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# Journal of **Tourism & Adventure**

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No. 1

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Editor-in-Chief  
**Prof. Ramesh Raj Kunwar**



**Janapriya Multiple Campus (JMC)**  
(Affiliated to Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal)

## **Aims and scope**

*Journal of Tourism & Adventure (JTA)* is an annual peer-reviewed journal launched by the Tribhuvan University, Janapriya Multiple Campus, Pokhara, Nepal in 2018. Journal is one of the most important sources of producing and disseminating the knowledge of concerned subject. This is an identity marker of academia and academics. It aims to provide an international knowledge based platform for innovative studies that make a significant contribution to the understanding tourism, hospitality, and event studies/management including risk recreational specialization (adventure). This journal welcomes original, academic and applied research from multi- and interdisciplinary perspectives.

The journal will be an impetus for carrying recent theoretical, conceptual, methodological and new paradigms of tourism studies. Thus, it will be very important for the students, researchers, journalists, policy makers, planners, entrepreneurs and other general readers. It is high time to make this effort for tourism innovation and development particularly in Nepal. It is believed that this knowledge based platform will make the industry and the institutions stronger.

## **Call for papers**

The journal welcomes the following topics: tourism, mountain tourism and mountaineering tourism, risk management, safety and security, tourism and natural disaster, accident, injuries, medicine and rescue, cultural heritage tourism, festival tourism, pilgrimage tourism, rural tourism, village tourism, urban tourism, geotourism, paper on extreme adventure tourism activities, ecotourism, environmental tourism, hospitality, event tourism, voluntourism, sustainable tourism, wildlife tourism, dark tourism, nostalgia tourism, tourism planning, destination development, tourism marketing, human resource management, adventure tourism education, tourism and research methodology, guiding profession, tourism, conflict and peace and remaining other areas of sea, air and land based adventure tourism research.

We welcome submissions of research paper on annual bases by the end of June for 2<sup>nd</sup> issue. In one issue, there will be minimum five research articles excluding research notes and book reviews, etc. Every year the journal will be published by the end of the following year. The article will be under the author(s)' copyright. Whoever is willing to contribute he/she/they should not pay any currency for publishing their papers in this journal. The published articles will go to online-[www.nepjol.info](http://www.nepjol.info).

All academic correspondence should be addressed to the Editor-in-Chief. The Editor-in-Chief on behalf of Editorial Board, will give the final decision whether the article should be published or not. The young researchers are highly encouraged to publish the materials in this journal. The native author(s) will get three hard copies and others will go through online as mentioned below.

## **Peer review statement**

This journal operates a double blind review process which means the identities of the author(s) are concealed from the expert reviewers, and vice versa. The papers will be first checked by the Editor-in-Chief and followed by two independent expert reviewers to access the scientific quality of the paper. The paper writers will not be allowed to mention their names inside the text. All research articles and research notes in this journal have undergone rigorous peer review, including editor screening and a double-blind evaluation process by two anonymous referees.

## **Instructions for authors**

Please note that this journal only publishes manuscripts in English (use either British or American spelling consistently).

*Journal of Tourism & Adventure* accepts the following types of article: original research articles, case studies, research notes, conference reports, and book reviews.

## **Structure**

The articles and research notes should be compiled in the following order: title page; author's introduction; abstract; keywords (maximum five); main text introduction, review of literature, research methodology, findings, discussion; acknowledgments; declaration of interest statement; references; table(s) with caption(s) (on individual pages) and figure(s).

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## Journal of Tourism & Adventure

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# Tourism and Community Perception: Quest of Sustainability from Happiness Paradigm

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### Article

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### Keywords

Sustainability,  
happiness,  
perception,  
phenotype,  
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### Abstract

*Change is normally phenotypic and influenced by external environment however transformation is genotypic and irreversible which mostly comes from within. Social change and transformation might also be triggered by external stimulus that may be intentional or accidental. Tourism has emerged globally as one of the powerful external but intentional agents of modern society for socio-economic transformation. Namche Bazar, the gateway to Mt. Everest, experienced tremendous socio-economic transformation (genotypic) due to tourism otherwise it would simply be a seasonal resting place for Sherpa shepherds and nomads. The dichotomy of discourses on tourism lies on perspectives: tourism as a symbol of modern society or postmodernity versus tourism as a vehicle of imperialism. The former view depicts tourism as an agent of economic prosperity whereas the later claims that tourism consumes and despoils destinations' image and essence. The imperialistic discourse on tourism is entirely built on negative hypothesis. In tourism, phenotypic impact is rather superficial and can be restored if perceived negatively unlike genotypic. Amid these positive and negative propositions, a third paradigm emerged with sustainability variant that hooked up the two juxtaposed hypotheses as an alternative model of mass tourism. It portrayed tourism as*

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*a double-edged dagger that insists on efficient and effective manipulation of tourism for positive implications. The 'sustainable tourism' – a buzzword among tourism academia - stands in favor of planned, managed, controlled and responsible tourism. However, the crux of sustainable tourism lies in the quantification and measurement of sustainability. A sustainability premise of a stakeholder at the destination might be unsustainable for the other as like of economists and environmentalists for example. The incongruity perspectives have troubled the tourism academia to quantify, measure and analyze the indicators of sustainable tourism from unanimous parameters. This study is, therefore, an attempt to analyze the sustainability of a tourism destination via happiness (hedonic as well as eudaemonic) parameters of the community people, one of the main stakeholders in the destination and yet do not directly thrive on tourism business. The paper is directed by a thematic proposition 'the more the happiness level of stakeholders, the better will be the sustainability situation of the destination'.*

## **Introduction**

Life and nature bewildered many philosophers for thousands of years and thus argued that life on earth must have been created by a supernatural power. The thought of Charles Darwin, a mid-nineteenth century natural scientist, expressed in his first edition entitled "*The Origin of Species*" (Darwin, 1859) altered the paradigm of human brainwave about the origin of living organism away from conventional notion. Darwin's principle '*the survival of the fittest*' (neither the strongest nor the intelligent) is later on borrowed by Social Darwinists (Dickens, 2000) like Herbert Spencer to link the notion with society and politics with the assumptions that conflict between groups in society leads to social progress as superior groups outwit inferior ones and weak or unfit should be allowed natural death. Social scientists further argued that the rich and powerful cultures adapt better and also influence poor and weaker societies that begets socio-cultural change and transformation. Rao (2002) in this connection admits that every society and culture, no matter how traditional and conservative, is constantly undergoing change and society changes in ceaseless flux and flow. For Rao, society cannot be a static hypothesis, rather a dynamic entity. Hunt and Colander (2012) also advocate that cultural diffusion and assimilation are extremely pervasive phenomena of modern society and thus the larger portion of the content of any contemporary culture today has been borrowed from other cultures.

Change is normally phenotypic and influenced by external environment however transformation is genotypic and irreversible which mostly comes from within. The phenotypic change is more physical and phenomena-oriented and, on the other hand, genotypic transformation is more morphological. The definition proposed by Williams (2010) is more relevant here to connote transformation. As per him, transformative social change is a philosophical, practical and strategic process through which we are individually changed so deeply that identity, emotions, embodiment,

actions, creativity and paradigms are altered. Such transformations might also be triggered by external stimulus that may be both intentional or accidental. Tourism has emerged globally as one of the powerful external but intentional agents of modern society for socio-economic transformation. When transformation takes places, the destination loses its essence and appeal (Butler, 1980; Doxey, 1975) as Fisher (1986) observed a tremendous socio-cultural and economic transformation (genotypic) among Sherpas of Khumbu and Namche (the gateway to Mt. Everest) due to the development of mountain tourism in the region which were once full of vistas with herds, shepherds and nomads arraying virgin Sherpa lifestyle. According to Fisher, he hardly found Sherpas in Sherpa Village (Khumbu and Namchebazar). The author of this article also has similar observation for Ghandruk which was once a typical village of Gurung culture in Nepal for tourists. The village has left no more previous iconic appeal to represent Gurung culture and lifestyle which is now confined in a stuffy hall of a recently made museum.

