



NATIONAL COLLEGE
Pragati Tole, Kathmandu

Field Evaluation Summary Report
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Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
BACKGROUND	4
FIELD EVALUATION PURPOSES AND QUESTIONS	5
Objectives	5
Evaluation Question	5
FIELD EVALUATION METHODS AND LIMITATIONS	6
3.1 Nature and Source of Data	6
3.2 Data Collection Tools	6
3.3 Sampling	6
3.4 Limitations	7
FINDINGS	8
4.1 Summary of the results	8
4.2 Evaluation of the field trip	10
I) Planning	10
II) Accommodation:	14
III) Food Services	15
IV) Transportation	16
V) Informant Interview	16
CONCLUSION	18
RECOMMENDATION	18

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The four-day expedition to Birgunj, scheduled from December 19 to 23, 2023, was an experiential learning venture for third-year BDevs students at National College. The project focuses on urban development, research, and critical evaluation of ongoing projects. The itinerary includes immersive visits to key locations like Birgunj Metropolitan City, Kalaiya Sub-Metropolitan City, Nijgadh, and Parsa National Park. The field report includes logistical arrangements, operational efficiency, communication channels' effectiveness, administrative support, and contingency planning. A blend of qualitative and quantitative methodologies is used, including participant surveys and in-depth interviews, while acknowledging potential limitations such as constraints and subjectivity.

ABBREVIATIONS

PNP	:	Parsa National Park
SMC	:	Sub- Metropolitan City
SODCC	:	Social Organization District Coordination Committee

BACKGROUND

The project field trip to Birgunj lasted four days and three nights, from December 19th to December 22nd, 2023. The participants, 51 students from the second and third semesters of Bachelors in Development Studies (BDEVS) and Development Finance (BDFIN), as well as three faculties, one staff member, and three drivers, took part in a variety of activities at project sites including Parsa National Park, Birgunj Metropolitan City, Dry port, Raxaul, Kalaiya, Gadhimai temple, Mahagadimai Municipality, and Nijghad fast track. The students' poll focused on urban planning and research methodology. The project, organized by National College, aims to meet the minimum requirements for completing the current semester while benefiting both the participating students and the surrounding community. The project's primary goal was to improve students' understanding of how theoretical frameworks can be effectively implemented in real-world situations. The initiative aimed to deliver a one-of-a-kind learning experience by immersing participants in Birgunj's vibrant and diverse surroundings.

The key sites visited during the trip were:

Day 1: Parsa National Park

Day 2: Birgunj Metropolitan City Office, Landfill site visit in Itihayari village, Dry port of Birgunj, Raxaul market

Day 3: Maha Gadhimai Municipality (Ward no 1 and 2), Kalaiya Sub- Sub-Metropolitan City, Social Organization District Coordination Committee interaction, Fast Track Zero Point in Nijgadh.

The project aimed to touch society more broadly than only academia. The purpose of the immersive exposure to real-world occurrences was to foster in students a practical viewpoint so they could apply academic concepts with ease in real-world scenarios. National College anticipated that the endeavor will provide advantages for the local population of Birgunj in addition to the academic development of the participating students.

FIELD EVALUATION PURPOSES AND QUESTIONS

Objectives

- To evaluate the planning of the field and whether the activities carried out during the field followed the itinerary
- To assess the logistical aspect of the field trip, such as hotel bookings, meetings with the informants, food services, and transportation

Evaluation Question

The evaluation will be carried out with the following evaluation questions

- Did the activities in the field go according to the activities planned in the itinerary?
- What were the issues regarding the logistic aspect of the field trip, such as accommodation, meetings with the informants, food services, and transportation, if any?

FIELD EVALUATION METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

3.1 Nature and Source of Data

Primary data is obtained through online questionnaires, interviews, and observation. The data will be collected from the participants of the field trip (teachers, students, staff, and college administration). For purposes of presenting a case study regarding the field trip, an interview has also been conducted to highlight the process of planning for the trip and logistics management

3.2 Data Collection Tools

- **Online Questionnaire**

The satisfaction and experiences of the participants were assessed through an online questionnaire provided after the field trip.

- **Observation**

The activities' adherence to the itinerary and its timeliness were observed and noted during the field, to be assessed later.

