhumeya puja, before few weeks nokobange dance group is formed. They practice starts at aangan of their house or in the open space at community. Work of agriculture and homes are tried to finish at early as possible, so that they can enjoy this festival without any worries. For some special food item, preparing rice flour, preparing leaf plate, hand woven cloths during the festivals are prepared in aangan and mahira. The entire cutting thing like khukuri, hasiya, kodali, bancharo are kept clean and prepared for the festival. All the streets, aangan, open spaces and homes are kept clean and tidy.”

Bhadra Gharti Magar explains that “before the day of Asar 1, dance group goes to Jaljala Mountain to bring seasonal flowers and leafs, on the way they worship trees, mountains, rivers. While returning they stay in different locations like Jorpani, Dhundhkhola,, Gobang, Dhankilathing. When they return to the village they go to the priest house and dance, than they go to the offering site called namchung. During their way to namchung, they go through the streets performing dance rituals and singing the nyaho songs. Every house hold joins them on the streets.”

The interview suggests the factor that emphasized upon the animist through the use of key terms such as culture faith on nature and existence of past rituals. One of the local respondent said that, “Bhumya puja is the major festival of magar in all over Nepal. It is very important for everyone to thank Mother Nature for everything she has offered. If it is not done in right time and in right manner it is believed that it will

bring misfortune to the community, people, and land, animal.”

The relationship between Festivals and Agriculture life of the people

Bhumeya puja is the major festival of magar community which starts from Asar 1 for a week. But the preparation starts one month before from the Jestha. There is a celebration of the storage of summer foods and they worship for the better crops for the monsoon. It is believed that the musical instruments begin to play, and then birds and insects come out to listen the music helps to keep the crops safe. Maghe Sankranti is also important annual festival, which is celebrated at the first day of magh, a time that marks the transition from winter to spring. According to the Magar terminology, Maghe Sakranti commemorates the end of udheli (literally 'down'), which is a period that lasts for six months starting from mid-July, and the initiation of ubheli ('up'), the period lasting for another six months starting from the mid-January. The down and up periods probably correspond to the annual cycle of herding livestock up and down from high pastures, a historically important economic activity of the Magars. Dashain & Tihar are also celebrated as major festivals, where monsoon crops are harvested and summer crops are planted. These show that festival and agriculture activities are linked with each other eventually affecting the daily life and activities.

The agriculture related works are also defined for man and woman. Land preparation and plantation works are carried out by men. Weeding, harvesting and storage are carried out by mostly women. Man and woman manage their work in time so that they can enjoy festival without any worries.

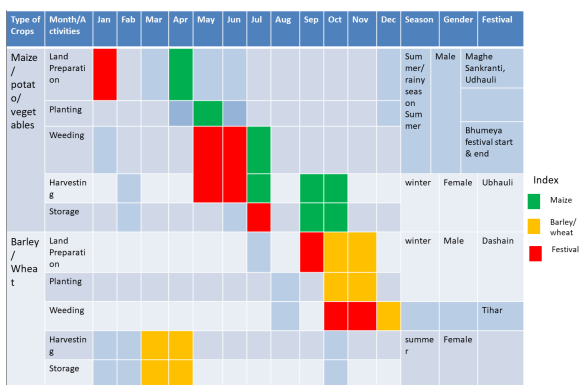


Figure 14: seasonal calendar along with the festivals

8. Discussion

Desired direction of changes

1. Ecologically responsive architecture

- Understanding the natural environment

The transformation of Thabang village is definitely not in desired direction. New construction does not understand its natural environment. Haphazard construction of RCC structures does not obey its natural setting. Definitely these new building fulfills the changing needs of the occupants but in the cost of nature and its surrounding's visual quality. Some natural and cultural elements approved by the local community are the constituent of the settlement character which needs to be preserve.

- Solution Grow from Place

The location of the house can be chosen such that the least amount of contemporary materials—or less damaging or local materials are employed. By carefully orienting the building and using the right building materials, passive solar heating can be used to address the building's heating and lighting problems.

- Ecological Accounting informs design

Enterprises can access lower cost, more flexible sources of finance by optimizing and enhancing social returns like the creation of living wage jobs and environmental returns like less greenhouse emissions.