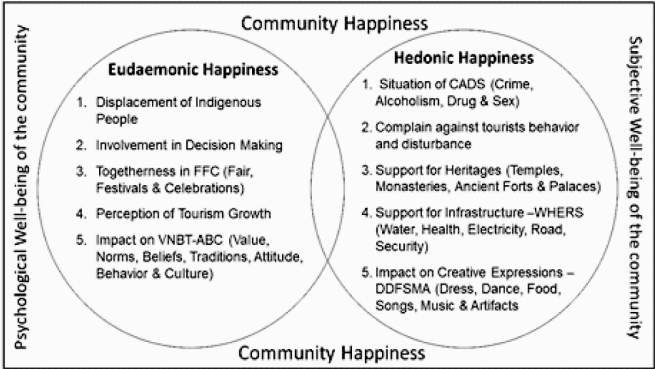
The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the apex body of global tourism, has defined tourism from wide perspective as the activity of a person travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business or any other purpose (WTO, 1995). Due to the involvement of multi-faceted human activities as mentioned by WTO and their subsequent implications, the tourism industry itself is perceived differently by different stakeholders. There are dichotomous discourses on tourism. One dimension admires tourism as a symbol of modern society or postmodernity and considers tourism as an agent of economic prosperity. On the other hand, another dimension portrays tourism as a form of imperialism which is entirely built on negative hypothesis. Analysis and interpretations of impacts depend on perspectives. Environmentalists' perspective is not always congruent with economists and so on with sociologists or anthropologists. The incongruence of propositions from stakeholders has become a real challenge for the analysis and evaluation of impacts and implications of tourism in any destination. Phenotypic impact is rather superficial and can be restored if perceived negatively unlike genotypic. Amid these positive and negative propositions, a third paradigm emerged with sustainability variant that hooked up the two juxtaposed hypotheses as an alternative model of mass tourism. It portrayed tourism as a double-edged dagger that insists on efficient and effective manipulation of tourism for positive implications. 'Sustainable tourism' became buzzword thereafter among tourism academia. The perspective stood in favor of planned, managed, controlled and responsible tourism in a destination. However, the crux of the study of sustainable tourism lies in the quantification and measurement of sustainability though its 12 principles tries to solve limitations of incongruence of different perspectives to some extent. Generally, a sustainability

premise of one perspective might be unsustainable for the other, be it phenotypic or genotypic. The divergence of interpretation and perception of stakeholders has become a major problem for tourism academia to quantify, measure and analyze the indicators of sustainable tourism passing through unanimous parameters. This study is, therefore, an attempt to analyze the sustainability of tourism via happiness (hedonic as well as eudaemonic) parameters of one of the stakeholders of a destination to overcome such a dichotomy of perspectives. The two hemispheres of happiness namely hedonic and eudaemonic are emerging paradigm of tourism discourses as discussed by Sharma (2020). The hedonic parameters are basically to measure the subjective hemisphere of individual's happiness whereas eudaemonic is to measure the other half hemisphere of happiness which is predominantly psychological. The four major game makers in a tourism destination are entrepreneurs, their employees, tourists and the community people. The happiness level of these stakeholders plays important role for the destination's growth and sustainability. Being only a segment of an extensive research, this paper has covered the happiness level of only one of the major stakeholders - community people not directly thriving from tourism - for analysis and evaluation. The paper also inherits the thematic proposition; 'the more the happiness level of stakeholders, the better will be the sustainability situation of a destination'.

Objective and methodology

The main objective of this study is to ratify stakeholders' total happiness as an emerging paradigm in tourism to gauge the sustainability thereby considering *hedonic* as well as *eudaemonic* (Deci & Ryan , 2006; Waterman, 1993) hemispheres of personal happiness. Because of the limitation of space and length, only single but important actor of the destination (community not directly thriving on tourism business) is considered for study and analysis in this paper. *Hedonic* happiness is associated with subjective wellbeing (Diener, 1984; Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999), is more extrinsic and thus ephemeral whereas *eudaemonic* happiness is psychological wellbeing (Waterman, 1993), is more intrinsic and thus enduring too. Altogether 90 community people of Baidam Lakeside (Pokhara, Nepal) were randomly selected from among 150 stratified sample population to

Fig. 1: Variables of Study



distribute pre-tested questionnaire. However, only the responses from 75 (i.e. 83.33%) were considered for analysis due to the incompleteness of information from other respondents. Initially, respondents were grouped purposively and then selected randomly from the strata that were configured on the basis of three main attributes: living in the tourism destination, not directly thriving on tourism business and having comparatively a lead role in the society. Besides questionnaires, telephonic conversation, face to face interview and personal observation were also used to explore the latent perception, reaction and feeling of respondents.

All perceptions were collected during 2018 except the personal interview of ten key informants that was taken in 2019. Altogether ten variables were employed to explore and analyze the happiness level of the community perception. Among them, five variables were to measure *hedonic* satisfaction and happiness of community people from the subjective well-being (SWB) perspective whereas the remaining variables were *Eudaemonic* which were used to measure the psychological satisfaction, happiness and well-being (PWB) of the people living in the selected community. The study initially used the exploratory positivist paradigm followed with phenomenological focus with *quan-qual* approach of analysis. The data were analyzed from general statistical tools and techniques to more technical tools such as Karl Pearson's Chi-Square Goodness of Fit Test ( $\chi^2$ ) and Likelihood Ratio Test to know the association and connectivity between the categories of respondents and perceptions, feelings and reactions on research variables. Null hypotheses ( $H_0$ ) were tested at 10% level of significance by using Karl Pearson's Chi-Square test. Whenever the Karl Pearson's Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) Goodness of Fit has been invalid due to the number of cells with counted values less than 5 exceeded 25%, then the Likelihood Ratio Test has been used alternatively until the percentage of cells having expected count less than 5 remained 40% or less. The percentage more than this means not fit to use Chi-Square test and the study in this case has merely depended on tabular and chart values in association with cross-tabulation percentage, mean, mode, weighted average etc. For the statistical test and analysis, the statistical software package specially designed for social science research called 'SPSS' version 20 has been used. The major limitations of this paper is not to consider the perception of other important stakeholders (such as tourism entrepreneurs, employees, visitors and activists) for analysis. The grey area between hedonic and eudaemonic hemispheres is another difficulty to assign variables distinctly to different clusters. The paper could not cover gender-wise, ethnicity-wise, age-wise and education-wise analysis of respondents' perception.

### **Morphology of respondents**

The male-female mix of the respondents happened to be 57.33% and 42.67% respectively. Most of the respondents (i.e. 97.33%) were married whereas 2.67% had chosen '*others*' which includes divorced, separated or widowed. Among the

respondents, 36% had completed bachelor's degree. The respondents with master and PhD degree were 8% and 1% respectively. Similarly, some of the respondents were just literate (11%) whereas 23% and 21% respondents had school level and +2 level of qualification. Ethnically, 72% were *Khas Aryan* followed by 13.33% *Mangolian* and 9.33% *Dalit*. Similarly, the highest number of respondents (44%) were from 31-40 years' category followed by 41-50 years' of age with 32%. There were 17.33% respondents to represent younger generation with age less than 30 years whereas almost 7% respondents represented 50 plus age group. Likewise, more than 17% respondents were living in the destination since last 25 years. So they have a good experience of tourism impacts and implications in this community. Similarly, respondents living for 21-25 years in the study destination were almost 23% which is also a significant percentage to analyze the perceptions and experiences. Respondents living for 16-20 years were 17.33% whereas living for 11-15 years were 18.67%. Among them, almost 24% respondents have been living there since last 10 years.

### Literature review

Tourism is a temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal places of work and residence, the activities undertaken during their stay in those destinations, and the facilities created to cater to their needs (Mathieson & Wall, 1982). The economic spin-offs of travel and tourism industry have enticed each and every nation of the globe perhaps due to its high earning capacity with relatively less amount of investment. It is not surprising, therefore, that many, if not all, nations have jumped on the tourism bandwagon. The data shows that travel and tourism is the biggest global industry of 21<sup>st</sup> century. It contributed 334 million (10%) jobs and US\$ 9.17 trillion revenues for global economy in 2019 (WTTC, 2021). But the pandemic of covid-19 has affected this industry exceptionally. The economic contribution of tourism plummeted to 5.5% giving a loss of almost US\$ 4.5 trillion revenue and 61.6 million jobs to the global economy in 2020 due to the impact of coronavirus (WTTC, 2021). Nepal also received 11,97,191 tourists in 2019 that contributed NPR 247.5 billion (6.7%) for national economy by generating more than 1 million jobs that accounts for 6.9% of total national employment. The global pandemic of covid-19 heavily battered the tourism sector of Nepal also mostly due to its heavy reliance on international market. Visitors' number dropped by 80% in 2020 causing 46.6% fall in national GDP contribution and loss of almost 2 lakhs jobs (MoCTCA, 2020). In spite of its fragility in the situation like coronavirus pandemic, tourism represents an important element of economic prosperity and development for many countries including Nepal.

Interactions and encounters of host and guest in tourism is inevitable. Similarly, impacts and implications of tourism in host societies and destinations are multifaceted with positive as well as negative interface. The influences on destination can be seen

in life style, value system, labor division, family relationships, attitudes, behavioral patterns, ceremonies and creative expressions. Increasing economic dependence upon tourism may alter the job structure and roles of a community, sometimes creating more new jobs for women than men, develops frustrations when tourists flow is less and even can cause economic imbalance during off season or slack period. There are a number of socio-cultural impacts and implications of tourism over any destination. The third world destinations have victimized not only from the dependency syndrome but also loaded from hegemony of rich and powerful wests, unequal relationships with the first world and the latest effect of globalization driven by hi-tech revolution in information technology.

It is argued that tourism makes destination a dynamic. Doxey (1975) proposed four different stages of a destination beginning from euphoria followed by apathy, irritation or annoyance and finally antagonism stage in which hosts become hostile against tourists. Butler's (1980) destination lifecycle model explains six different stages of destination continuum from exploration stage followed by involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation to decline stage finally. Jafari (2005) has differently explained five different stages of tourism development; advocacy platform (only positive impacts emphasized), cautionary platform (negative impacts highlighted), adaptancy platform (good and bad stories of tourism identified and suggested for alternatives), knowledge-based platform (a body of knowledge created in academic level) and the public platform (tourism gained visibility in every sphere of public agenda due to its impacts and implications). Cohen (1984) compared tourism with neo-colonialism whereas Nash (1989) explained it as a form of imperialism. They advocate that tourism acts like a juggernaut. It exploits, consumes and despoils one destination and rolls on to the next. This advocacy qualified the negative hypothesis of tourism.