- **Interview**

An in-depth interview was conducted with a student and a faculty member concerning the planning and logistics management of the trip. The interview also aims to highlight whether there were any major deviations between the planning and the implementation of the field.

3.3 Sampling

For the evaluation, the sample size is 25, out of which 2 respondents are teachers and 23 respondents are students. Among the 23 student respondents, there were 16 females and 4 males from BDevS 1 female and 2 male from BDFin. A convenient sampling technique has been used to make it simpler and easier to obtain the information considering the limited timeframe.

- **Data Analysis Technique**

The qualitative data is analyzed through narrative analysis. Here, participants' responses concerning their experiences and satisfaction with the field trip are presented using graphs and percentages.

3.4 Limitations

- The short duration of the field trip (4 days and 3 nights) limited the depth of students' exposure to real-world scenarios.
- The observation of student participation and application of theoretical knowledge may be subjective and by personal biases.
- Unforeseen occurrences like bus malfunctions or schedule changes may have an impact on the itinerary.

FINDINGS

4.1 Summary of the results

The results of the field trip assessment highlight several key findings related to planning, logistics, and participant satisfaction. Here's a summarized overview:

a. Pre-trip Planning:

- The majority of respondents indicated minimal adherence to the established timeline for pre-trip preparations.
- Mixed responses regarding communication of pre-trip objectives and goals to stakeholders.
- Issues with coordination and communication led to delays and missed activities.

b. Itinerary:

- 60% of respondents reported that field trip activities did not follow the planned itinerary closely.
- Mechanical failure of the college bus on the first day caused significant schedule delays.
- Various changes in site visits and some activities were not conducted as planned.
- Evaluation of individual activities showed inconsistencies between proposed and actual times.

d. Logistics - Accommodation:

- Hotel Country Inn received low satisfaction ratings, with cleanliness and room allocation issues.
- Heera Plaza Hotel had mixed reviews, with concerns about food quality and vegetarian options.
- Challenges related to booking and check-in processes for accommodations.

e. Logistics - Food Service:

- Majority of participants were neutral about food service satisfaction.

- Initial issues with unclean facilities and limited vegetarian options were addressed during the trip.

f. Logistics - Transportation:

- College buses experienced frequent technical problems leading to delays and safety concerns.
- Satisfaction with transportation services varied, with a notable portion dissatisfied.

g. Logistics - Informant Interview:

- Challenges in communication during key informant interactions, affecting educational goals.
- Scheduling issues and communication problems reported during various activities.

h. Participant Feedback:

- Varied responses on the effectiveness of the field trip in bridging theoretical and practical knowledge.
- Majority expressed intent to apply knowledge gained in professional/academic life.

i. Suggestions for Future Trips:

- Emphasis on careful planning, trained drivers, and rationale studies before the trip.
- Recommendations for equality in student accommodations, improved coordination, and student involvement in planning.
- Calls for administrative improvements, including better internet resource utilization and a more streamlined schedule.

In conclusion, the assessment reveals a mix of positive and negative aspects in different facets of the field trip, indicating areas for improvement in planning, logistics, and overall participant satisfaction.

4.2 Evaluation of the field trip

I) Planning

- **Pre-trip planning**

Respondents' perspectives on the planning team's adherence to the established timeline for pre-trip preparations are depicted in the chart below:

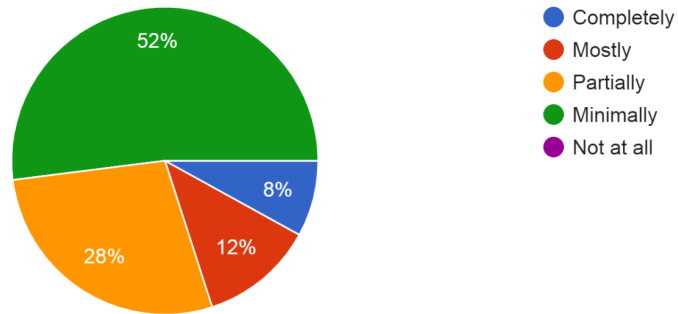


Figure 3: Perspective on the adherence of pre-trip preparations to the established timeline

- **Itinerary**

The assessment revealed that the major deviations from the itinerary were as follows:

- On the first day, due to the mechanical failure of the college bus, the entire schedule was pushed behind and all the participants reached Birgunj quite late
- Respondents also stated that there were many changes in site visits. Few activities were exchanged, and some activities, such as a visit to Kalaiya Sub Metropolitan City and visits to Pokhariya and Maisthan Temple, were not conducted at all.