- Design with nature

In order to save energy and time on transportation, reduce CO2 emissions and our dependence on oil, and free up time for family and community activities, it is necessary to develop locally rooted, self-organizing, compact communities that bring work, shopping, and recreation closer to our homes. By bringing family life, work life, and community life closer together geographically and putting people in more frequent and natural contact.

- Everyone is a designer

During design process, every voice should be heard. Honor the special knowledge each person brings. The design has been ingrained in culture via participation in daily family and community life.

- Make nature visible

The structure ought to help people understand how the weather, the seasons, the sun, and the shadows vary

and flow, turning their awareness of the natural cycles that sustain all life. Building with energy efficiency also entails building with consideration for the environment. The desire to interact with a wide range of animals is inbuilt in humans.

2. Place making as a tool for transformation

Most important thing while place making is we should know who is living there like old age people, children, especially able people, which age group, gender. A shared vision for that location is then developed using this information. Connection with nature or wild places are emotional not informational. Keeping rural people involved in transforming and managing the landscape by telling the truth. Place making can be used to improve all of the spaces that comprise the gatherings places with in a community like streets, sidewalks, parks, buildings and other public spaces [11].

3. Continuity of vernacular reflection in new design of house and public spaces

The present and future architecture and construction should seek a blend of traditional with modernity, thus aiming at a hybrid system that involves the use of intelligent materials and traditional materials and allows for the exploration of new aesthetic and functional concepts [12].

Modernist homes are qualitatively distinct from new architecture because it represents the altered lifestyle requirements of the twenty-first century. But neither has it ever been a part of pre-industrial vernacular. New vernacular refers to vernacular interpretation and alteration made to a building type to make it suitable for contemporary living.

One of the significant changes in Thabang is the conversion of Mahira into tall, multi-story buildings. Mahira is replaced by the expansion of the room, demonstrating their rising demand for greater space. Transformation of streets the pathways into public spaces, where people walk, sit and talk these days like they used to do in aangan. Transformation of building layout, plan shows the new functional spaces. Transformation of streets and new roads shows the changing social system and economic need of the settlements.

Continuity of historical events like festivals and their back stories or mythological stories in new design of buildings and communities will preserve the soul of the settlement. New design should incorporate all the

historical events and its continuation in future.

Conclusion

The location is chosen to meet the basic necessities, such as food security, safety, and proximity to nature for personal satisfaction and social needs, as seen in Thabang village. Houses are built according to the style of the geographical features and resources found. Later on social values, norms are developed and transferred into architectural values and artifacts.

There was a spiritualization or need for spirituality. The god of nature is worshipped initially. Because they are challenging to recover from, natural calamities have retained the original mindset of nature worship. The awareness of ancestor worship is the second. The idea of "animism" holds that after death, man becomes god. In the afterlife, ancestors would grant blessings to their descendants, and their inns are filled with spirituality. They believe that nature command all life, they believe in naturalism or shamanism and animism who perform Baraju puja, kul puja, jhakri puja, naag puja, ban puja, vayu puja, bhume puja, simya puja etc. Their belief and ritual are giving the form and shape of the house. Extended outside spaces like Mahira, aangan, streets are the major spaces during these rituals and festivals. The idea of peaceful coexistence between man and nature as well as the sustainable ecological concept of treating natural resources with "reasonable access and suitable use" are both embodied in the simple, unsophisticated thinking of the Magar people.

Magar people and their life cycle indicate to their inner core values, life style and livelihood. The major occupation of people of Thabang is agriculture; they have same form of economy and similar forms of rural houses and their spatial arrangements. The socio-cultural forces like the basic needs, family size and structure, position of woman, need for privacy and social intercourse are responsible for the form of the house and settlement of Thabang.

Building and interior design trends fluctuate more as a result of symbol and fashion shifts than actual changes in human necessities. Relation of people and buildings with environment can be seen from ritualization of spaces through festivals. Desired direction for transformation of the settlement needs to be in ecologically responsive architecture which is inspired from its traditional surrounding architecture. Keeping rural people involved in transforming and

managing the landscape. Streets, sidewalks, parks, buildings, and other public areas are all parts of a community's meeting places. Place making can be utilized to make these locations better.

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