Later on, Uriely's (1997) advocacy launched an affirmative hypothesis in tourism that accepted mass tourism as a symbol of modern society or postmodernity. In late 1980s and early 1990s, numerous tourism commentators drew the global attention to the potentially destructive environmental and socio-cultural effects of the unbridled expansion of mass tourism (Sharpley, 2009) and, simultaneously, the alternative concepts to mass tourism such as eco, green, appropriate, low-impact, responsible and soft-tourism were established as hot topics of discourses in the tourism domain. Consequently, the third paradigm with sustainability variant emerged to hook up the two juxtaposed hypotheses as an alternative model of mass tourism. It portrayed tourism as a double-edged dagger; upon handling it carefully a panacea of economic prosperity, socio-cultural preservation and ecological conservation otherwise as a crushing movement that brings visitors to the land of virgin culture and fragile environment, and eventually despoils the destination's persona. Thus, the third

perspective of tourism stood in favor of planned, managed and controlled tourism. In the meantime, the attention on negative impacts of tourism as well as alternative approaches to tourism re-focused with the specific lens of sustainable tourism and, since then, it has maintained a dominant position as a buzz word in tourism domain especially among academia as well as planners.

The concept of sustainability asserts the perpetuity of the tourism destination's appeal with a balance between ecology, economy, culture and society. As per United Nations World Tourism Organization, sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future envisaging an effective management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems (UNWTO, 2020). The United Nations World Tourism Organization has also given several genres of indicators (UNWTO, 2004) and twelve principles (UNWTO, 2013) in association with United Nations Environmental Project (UNEP) for sustainable development of tourism in a destination. However, sustainability paradigm in tourism is a dichotomous and vague hypothesis for some scholars due to the lack of effective measurement system and analysis procedure. Sharpley (2009), aggressively expressed that sustainable tourism development is morally desirable but fundamentally idealistic and impractical alternative and therefore it is time to move beyond sustainability since the academic study of sustainable tourism development has reached something of an impasse.

Thus, this is an attempt to quantify and measure the sustainability aspect of tourism from stakeholders' happiness perspective. Due to the limitation of space and length, only the happiness of single but important actor i.e. community who do not thrive directly on tourism has been covered in this paper. It is obvious that the community people's perception, reaction, happiness and support play a vital role for sustainable develop of tourism in a destination. In this paper, community connotes the people living in a tourism destination without direct financial benefits from and connection with the tourism and hospitality business. However, they cannot remain away from tourism's socio-cultural as well as environmental impacts and implications.

In various situations, tourism industry should be together with indigenous community. It is in the notion that tourism can be sustainable in a destination when the community remains supportive as a complementing slice of the industry. The indigenous community walks together with entrepreneurs for tourism growth and development only when the public also perceive themselves as a part of beneficiaries albeit indirect or induced. Walking with society enhances hospitality and walking against them increases hostility in the destination.

## Analysis of variables

### Displacement of indigenous people

The growth and development of tourism should be community friendly and supportive to the local people. However, it seems imperialistic and exploitative in many cases due to which indigenous people in some destinations are gradually displaced from their pastoral land that fosters negation among community people about the growth and expansion of tourism contributing negatively for the sustainable development of tourism. Devine and Ojeda (2017) explained diverse practices of dispossession and displacement in tourism such as enclosure and extraction, erasure and commodification, destructive creation, and (neo) colonialism. Neef (2019) re-described tourism dispossession as eviction, enclosure, extraction and erasure citing some examples of resource grabbing taxation strategy in Bali of Indonesia, Chinese mega project in Koh Kong Province of Cambodia, military resorts in Chittagong Hill in Bangladesh, Seizure of Maasai's customary land for Sarangeti National Park in Tanzania, Army resorts over Tamils' land in Sri Lanka, national policy of displacement of indigenous as well as welcoming of mega tourism projects in Indonesia after 2004 tsunami and in Philippines after 2013 Haiyan typhoon etc. This paper has tried to analyze the tourism-induced dispossession or displacement of indigenous or minor community in Lakeside of Pokhara, Nepal and the impact of displacement on them.

For this paper, respondents were asked to provide with the information as far as their knowledge is concerned in this context. The form of displacement or dispossession in Lakeside Pokhara is certainly tourism-induced. The data showed that almost 67% displacement of indigenous fishermen from mainland of Lakeside is due to denial of access to their customary fishing ground (Fewa Lake) imposing difficult rules by local and national authority. Another reason of displacement for almost 84% of them is insecurity feeling due to frequently revised distance regulations and standard of land possession from coastal area of the lake that opened the door for big touristic infrastructures for national/international investors and domestic elites to displace indigenous fishermen, tailors and minority smiths from the main coastland of Fewa Lake to the periphery. Almost 56% community respondents affirmed that tourism-induced price hike of everything from daily consumable goods to the land is another reason of local displacement. Therefore, non-entrepreneur community seems rather skeptical about the growth of tourism and has taken it as a perineal threat of displacement and dispossession that has developed less supportive fervor for sustainable growth of tourism in the destination. This variable represents intrinsic and eudaemonic (psychological) hemisphere of happiness. Statistically, the happiness score for this variable is only 18.67% whereas the unhappiness score is 66.67% which is incomparably high. Its neutrality score is just 14.67%. The figure represents that there is a feeling of insecurity and fear of displacement from their customary land

among the people who do not have direct involvement in tourism business or are not direct beneficiary of tourism. This is obviously not a good gesture for sustainable growth of tourism in the destination.

According to Karl Pearson's testing, the value of Chi-Square ( $\chi^2$ ) is 4.832 and the calculated value P is 0.089 at 2 degree of freedom which is less than the value of  $\alpha$  at 10% confidence level. This indicates that there is an association between the gender of the respondents and the expressions of them regarding the fear of displacement and dispossession from their customary land. Female respondents have more fear and panic about the displacement than male. Only about 10% female responded with no fear of tourism-induced displacement whereas almost 26% male had similar responses. The overall impression clearly appears against sustainable growth and development of tourism since non-entrepreneur community peoples are one of the major actors in the destination.

### **Community involvement in decision making**

The role of local people is very important for the development of tourism. Any tourism business going against the local community can never be sustainable. Involvement of local people is essential for policy and decision making in tourism destination basically to enhance the trust, confidence and ownership of local people over tourism's pros and cons. Rasoolimanesh and Jaafar (2016) have described three types of community participations in the context of tourism development and management: coercive participation, induced participation and spontaneous participation. Coercive participation is the lowest level of participation in policy, planning and decision making in which local residents have no power over the course of tourism development. They are involved just for the name sake and to get the quorum. Spontaneous participation is the strong involvement with enough power in policy, planning, decision making and management of the destination. Induced participation lies in between coercive and spontaneous in which local residents exercise power in some areas sometime. Community involvement in the issues of some social and community welfare ultimately develops the feeling of ownership and supportiveness for tourism related activities that eventually help them to make more responsible. Some issues like health, sanitation, safety, security, water, electricity, preservation/conservation of heritages, road, transportation and other infrastructures bring community and tourism industry together. Page (2007) argues that participation of local community in every aspect of tourism from planning and management decreases hostility with visitors and enhances hospitality. Therefore, togetherness of community people in planning and managing a destination is an important issue of socio-community welfare. Moreover, community wellbeing is one of the mandatory principles of sustainable tourism development as well.

In case of Pokhara, the situation of spontaneous community involvement (as used by Rasoolimanesh and Jaafar, 2016) is not so encouraging. Only 9.33% respondents admitted their participation in vital issues from policy formulation to implementation and 18.67% perceived their participation as coercive and for quorum only, mostly for cheering and clapping. Their views did not get any place in the past in any decision making process. They felt that they are being exploited in this matter. The locals with the opinion of induced participation is 24% and they admitted that they are rarely invited in tourism related activities but whenever invited, their views have been incorporated in decision, policy and management of tourism. Among the respondents, the highest number (i.e. 32% in total) perceived complete ignorance in tourism planning, development, implementation or management.

The value of Chi-Square Test ( $\chi^2$ ) is 2.114 and the calculated value of P is 0.715 which is higher than the value of  $\alpha$  at 10% level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted that means there is no any evidence of strong association between the gender of respondents and the views regarding the involvement of community in important issues while making decision. Statistically, about 28% respondents were eudaemonically (intrinsically) happy against 48% unhappiness level thereby leaving 24% for neutrality score. In nutshell, this important actor is not happy with the growth of tourism in the study area mostly due to the ignorance of their presence in policy, planning, decision or management in tourism related issues. This situation cannot be favorable for the quality and sustainability of tourism in the destination.

### **Community togetherness in fair, festivals and celebrations (FFC)**

Community's togetherness is not only necessary while making decisions in any important issues but also essential when organizing any fairs, festivals and celebrations. Involvement in these kinds of activities helps to develop the ownership of the celebrations that enhances hospitality and reduces hostility, otherwise the community remains indifferent in any activities related to tourism and development. Local non-entrepreneurs expect substantial share on infrastructure and amenities. Until local non-entrepreneurs perceive tourism growth positively, development or any other tourism issues, tourism industry cannot be a successful endeavor in any destination and cannot be sustainable in long run.