Evaluation of the itinerary

Date	Activity	Proposed Time	Actual Time	Remarks
19/12/2023	Departure from college	6:40 AM	7:20 AM	In line with the Itinerary
	Lunch	10:30 AM	11:30 AM-12:45	Somewhat in line with the

			PM	Itinerary
	Interaction at Parsa National Park	3:00 PM	4:30 PM	Somewhat in line with the Itinerary
	Arrival at Birgunj	4:30 PM	6:30 PM	Somewhat in line with the Itinerary
	Briefing and Orientation	6:00 PM	9:00 PM	Not in line with the Itinerary
	Dinner	7:30 PM	8:30 PM	Somewhat in line with the Itinerary
20/12/2023	Breakfast	7:00 AM	7:00 AM	In line with the Itinerary
	Visit to Metropolitan City Office and Interaction with Mayor	8:30 AM	8:00 AM	In line with the Itinerary
	Presentation of RUDP	9:00 AM - 10:00 AM	9:15 AM	In line with the Itinerary
	Visit to infrastructure development areas of Birgunj Metropolitan City	10:00 AM - 11:00 AM	NA	Not in line with the Itinerary
	Lunch	11:30	11:30 AM	In line with the Itinerary
	Visit to Integrated Check Post, Birgunj	12:30 - 1: 30 PM	12:30 PM	In line with the Itinerary
	Interaction at Federation of Nepalese Chambers and Commerce	1:45 - 2:45 PM	NA	Not in line with the Itinerary

	Visit to Landfill Site	2:45 - 3:45 PM	9:20 AM	Not in line with the Itinerary
	Visit to Raxaul Bazar	NA	3:00 PM	Not in line with the Itinerary
	Maisthan Temple Visit	3:45 - 4:45 PM	NA	Not in line with the Itinerary
	Arrival at Hotel	17:00	6:30 PM	Somewhat in line with the Itinerary
	Presentation of Field Study	6:00 PM - 7:30 PM	7:45:00 PM-11:45 PM	Not in line with the Itinerary
	Dinner	7:30 PM	8:15 PM	In line with the Itinerary
21/12/2023	Breakfast	7:00 AM	7:15 AM	In line with the Itinerary
	Move to Kalaiya Sub-Metropolitan City	8:00 AM	NA	Not in line with the Itinerary
	Interaction with Mayor	8:30 AM - 9:00 AM	NA	Not in line with the Itinerary
	SMC meeting at Kalaiya Municipality	9:00 AM - 10:00 AM	NA	Not in line with the Itinerary
	Religious tourism study at Gadhimai	10:00 AM - 11:00 AM	8:45 AM	In line with the Itinerary
	Community Survey at Maha Gadhimai Municipality	NA	10:45 AM-11:45 AM	Not in line with the Itinerary
	Lunch at Kalaiya	11:00 AM - 11:30 AM	12:00 PM	In line with the Itinerary
	Visit to Fast Track zero	12:00 PM - 1:00	3:30 PM - 4:00	Not in line with the

	point at Nijgadh	PM	PM	Itinerary
	Visit to local NGO	2:00 PM - 3:00 PM	1:00 PM - 2 PM	Somewhat in line with the Itinerary
	Visit to Dry Port in Birgunj	3:30 PM - 4:30 PM	1:00 PM-2:30 PM (20th Dec)	Not in line with the Itinerary
	Arrival at Hotel	5:00 PM	7:00 PM	Not in line with the Itinerary
	Presentation of the field study	6:00 PM - 7: 30 PM	5:30 PM - 7:30 PM	In line with the Itinerary
	Dinner	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	In line with the Itinerary
22/12/2023	Breakfast	7:00 AM	7:00 AM	In line with the Itinerary
	Return to Kathmandu from Birgunj	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	In line with the Itinerary
	Lunch	10:30 AM	11:30 AM	In line with the Itinerary
	Refreshments	1:00 PM	2:45 PM	Somewhat in line with the Itinerary

Note: 1) Green for activities conducted within one hour from proposed time, Yellow for activities conducted 1-2 hours from proposed time, and Red for activities conducted 2 hours or more than the proposed time

2) NA is assigned for activities which were not mentioned in the itinerary before or the activities which were not conducted in the trip

Indicator: Within one hour indicates that the activity is in line with the itinerary, 1-2 hours indicates that the activity is somewhat in line while 2 hours and more indicates that the activity is not in line with the itinerary.