Street festivals, new year carnival, *holi* festivals, *dashain* festivals are branding celebrations of Baidam Lakeside Pokhara (the study area). However, negligible percent of local non-business community seems to be involved in fairs, festivals and other celebrations. Almost 27% respondents stated that they were completely ignored and around 50% respondents (who mostly belong to *AAMA samuha* and *NAARI samuha*) admitted that they are being used and exploited to some extent. Their presence was

just for number, formality and guest welcome; nothing in return for *samuha* (group) or community/social wellbeing. A negligible percent of respondents i.e. just 1.33% in total average stated that they were invited and their views were incorporated in tourism decision making programs and processes. Likewise, about 10% respondents (who are in executive committee of NAARI/AAMA *Samuha*), seemed to be positive and worked sometime in partnership with tourism entrepreneurs in some celebrations, festivals, infrastructural and park/palace/temple management issues.

Since the Chi-Square ( $\chi^2$ ) value in Likelihood Ratio is (5.902) higher than the calculated value of P (0.207) at 4 degree of freedom, there is no any evidence of significant association between the gender and the views in this connection. The happiness score for this variable is 25.33% in the happiness index with 46.34% and 28.33% unhappiness and neutral scores respectively. This indicates that local non-entrepreneurs are not psychologically / intrinsically happy as they should be happy eudaemonically with the growth and development of tourism. The situation demands more and quality participation and involvement of local people in various events, festivals and tourism issues from policy, planning to implementation and management for sustainable growth and development of tourism in the destination.

### **Perception of tourism growth**

Perception is basically the sensory interpretation of what we see, hear, touch, taste and experience. It's a functioning of how our brain choose, organize and interpret the input of sensory information. There is discourses of both bottom-up and top-down processing of perception in psychology. Bottom-up processing (Gibson, 1966) refers to the fact that perceptions are built from sensory input in real time and hence is a first-hand experience whereas top-down processing (Gregory, 1970) is how the interpretation of sensory information is influenced by our available knowledge, experience, expectations and thought and hence is schema driven. Perception is purely psychological system and unique to each individual. Therefore, growth of tourism is also viewed differently by different actors in a destination.

In case of Lakeside Baidam Pokhara, 16% respondents from community, who do not have any direct connection with tourism business but reside in the same vicinity, liked the development and growth of tourism 'very much' whereas almost 54% opined 'good' and almost 11% wanted to remain 'neutral'. Almost 19% respondents perceived tourism as a career of bad culture to the society and it contaminates the indigenous cultural norms, values, beliefs and behaviors and hence harmful to the entire community. Alcoholism, drug, gambling and sex are some of the social snags locals have perceived synonymous with tourism. Female respondents (about 79%) seemed more sensitive in this issue than male (almost 52%). Similarly, for about 16% respondents, tourism activities and related issues have not caused any disturbances so

far; for 52% respondents, tourism related activities have disturbed sometime whereas for 32% respondents, tourism related activities have really caused nuisance, problem and disturbances in their community.

As per the interpretation of Likelihood Ratio, there is an evidence of association with the gender in the community regarding the perception tourism growth and development. Male responses were more diverse and extreme than female for the reason that the value of Chi-Square ( $\chi^2$ ) is 8.013 and the calculated value of P is 0.091 which is less than the value of  $\alpha$  at 10% level of significance. None of the female respondents mentioned the two extreme points i.e. not very positive and not very negative. Their opinion remained between two extremes.

In the happiness index, the score for eudaemonic happiness for the growth and development of tourism in the destination is 70.66%, the highest among entire variables. The unhappiness and neutrality scores are 18.67% with 10.67% respectively. This clearly connotes that the locals are intrinsically happy and in favor of tourism growth in the destination but the present condition of disturbances and outcomes of alcoholism, drug, gambling and sex due to the unmanaged /uncontrolled tourism activities are reasons of annoyance and irritation and hence fostered hostility rather than hospitality.

#### **Impact on values, norms, beliefs, traditions, attitudes, behaviors and culture (VNBT-ABC)**

Every society is guided by its own value system, norms, standards, beliefs, traditions and cultures. They are the guidelines for the society. Traditions are handed down from one generation to another. However, they are susceptible to be infected from modernization and globalization. For Sharma (2010) tourism, however considered economic enterprise, is a complex mélange of the multiple interconnected frontages of human issues with diverse anthology of forms and facets in the society - some latent and some visible, some positive and some negative. Tourism has become a vehicle of cross-cultural phenomena like diffusion, integration, acculturation and assimilation in some societies like once shepherds resting place *Namchebazar* (Fisher, 1986) and once Hippie's freak zone Pokhara (Sharma, 2012) of Nepal.

As pre the statistical calculation of the local non-entrepreneurs' perception on VNBT-ABC in study area for this paper, the happiness score is exactly 16% against the unhappiness score of 72.89% in the index leaving just 11.11% for neutrality. Those who perceived tourism's impact on local community negatively expressed that tourism is oxymoron, consumes its socio-cultural attributes like VNBT-ABC and converts them into homogeneous component that eventually lose their social values and identity.

In statistical testing, Pearson's Chi-Square Test is not valid as the number of cells with expected count less than 5 is 33.3% for all five variables and hence the Likelihood

Ratio is considered. In all cases, the calculated value  $P$  at 2 degree of freedom is higher than the value of  $\alpha$  at 10% level of significance and hence the null hypotheses were accepted. It denotes that there is no any significant relationship between the category of respondents and the expressions of the perceptions of tourism impact on the stated socio-cultural variables i.e. traditions, culture and celebrations, beliefs, norms and values, attitudes, behaviors and hospitality service. The perception holds high value in terms of tourism growth and development. For sustainable growth and development of tourism, the destination must be able to retain its existing appeal and image otherwise rebranding of destination is necessary, as expressed by Sharma (2012), with new appeal, image and identity, and frequently switched appeal may reach the destination to Doxey's (1975) antagonistic stage.

### **Situation of CADS (Crime, alcoholism, drug & sex)**

There are some activities in tourism which have become inevitable parts and yet unwanted in the destination in larger perspective. Thailand, Philippines, Cambodia and Kenya for example do not want to legalize drug and sex and yet are renowned destinations for sex tourism in the world and will go on till the community stands against this. Society and Government are together in ethical issues in most of the countries but in some may have contra perspectives too like in the case of Thailand and Philippines. Tourism cannot thrive sustainably as expected when the destination actors like community, government and entrepreneurs cannot go hand-in-hand together.

For this paper, community (non-entrepreneurs) perception on CADS (crime, alcoholism, drug and sex) in the destination were analyzed under hedonic paradigm. About 84% respondents agreed to have tourism-induced negative implications in the destination associated with CADS i.e. crime, alcoholism, drug and sex. For a question asking about highest occurrence of tourism-induced activity in their society as per their experience and perception, 12% mentioned crime, 21.33% marked alcoholism, 6.67% ticked drug and 8% wrote sexual activities. The interesting fact is that about 12% respondents in total average admitted that high occurrence of CADS in their community. More than 29% respondents stated that the occurrence of CADS is frequent in Lakeside of Pokhara. Alcoholism seems the most common and highly occurred tourism induced-attribute in the destination as all the respondents (100%) admitted it. As per them, the growth of drug peddling and sex business are like husk fire in the destination. More than 86% respondents witnessed criminal activities like theft, mugging, burglary and pick-pocketing in the destination – with high frequency during off-season. Similarly, 98.67% respondents witnessed the incidents of alcoholism followed by affrays and disturbances, brawls and gang fight. Drug peddling is another issue in Lakeside, Pokhara. For more than 74% respondents, the drug peddling or smuggling has bothered them a lot. The most distressing fact for them is the use of street-children for drug trafficking in Lakeside Pokhara.

Sex business is illegal in Nepal and yet there is a substantial sex market operating underground in Lakeside Pokhara. More than 74% respondents claimed that sex market has been fostering underground in the community due to tourism business. According to Sharma (2013), some of the massage parlors also offer commercial sex and there were some incidents of pedophilia and use of street-children for drug trafficking in Lakeside Pokhara in the past.

In the index, the hedonic happiness score is 16.33% against 41.33% unhappiness score thereby leaving 42.34% share of neutrality. The happiness score indicates no negative impact of CADS in the destination whereas unhappiness score is to indicate the existence of negative impact of CADS in the community. Since the unhappiness score is significantly higher than the happiness count, there is perceptual problem of the tourism-induced CADS in the community. Such perception of the defilement of the revered socio-cultural norms and values of the community is not supportive for the sustainable growth and development of tourism.

### **Complaints against tourists' behavior and disturbance**

Attractions, Accommodations, Accessibility, Amenities and Activities are five important components to measure the attractiveness and popularity of any tourism destination. Therefore, every destination has some kind of fairs, festivals and celebrations depending on their nature, culture and social needs. Lakeside Pokhara also has some kind of celebrations like street festivals, new year celebrations etc. Besides, there are regular activities in pubs, dance bars, night clubs and fashion ramps as well. Some visitors, both domestic and international, feel free in the destinations and in the mood of recreation and relaxation who use alcoholic beverages and come out in the street, sometime in group too, in late night with a kind of unusual behavior, noises and commotions (Sharma, 2016).

In this study, the level of embarrassment and disturbance to the community was tried to measure and analyze due to the above mentioned activities and behaviors from the guests. Only 4% respondents stated that they were not disturbed yet due to tourism-induced activities whereas 96% affirmed that they have faced disturbances from such activities. The Karl Pearson's Chi-Square Test in this concerned proved not having significant differences of responses between the genders since the Chi-Square ( $\chi^2$ ) value is 2.369 at 3 degree of freedom and the calculated value P is 0.499 which is higher than the value of  $\alpha$  at 10% significant level.

From hedonic paradigm index, the happiness score is almost 16% against the unhappiness score of about 32% which happens to be 100% more than happiness leaving around 52% for neutrality. The difference between happiness and unhappiness is really substantial and apprehensive for sustainable development of tourism in the destination.

### **Support for heritages (Temples, monasteries and old forts & palaces)**

Heritages encompass history, culture and stage of civilization of any places. They are the assets of any destinations. In this study, heritages encompass old temples, monasteries, forts and palaces. Their preservation and conservation is very essential. They are one of the strong tourism products in the destination. Tourism industry sells those products and earns revenue and therefore the industry as a whole should play proactive role to preserve and conserve those heritages as a part of social responsibility. An attempt was done to explore the situation in this context in the study area. In total, 45.53% respondents agreed that heritages are getting some kind of assistance for conservation through tourism industry whereas 54.47% respondents claimed against it. In fact, none of the heritages except Kedareshwor Temple (excluded Hima Griha, the summer Royal Palace) in the study zone, found to be received financial assistance from tourism revenue (NTB/ entrepreneurs) for conservation and preservation. The value of Chi-Square ( $\chi^2$ ) did not markedly show the differences of perception between the genders.

This variable is to analyze the perception of locals hedonically. The index shows that 30.66% is the happiness score against 54.67% unhappiness thereby just leaving 14.67% for neutrality. The perception of non-entrepreneur local residents in this connection is relatively better than the result of many other variables though the happiness score is still lower than the acceptable base point of 40%. A slight contribution for heritages from tourism revenue can give better result in this regard.

### **Support for infrastructure (WHERS: Water / health, hygiene & sanitation / electricity / road / safety & security)**

Amenity is one of the important tourism components in any tourism destination. Though amenities help to add satisfaction to the visitors, they are very important to the local community as well. In this study, local non-entrepreneurs of tourism business were asked whether they have received any assistance from tourism industry to make, improve or repair any amenities like drinking water, health, hygiene, sanitation electricity, safety, security, road construction or maintenance. In total, almost 65% respondents mentioned 'yes' they are getting support but around 35% said 'no' they are not getting any support from tourism. The assistance getting in some areas like drinking water, health and hygiene as well as safety and security have made majority of people in the community happy but in other areas local people seemed to be expecting something more than what they have received till today from tourism.

In statistical testing, the null hypothesis is accepted i.e. the calculated value P is greater than the value of  $\alpha$  at 10 % significance level that denotes that there is no any specific relation between the category of the respondents and the perceptions about the support for amenities in the society from tourism industry. The hedonic happiness

score in the index for this variable is 35.47% (second highest out of 10 variables) against the unhappiness score of 64.53% thereby leaving 0% in neutrality score. Even a small support in local infrastructure and amenities seems to yield a good result in the community for positive impression of tourism and enhance visitors' hospitality in the destination that are necessary for the sustainable growth and development of tourism.

#### Impact on creative expressions (Dress, dance, food, songs, music & artifacts)

Culture is the identity of any society. It distinguishes society from others. It also makes society unique and special. Food, dress, song, dance and music are some of the important creative expressions of a society. Negative impact over them means a great loss in cultural identity and in a broader scale a loss of society's identity. Tourism is very often accused of being a despoiler of pristine ecology and bio-diversity, a destroyer of valued lifestyles and age-old cultures, and an exploiter of poor nations as a juggernaut, consuming one destination after another and then rolling on (Sharma, 2016). Therefore, an attempt was done in this study to know the perception of the society over the impact of tourism on socio-cultural expressions like dress, dance, food, songs, music and artifacts (DDFS-MA).

In dressing style, 76% respondents claimed that there is negative impact of tourism and 16% seemed positive over the impacts. Only 8% remained neutral and claimed that there is no impact of tourism over any dressing style of the community. Respondents found the younger generations highly vulnerable and susceptible to copy and adopt the outfits blindly from westerners that gives them awkward and unusual looks and get up. Similarly, songs, dance and music are likely to have high susceptibility to change and adoption. They influence younger generation very fast. Almost 67% respondents claimed to have outside impacts on their songs, dance and music (SDM). As per them, SDMs are gradually losing their original essence and are mixed and traded now. In contrary to this, 32% respondents were in favor of tourism saying that tourism has helped to preserve and protect the local songs, dance and music at least for the sake of stage performance for tourists. Almost negligible (1.33%) remained neutral with an opinion that tourism has no any impact over such social factors. In case of food and menu, 44% claimed to have positive impressions whereas 49.33% claimed that there is negative impact of tourism over food and menu of a society. Local and indigenous food is now almost replaced by western food and menu even in the families which do not have direct connection with tourism related business. They believed that the things and food items easily available around them force them to use those items whether it is for food or other things.

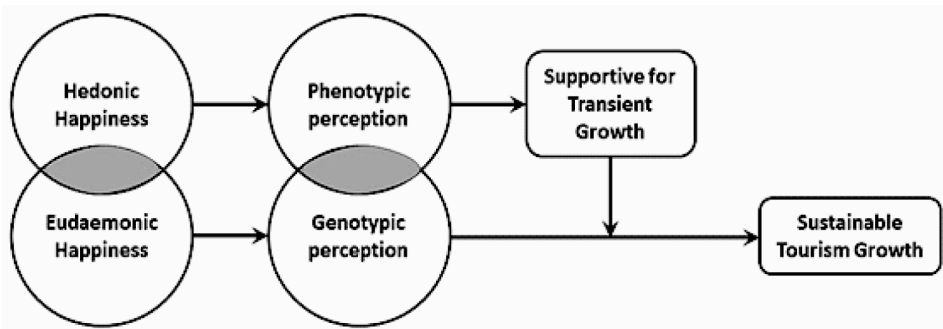
Statistically, there is no any significant relationship between the category of respondents and the expressions regarding the impact of tourism on creative

expressions except on songs, dance and music. Female respondents seem relatively more positive than male respondents in this case. More than 43% female claimed that the impact of tourism on songs, dance and music is positive whereas only 10.67% male were there with this view. Likewise, more than 78% male respondents found the impact negative on SDM whereas only 54.05% female were with this view. In the index, the happiness score for the impact on creative expressions is 30.67%, which is third highest among the ten variables, against the unhappiness score of 64% with only 5.33% neutrality score. There is perceptible and negative demo-influence on dressing style, songs, music, food habit and other artifacts like commercialized *Thanka* paintings, mass production of *curio* and *antique* items for souvenir shops.

**Conclusion**

Tourism has become a strong driver of socio-economic transformation in 21<sup>st</sup> century. Its implications are varied from latent to manifest, positive to negative, momentary to enduring, temporary to permanent, phenotypic to genotypic. Change is normally phenotypic and influenced by external stimulus but transformation is genotypic and mostly irreversible which comes from inside. The phenotypic change can be genotypic transformation in due course of time. Tourism’s impact and implications seem to be phenotypic initially. If proper planning and management is not initiated at this stage, it will eventually be genotypic with both possibilities – positive or negative transformation of society, culture, ecology or economy. This study is in a premise that sustainable development of tourism can be traced via stakeholders’ happiness parameters. The hedonic happiness is more subjective, external and ephemeral, and hence more phenotypic whereas the eudaemonic happiness is more psychological, intrinsic and enduring and hence more genotypic though there is a grey area in between hedonic and eudaemonic as well as phenotypic and genotypic as shown in the figure below (Fig. 2).

**Fig. 2: Happiness Sustainable Continuum**



The hedonic happiness mostly contributes to the phenotypic happiness which is

subjective and momentary that only supports for transient growth of tourism in the destination. To have intrinsic, enduring and psychological wellbeing and happiness among the stakeholders, the level of eudaemonic happiness score should be improved. Eudaemonic happiness is more genotypic and contribute more for sustainable growth and development of tourism. The hedonic as well as eudaemonic happiness scores of local non-entrepreneurs (i.e. people not directly thriving from tourism business) extracted from ten different variables with the help of their perception level of tourism-induced outcomes in Lakeside Pokhara of Nepal is not encouraging for sustainable development of tourism.

The study of sustainable tourism and its development from just an actor's perspective is obviously not complete and perfect but the outcome is believed to be very useful starting point for further exploration, analysis and synthesis for future researches in tourism. The sustainability of the destination (Lakeside, Pokhara) is at risk and is in threat from community (non-entrepreneurs) perspective. Out of five eudaemonic variables under analysis, only a single variable crossed the bar leaving others far behind the estimated minimum threshold of 40% (c/f Table 1).