- **Satisfaction with Planning**

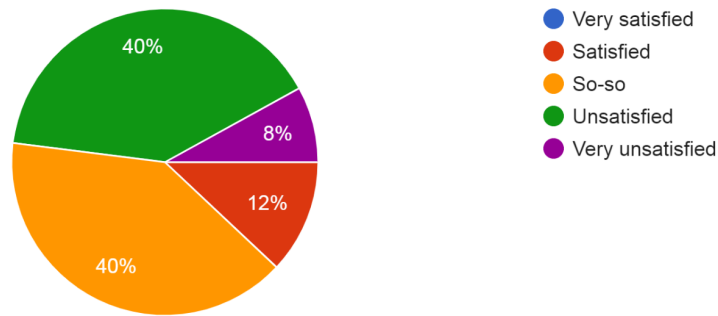


Figure 6: Satisfaction level of respondents with the field planning

The chart above depicts that 8% of the respondents were very dissatisfied, 40% were dissatisfied, 40% were neutral, and 12% were satisfied, while none were very satisfied with the planning of the field trip.

Challenges in Planning

According to the respondents, the following are the main difficulties in the field's planning:

- Mismanaged field planning, which led to very hectic and unrealistic schedules
- Lack of coordination between teachers, due to which half of the students were not able to join the SODCC briefing
- Lack of pre-planning of accommodations and transportation, due to which there were problems in hotel room bookings and mechanical issues with the college bus.

II) Accommodation:

1. Hotel Country Inn:

- Unsatisfactory circumstances, including dirty rooms, too few rooms, and unhygienic surroundings, emerged as the primary complaints.

- Along with these issues, participants expressed dissatisfaction with organizational disarray, room dimensions, teachers' attentiveness, and hygiene standards, all of which contributed to their overall dissatisfaction with the experience.

2. Hotel Heera Plaza:

- Disagreements regarding the quality of the meals, issues about the hotel's services, and a perceived lack of vegetarian options were among the difficulties.

- Additionally, a few people said they could manage these difficulties and were generally happy with the food options.

3. Challenges with Accommodation:

A vast majority of complaints, 52%, dealt with issues related to booking and arrival procedures, creating an inconsistent set of complaints. Particular issues included inadequately allocated and clean rooms, as well as issues with faculty attentiveness, hygiene standards, and general organizational problems.

III) Food Services

There were difficulties with food and lodging throughout the first part of the trip because the first hotel (Hotel Country Inn) had problems with unclean facilities and had only a few vegetarian options. There was too much oiliness and spice, which made the food of poor quality. The entire trip got a little enhanced when quick action was taken to remedy the issues regarding it and shift to a new hotel altogether. Although some parts of kitchen hygiene remained an issue, the food served at the subsequent accommodation was good. Notably, the lunch service was canceled so that attendees could try the food that was offered in the area. Although there were initial issues with unclean food and lodging during the trip, efficient steps were taken to address these issues and improve the overall experience.