**Table 1: Hedonic and Eudaemonic Happiness of Community People**

Research Variables	Happiness Scores	Result at 40% base	Neutrality Scores	Unhappiness Scores	Happiness Paradigm	Remarks
Displacement of Indigenous Community	18.67%	Unhappy	14.67%	66.66%	Eudaemonic	<b>Eudaemonic:</b> Variables = 5 Happiness = 1 (20%)  <b>Hedonic:</b> Variables = 5 Happiness = Nil (0%)
Involvement in Decision Making	28.00%	Unhappy	24.00%	48.00%	Eudaemonic	
Togetherness in FFC	25.33%	Unhappy	28.33%	46.34%	Eudaemonic	
Perception of Tourism Growth	70.66%	Happy	10.67%	18.67%	Eudaemonic	
Impact on VNBT-ABC	16.00%	Unhappy	11.11%	72.89%	Eudaemonic	

Research Variables	Happiness Scores	Result at 40% base	Neutrality Scores	Unhappiness Scores	Happiness Paradigm	Remarks
Situation of CADS	16.33%	Unhappy	42.34%	41.33%	Hedonic	<b>Conclusion:</b> Mostly unhappy however slightly happy intrinsically
Complaints against tourists' Disturbance	16.00%	Unhappy	52.00%	32.00%	Hedonic	
Support for Heritages	30.66%	Unhappy	14.67%	54.67%	Hedonic	
Support for Infrastructure (WHERS)	35.47%	Unhappy	0.00%	64.53%	Hedonic	
Impact on Creative Expressions (DDFSMA)	30.67%	Unhappy	5.33%	64.00%	Hedonic	
<b>Mean Average in total</b>	<b>28.78%</b>	<b>Unhappy</b>	<b>20.31%</b>	<b>50.91%</b>		

Source: Analysis of field survey data (2018)

Though three of the variables from hedonic hemisphere are very close to the bar, none of them could score the minimum estimated threshold. In total also, the average happiness score of all variable putting together is just 28.78% which is far below than the expected ceiling whereas the total average unhappiness score is 50.91% which is quite high and substantial to cultivate hostility in place of hospitality in the destination. This type of unhappiness level of indigenous community people not thriving from tourism in the society indicates that there was no any plan in the study area for sustainable tourism growth covering the twelve principles and three pillars (socio-cultural, economic and environmental) of sustainable development. It is obvious that the default growth of tourism like this in Lakeside Pokhara (Nepal) cannot be sustainable in long run, however, the happiness scores of other major stakeholders like tourism entrepreneurs, employees, visitors, activists etc. are yet to be analyzed. Whatsoever, the *laissez-faire* growth can transform the entire tourism industry into a sink of unsocial, unethical, inappropriate and irresponsible trading activities despoiling the destination's current image and brand of 'Pokhara as Pure as Paradise'.

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# Impact of COVID-19 on Pilgrimage Tourism: A Case Study of Lumbini, Nepal

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### Abstract

*The coronavirus outbreak is troubling the pilgrimage tourism industry in terms of economic, social, food, employment, and spiritual faith as pilgrimage activities are being stopped during the pandemic. The COVID-19 restriction and the nationwide lock-down has made it a very difficult time for pilgrims to stop the travel movement and this has made a big worry for government around the world. The pilgrimage tourism in Mecca, Vatican City, Israel, and India has been affected much by pandemic as gathering in the pilgrimage sites have been restricted since the year 2020. Lumbini one of the most important pilgrimage site, which is also a UNESCO-listed World Heritage site in Nepal, and has a significant contribution to the national economy. This research uses Lumbini, Nepal, the birthplace of Lord Buddha, to explore the impact of novel coronavirus on pilgrimage tourism and discusses the challenges experienced by Buddhist pilgrim, monks and nuns in different monasteries in 2020 and during the first quarter of the year 2021. The research is qualitative. The study is based on both primary and secondary data gathered through interviews with the related stakeholders and the review of several relevant secondary sources. The outcomes of the research illustrate that pilgrimage tourism has been extremely affected by coronavirus and lock-down*

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*causing multiple effects on social creation, economic and holy activities, and daily lives of the monks and nuns in Lumbini.*

### **Introduction**

Pilgrimage tourism is the oldest perception or unique art of traveling for perceiving spiritual insight and dedication (Kunwar & Ghimire, 2012). It is a journey resulting from religious causes, externally to a holy place, and internally for spiritual purposes for understanding or leisure purposes (Kunwar & Thapaliya, 2021). The first motives for the spiritual journey is the religious feeling that essentially require their followers to visit sacred places and help to facilitate religious events and festivals (Kunwar, 2017). It is estimated that around 300-330 million tourists visit the world's key religious sites generating approximately over US\$ 3.5 trillion worldwide every year (Daily Day, 2020 & UNWTO, 2011). The world's largest form of mass pilgrimage tourism takes place at the yearly Hajj pilgrimage in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, and the Kumba Mela, which is held every 12 years at Haridwar, Uttaranchal, and Prayag, Allahabad, India (Pathak, 2012). Thus, Mecca in Saudi Arabia, Vatican City, which is the home for the Pope, and the Centre of the Roman Catholic Church, Israel, etc. are the most popular pilgrimage destinations for pilgrim tourists in the world (Nhamo et al., 2020). Despite the significance, the tourism industry is also very complex to pandemic, terrorism, conflict, and economic crisis that have been affecting human lives since early ages. There are cases where communities and governments have damaged the different holy sites. The world's tallest Buddhist statue in Afghanistan destroyed by the Taliban in 2001 had led to a negative influence on pilgrimage tourism (Nyaupane, 2009). The existing COVID-19 pandemic is a health emergency that has brought uncertainty and severe effect on almost all the sectors all over the world. The major pilgrimage destinations have been forced to close are facing with socio-economic catastrophe in business due to the lack of pilgrimage visitors to the destination (Raj & Griffin, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic was first reported in Wuhan, the capital of Hubei province in December 2019 (Buckley, 2020). The coronavirus outbreak has created many challenges in the health and safety, global economy, and tourism industry. The strength of the infection has also confirmed that it is very difficult to control the spread of the virus easily (Raj & Griffin, 2020). The COVID-19 outbreak has restricted all possibilities of human life including the cancellation of pilgrimages, religious and festival events, and the places for the worship of devotion affecting the mental and emotional phenomena (Gautam, 2020). Thus, the COVID-19 pandemic has had destructive effects and fear on pilgrimage tourism and services. The popular destinations of all the faith i.e., Jerusalem, Vatican City, Mecca, India's Mahabodhi temple, and the Lumbini that attract millions of Jewish, Christina, Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist pilgrims yearly from all over the world has been affected by the

COVID-19 crisis (Ali & Cobanoglu, 2020). According to United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the unparalleled catastrophe has resulted in a \$ 2.7 trillion drop in revenue and job losses of 100 million in 2020 from the entire tourism industry. The number of international arrivals will be lower by 850 million to 1.1 billion in 2020 (Ali & Cobanoglu, 2020). The arrival of tourists for 2020 was worst than the downturn during the Maoist insurgency between 1996 to 2006 and the earthquake in 2015 together (Prasain, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in an 80.78% drop in tourist arrivals than the previous year (Prasain, 2021). The tourists visiting Nepal for pilgrimage or spiritual purposes have also been impacted during the COVID-19 pandemic (Magar, 2020). In context to Lumbini, there has been a loss of many pilgrims and visitors in the year 2020 in the major visiting time of the year (Magar, 2020). Most of the international events, conferences, and festivals were postponed with uncertainty due to the coronavirus lock-down in the country. Through the research, the author is going to explore the impact of COVID-19 on pilgrimage tourism in the context of Lumbini and discuss the consequence practiced by the religious monks, nuns and pilgrims during the coronavirus lock-down in the country.

### **Pilgrimage tourism in Nepal**

The term pilgrimage refers to the structured institution which comprises the socio-cultural behavior of an individual (Morinis, 1984). Pilgrimage tourism is an important type of tourism that includes the participation in a journey to some sacred places such as mosques, churches, temples, and monasteries for practicing a spiritual and delightful experience (Raj & Griffin, 2020). In context to pilgrimage tourism, the travel activity, traveling designs, transportation system choices, and socializing process are affected by the beliefs and devotion towards the destination (Haq & Medhekar, 2019). Indeed, the development of modern tourism and practice is often difficult to identify without the understanding of pilgrimage tourism (Kreiner, 2019). The pilgrimage tourism to the sacred and holy places such as Pashupatinath, Muktinath for Hindus, Lumbini for Buddhists, Jerusalem for Christians, and Mecca for Muslims created modern tourism in the society (Kunwar & Ghimire, 2012). According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), pilgrimage tourism signifies all travel outside the normal atmosphere for mystical purposes (Daily Day, 2020).

Pilgrimage tourism has played a vital role in preserving sacred sites, building cultural understanding, and offering outstanding opportunities for generating revenues (Daily Day, 2020). Nepal was officially a Vedic country, where Hinduism and Buddhism controlled the life of the people and have co-existed for centuries (Adhakari, 2020). Nepal is also a renowned destination for pilgrimage tourism due to its prominent, famous, and prideful historical and holy places. Pilgrimage tourism is dedicated to the ritual bath, listen to the speech (Dhamma Deshana), practicing

meditation, worshipping, visiting the temple and monasteries (Adhikari, 2020). In context to the pilgrimage tourism, it lies in the third main purpose of visiting Nepal after the holiday and mountaineering tourism receiving a large number of tourists in the country (Magar, 2020). It is estimated that 20% to 30% of the tourists travel especially from India, Thailand, Japan, Korea, Myanmar, Sri-Lanka, and European countries fall under the pilgrimage category (Subedi, 2015). The table below shows the number of tourists visiting Nepal for pilgrimage between the years 2015-2019.

**Table 1: Pilgrim's arrival in the last five years in Nepal**

Year	Arrival number	Percentage of pilgrims Out of total arrival
2015	14,996	2.78 %
2016	82,830	11 %
2017	141,633	15 %
2018	169,180	14.4 %
2019	171,937	14.36 %

*Source: Nepal Tourism Statistics, 2020*

### **Pilgrimage tourism in Lumbini**

Lumbini is considered a synonym of the world peace center and the most important destination for pilgrimage in the world since the time of Buddha (Kunwar & Ghimire, 2012). It is the central point for the Buddhist circuits and a place of devotion for the entire peace-loving people in the world (Kunwar & Ghimire, 2012). It is popular all over the world as a birthplace of Lord Buddha, inscribed on the World Heritage Site since 1997 because of the outstanding universal value deserved for the benefits of humanity (UNESCO, 2013). It is one of the main pilgrimage sites based on the life of Gautam Buddha for Buddhists (Nyaupane, 2009). The Buddhist pilgrimage site of Lumbini includes more than 200 historical, archaeological, and pilgrimage sites associated with the life of Buddha and Buddhism culture which has been attracting visitors from early periods (Rai, 2020). Among them, the Maya Devi temple is considered the heart of all the monuments at Lumbini (Nyaupane, 2009). The Lumbini Museum, Lumbini International Research Institute complex, and the Auditorium also known as peace hall is the home for the cultural zone in Lumbini (Nyaupane, 2009). The pilgrims and travelers of different culture reach to Lumbini for expressing their spiritual and magical feeling in several ways (Rai, 2020). Lumbini is one of the best places in the world for practicing meditation, mystical vacation, worship, listening to speech, chanting, and getting wisdom and knowledge (Sharma, 2019). According to Liro, Soljan & Bilska-Wodecka, there are three kinds of motivations for visiting pilgrimage centres in Krakow, Poland i.e., tourist motivations

(Sightseeing, prayer, pilgrimage), religious motivations (service, confession), and recreational motivations (walking, spending time with the family) (Kunwar & Thapaliya, 2021). In the context of Lumbini, the motivation of pilgrims is devoted to all three kinds of motivation for visiting the pilgrimage centre in Lumbini. Thus, Lumbini has been a major tourist attraction for Buddhist and non-Buddhist visitors due to its antiquities, monuments, socio-cultural practice, norms and values, belief and activities.

### **Review of literature**

Buddhism is one of the major world religions founded in the sixth century B.C.E. (Rai, 2020). Pilgrimage sites are visited to judge the religious history (Kunwar & Ghimire, 2012). The authentic history of Lumbini started with the pillar inscription of the famous Indian Emperor Ashoka (Kunwar & Ghimire, 2012). Lumbini is the only landmark of the Buddhist world which is one of the holiest places of the greatest religion that contain important evidence about the nature of Buddhist pilgrimage centres from as early as the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC (Rai, nd). Lumbini is an international pilgrimage destination that is authentic both in terms of visitor's experiences and object-related authenticity (Kunwar & Ghimire, 2012). Lumbini is the birthplace of the greatest, the brightest, and the light of peace, where the newly born Prince Siddhartha took his seven steps and expressed a significant message to the suffering humanity nearly two thousand years ago (Kunwar & Ghimire, 2012). Lumbini falls in the cultural category that refers to monuments, historical sites, philosophy, archaeological, ethnological values. The concept of travel in Buddhism is seemed to have started by the Buddha himself, where Buddha mentioned four important places i.e., Lumbini, Buddhagaya, Sarnath, and Kushinagar that should be visited with the emotion in heart and mind (Rai, 2020). As the birthplace of Lord Buddha, Lumbini has become a growing place of pilgrimage for the international Buddhist community and an important tourist attraction in Nepal (Bernard, 2019). The millions of devotees are eager to fulfill their lifetime dream of visiting major Buddhist pilgrimage sites mentioned by the Buddha (Rai, 2020). The visits of Chinese travelers brought more records out about Lumbini and this has to lead the World to know about Lumbini. Lumbini holds almost a similar position with Mecca in the context of pilgrims and tourists (Kunwar & Ghimire). Thus, Lumbini has been a destination for Pilgrimage since the time of Buddha (Nyaupane, 2009).

Tourism is one of the most vulnerable industries in times of crisis and even more so in times of pandemic, as it involves human movement between an origin and a destination (Gössling et al., 2020). In context to the impact of COVID-19, there has been severe effect in all the sectors but tourism is paying the highest price (Nair & Sinha, 2020). Tourism plays an essential role in the spread of disease between places; indeed, safety and health condition are the prime necessity in order to develop

tourism (Peric et al., 2021). Until, the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the outbreak of a pandemic is becoming more and more frequent because of globalization. The World has experienced different types of pandemics like SARS in 2002-2003, Bird Flu in 2009, MERS in 2012, Ebola in 2013-2014 and COVID-19 in 2019 (Gössling et al., 2020). The increasing spread of the coronavirus converts the perception of the tourists and their behavior of convincing them that travel is unsafe and there is risk consideration on international travels (Park & Reisinger, 2010).

Regarding this research, the author has reviewed the different literature about the global impact of COVID-19 on pilgrimage tourism through different academic journals. The different reports showed that the world had experienced a number of the leading pandemic in the past years, yet none had similar implications on the global economy as the COVID-19 pandemic (Gössling et al., 2020). The coronavirus pandemic is one of the biggest global economic crises since the 9/11 terrorist attacks that have affected most intensely on the tourism industry (Raj & Griffin, 2020). In context to the impact of COVID-19 on pilgrimage tourism in Lumbini, there is also different literature but that research is directly or indirectly related to the promotion of pilgrimage tourism and tourism development of Lumbini. The example includes research on pilgrimage tourism in Lumbini by Nyaupane (2009), Kunwar and Ghimire (2012), Ghimire (2014; 2015; 2017), Ghimire & Rai (2015), Khatri (2016), LDT (2014-2020), Sharma (2019), Rai (2020), UNESCO (2013). These works are related to Lumbini from a pilgrimage, cultural or religious point of view to promote pilgrimage tourism with development and commercial interests, but none of the academic work has been conducted in Lumbini highlighting the impact of the pandemic on pilgrimage tourism in the destination. A review of previous studies show the inadequacy of understanding of the relation between pandemic and its impact on pilgrimage tourism, at least in the context of Lumbini. Thus, the author has made an effort to study the impact of COVID-19 on pilgrimage tourism in the Lumbini area. This is going to be the first study on the impact of COVID-19 based on pilgrimage tourism in Lumbini.

### **Research objectives**

The main purpose of this research is to investigate the impact of COVID-19 on pilgrimage tourism in the context of Lumbini, Nepal. The following research objectives are prepared to guideline this research work;

- To investigate the perceptions of monks and nuns about the coronavirus pandemic and how Buddhism understands and defines the pandemic and the solution towards minimizing the pandemic according to Buddhism context.
- To examine the social, economic, and spiritual impact faced by people in Lumbini due to the coronavirus pandemic.

### **Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic**

It was in year 1968, the word coronavirus got discovered in the world (Dahal, 2020). Thus, it has been more than 50 years since the “coronavirus” got originated in the world (Ulak, 2020). The coronavirus crisis is not the first situation of health emergency in the world as numerous health crises were encountered in the past decades (Kunwar, 2021). The COVID-19 started from Wuhan city, Hubei province of China in December 2019 and spread globally at a horrible rate claiming more than 700 thousand lives all over the world (Buckley, 2020 & Ruiz Estrada et al., 2019). According to World Health Organization (WHO), “Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly disclosed virus causing moderate respiratory illness and medical sickness among people” (WHO, 2020). The WHO confirmed that people with cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illnesses (WHO, 2020). The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the coronavirus to be a public health emergency of international concern on 30th January 2020 (WHO, 2020). On 11th March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) stated it as a pandemic.

The first case of coronavirus was confirmed in Nepal on 23rd January 2020 in a 31 years old student who returned to Kathmandu from Wuhan, China on 9th January 2020 (Shrestha et al., 2020). The second case was found two months later on 23rd March who had traveled to Nepal from France via Qatar (Sharma et al., 2020). Nepal has already reported 672,871 cases till 21st July 2021, 636,402 of them have been recovered, 26,832 cases still active, and 9,637 dead were registered till now (World meter, 2021). Nepal went into the strict lock-down from 24th March 2020 to 21st July 2020, prohibiting domestic and international travels, broader closure and closure of the non-essential services in the first stage which was later alleviated on 11th June 2020 but as the cases rose steadily, Nepal announced the second lock-down on 20th August 2020 to 16th September 2020 (Sharma et al., 2020). Moreover, COVID-19 is a new normal word now adays. Nepal started to begin the first phase of the COVID-19 vaccination campaign from January 2021 and the Government of Nepal's National Development and vaccination Plan (NDVP) targets to vaccinate roughly 22 million population in Nepal (UNICEF, 2020). Nepal has been imposing the second wave of coronavirus lock-down from 29th April 2021 as the cases have been increasing day by day in the country (The Hindu, 2021).