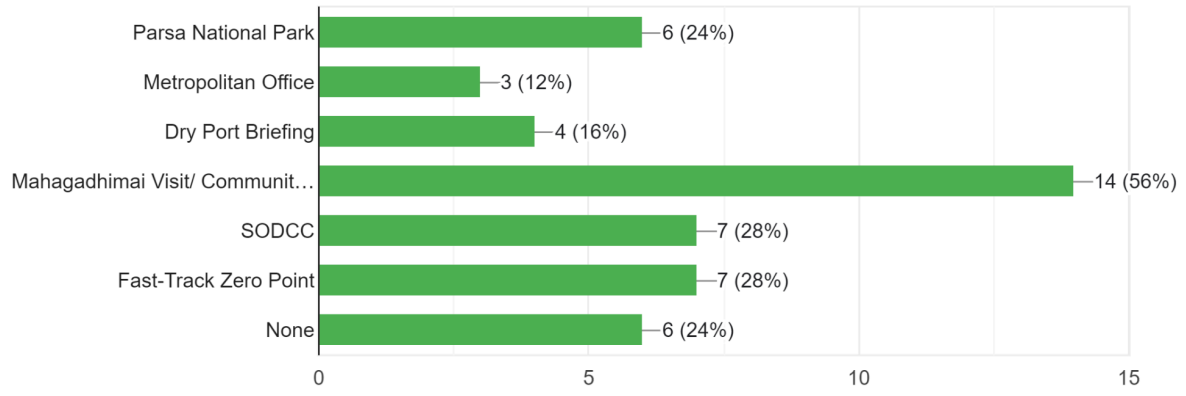
IV) Transportation

Challenges faced: Significant difficulties hampered the trip's transportation component, as the college bus experienced frequent technical problems and mishaps that caused scheduling delays. The bus broke down frequently, needed maintenance, and almost caused several near-accidents. In addition, careless driving and technological difficulties made matters worse and demanded trips to workshops for fixes. These difficulties affected the general level of satisfaction with the management team's handling of the situation because they not only created delays but also brought up serious safety concerns. The participants' trip was less than ideal and maybe dangerous because of the frequent mechanical issues and safety incidents.

V) Informant Interview

Challenges faced: There were a lot of communication problems throughout the trip, mostly because of language issues. The speaker's fast-talking nature was a problem in Parsa National Park, and the rushing made it challenging to conduct local surveys in Maha Gadhimai. Furthermore, participants' understanding of the Dry Port and Landfill site descriptions varied, which was a result of unclear descriptions. The communication problems became worse because of the unavailability of key informants in Fast-Track Zero Point and difficulties comprehending the RUDP key informant. The plan modifications and unmet expectations, such as a hurried trip to Mahagadhimai and a typical encounter at the fast-track entrance gate only, increased the unhappiness. In addition, the faculty members' lack of coordination and communication made the trip difficult, which prevented the bus from getting to the SODCC interaction. Throughout the trip, there were numerous instances of poor communication and unanticipated difficulties that had an impact on the participants' experience.

There were also scheduling problems with the interaction with stakeholders during the field which is represented in the graph below:



CONCLUSION

The Birgunj field trip visited several locations, from Parsa National Park to Maha Gadhimai Municipality, to assess the educational impact and logistical efficiency. The evaluation process included online questionnaires, observations, and interviews with teachers, students, faculty, and administration. Despite obstacles like time constraints and subjectivity, the findings revealed important aspects of the trip. The pre-trip planning phase yielded mixed results, with little adherence to the established timeline. Accommodations, transportation, key informant challenges, and scheduling issues are all part of the logistics. The qualitative analysis revealed dissatisfaction with the conditions, food quality, and transportation issues at the first hotel. Despite these obstacles, the survey provided useful information about the community's health, lifestyle, and socioeconomic status.

RECOMMENDATION

- **Improved Pre-trip Scheduling:** To reduce possible problems, carry out thorough pre-trip planning with an emphasis on well-planned activities and reliable bus maintenance schedules.
- **Transparent Fieldwork Communication:** Create efficient channels of communication to share up-to-date, thorough information regarding fieldwork activities, ensuring that participant expectations and trip realities are in line.
- **Detailed Accommodation Information:** To improve transparency and better prepare students for their living situations, provide students access to detailed accommodation information, such as room assignments and the number of students per room.
- **Effective Itinerary Change Communication:** Create a simplified procedure for informing all participants about itinerary changes in a timely and thorough manner, using a variety of channels to encourage flexibility.
- **Emergency Protocols and Procedures:** Provide participants with clear and concise emergency protocols before the trip to make sure they are prepared and capable of handling unanticipated situations.
- **Student Involvement in Planning:** Encourage students to actively participate in the process of organizing field trips, promoting teamwork, and incorporating their opinions into decisions about lodging, transportation, and schedule.