### **Impact of coronavirus on global pilgrimage tourism**

Pilgrimages are considered one of the oldest forms of tourism (Mróz, 2021). Pilgrimage is a complex and changeable phenomenon composed of a set of mutual interactions of religious, secular, and natural factors occurring in the geographic space of pilgrimages (Cohen, 1992). According to United Nations World Tourism

Organization (UNWTO), approximately 330 million people visit the major pilgrimage sites worldwide every year creating around US\$ 18 billion in global revenue (Mróz, 2021). But the global pandemic caused by SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus has already affected more than 45 million pilgrim's journeys from 190 countries worldwide in the year 2020 (Mróz, 2021). Due to the second wave of the COVID-19, it is confirmed that the effects of the pandemic will have a long-term impact on the pilgrim's journey, culture, economy, social and psychological behaviors of people all over the world (Oxholm et al., 2020). Thus, this has led to the cancellations or interruption of religious festivals and events with severe negative effects on the pilgrimage tourism of different destinations. To put a scale to the cost and effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, a summary table with estimated damages and consequences for pilgrimage tourism is shown below,

**Table 2: Estimated damage and effects on pilgrimage destinations by COVID-19**

COVID-19/Where	Estimated losses during pandemic	Consequences
Varanasi, Kashi Vishwanath, Jagarnath Temple, India	Estimated loss of \$137 billion.	Slowdown in visitors' number and loss around 38 million jobs.
Mecca, Saudi Arabia	Estimated a loss of \$ 12 billion.	2.5 million visitors were affected
Indonesia	Estimated a loss of \$ 5.8 billion.	Visitors decreased by 89% in 2020.
Jerusalem, Israel	Damage of US\$1.16 billion.	4.3 million visitors were disturbed
Catholic Church, France	Deficit of US\$9.06 million.	5 million visitors were affected
Entire tourism industry with Pilgrimage Tourism, Nepal	Estimated loss of US\$ 282 million.	Nearly 2 million international visitors were affected.

*Source: Statista, 2021, Ali & Cobanoglu, 2020, Kumar, 2020 & xinhunet, 2020*

### **Impact of coronavirus on pilgrimage tourism in Lumbini**

The coronavirus pandemic has created an unexpected amount of uncertainty in the pilgrimage tourism of Nepal. The Visit Nepal 2020 campaign has prepared grand events in the various pilgrimage sites including Lumbini but the global outbreak has resulted in the cancellation of all events (Magar, 2020). Pilgrimage tourism is the second sector after mountaineering tourism, which has been impacted worst due to

the coronavirus lock-down (Magar, 2020). Due to the closing down of most of the pilgrimage sites, the hotels, lodges, transportation companies, tours, and travels and nearly one million people depending on the tourism industry are highly affected by the pandemic.

The coronavirus outbreak has resulted to close down the pilgrimage sites of Lumbini for the 8 months in 2020 impacting the arrival of many domestic and foreign tourists in the destination. In the previous year, Lumbini had seen growth in the arrival of visitors except the year 2015 when a devastating earthquake crushed in Nepal (Kunwar, 2021). The credit for development in the pilgrimage tourism goes to the effort of restoring the Lumbini Garden under the master plan, better accommodation, political stability, and increased promotional activities (Nyaupane, 2009).

Lumbini is the first and foremost most visited destination by foreigners and domestic tourists in the year 2019. According to the report from the Government of Nepal, about 1,779,086 travelers visited Lumbini in 2019 out of them, 78.76% were Nepalese, 11.51% were Indian and 9.73% were from other countries (Nepal Tourism Statistics, 2020). But, in the year 2020, Lumbini has lost more than nine hundred thousand tourists in the major visiting time of the year due to the travel restriction and lock-down in the country (Paudel, 2020 & Magar, 2020). According to the information from the Lumbini Development Trust, Information section only 279,927 travelers visited Lumbini in 2020 out of them, 70.47% were Nepalese, 16.24% were Indian and 13.29% were from other countries, which was 84.27% a smaller number of visitors in the year 2020 (LDT, 2020). Yet, the number of domestic tourists has increased after the post-COVID lock-down in 2020 (Onlinekhabar, 2020). The occurrence of the second wave of coronavirus outbreak in the country has resulted to impose a lock-down from 29th April 2021 disturbing the pilgrimage tourism in Lumbini in the major tourist season of the year. The table shows the country-wise tourist arrivals to Lumbini in the years 2019 and 2020.

**Table 3: Tourist arrivals to Lumbini in 2019 and 2020 (Country-wise)**

S.N.	Name of the Country	Visitor numbers in 2019	Visitor number in 2020
1.	India	204,824	37206
2.	Myanmar	30,791	9943
3.	Thailand	28,364	9555
4.	Sri-Lanka	47,507	4061
5.	China	21,269	2477

S.N.	Name of the Country	Visitor numbers in 2019	Visitor number in 2020
6.	South Korea	6145	1707
7.	Vietnam	8345	1511
<b>Total</b>		<b>347,245</b>	<b>66,460</b>

*Source: Nepal Tourism Statistics, 2019 & LDC, Information section, 2014-2020*

### **Methodology**

The research is based on a qualitative approach, where the author has examined to increase the knowledge on the current situation of COVID-19's impact on pilgrimage tourism in Lumbini. The research is made based on both primary and secondary data sources. The ethnographic research was used in the research where the author has the opportunity to observe and interact with the participants and study the circumstances of COVID-19 and its impact on pilgrimage tourism in Lumbini. The field visit was undertaken from November 25, 2020, to March 31, 2020, where the researcher has observed the issue of pilgrimage tourism in Lumbini and has conducted an unstructured interview with the monks and nuns from different monasteries and temples in Lumbini. The total number of respondents in this study was eight and they were selected based on random sampling in which only intended stakeholders were chosen. Each interview lasted on average about 15-20 minutes. The data collected during the interviews were recorded first and later translated into English, afterward evaluated and presented in the findings of the study. As the author is native, there was no restriction to interview with the related stakeholders. The questions were related to monk's and nun's perception on daily rituals during the COVID-19 lock-down and their thought on the socio-religious and economic impact on pilgrimage tourism in Lumbini, with the questions about the effect of coronavirus on personal lives and pilgrimage tourism. The pseudonyms are used to address the interviewee.

Likewise, the secondary data were obtained from published journals, articles, newspapers, and emerging media coverage sources for doing this research. The limitation of the research is that due to the coronavirus crisis, it was not possible to get access into the international monasteries in Lumbini therefore was difficult to get interviews with the monks and nuns of international monasteries during the period of field visit. It is also difficult to collect all the relevant information for the research because of the specific time frame.

### **Findings and discussion**

This portion highlights the main outcomes of the research and addresses the results from the research titled the impact of COVID-19 on pilgrimage tourism

in Lumbini. The research is based on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on pilgrimage tourism in Lumbini in accordance to Buddhism content, the response of monks and nuns towards coronavirus pandemic, the connection of COVID-19 to Buddhism, the different rituals, social activities done in the different monasteries in Lumbini to minimize coronavirus pandemic, the restrictions towards the social lives, livelihood and restriction towards entry in the monasteries, the effect on the arrivals of the pilgrimage tourism in Lumbini during the COVID-19 lock-down. Eight interviewees were participated in the interviews for the research. Among them are, a monk inside the scared garden, a monk at the Myanmar monastery, a monk at Canadian temple, a monk at an Indian temple, a monk at Cambodian temple, a professor from Lumbini Buddhist University, a nun from Nepalese temple, and a nun from Kathmandu monastery in Lumbini were interviewed. The impact of COVID-19 on pilgrimage tourism in Lumbini are discussed below:

### **Economic impact**

There are several factors such as livelihood of the people, economic growth, business activities, the behavior of people that are influenced because of the pandemic (Lee & Chen, 2011). The tourism industry is a fragile and insecure industry, which will take a longer time to return to normal as travelers need the confidence to travel (Ulak, 2020). The coronavirus pandemic has created long-term uncertainty, economic and social threats to the tourism industry in Lumbini (Kunwar, 2021). Within the literature, the author found that many researchers consider the coronavirus pandemic as the most challenging catastrophe that has impacted enormously on the livelihood of the locals creating frustration, fear, nervousness and a huge economic loss.

According to a monk around the scared garden in Lumbini, monk Vivekananda (Pseudonym) stated,

*"I was born in this place and till the moment of my life, I am not aware of any type of lock-down. Although Lumbini is one of the popular pilgrimage spot, the coronavirus pandemic has impacted every sector in Lumbini. This is the time where Lumbini is filled with many pilgrim tourists but there is no tourist at the moment. The COVID-19 has not impacted so much in my livelihood, daily ritual activities. Before the pandemic, the number of pilgrims visiting Lumbini was huge but the tourism activities are zero since the coronavirus pandemic started and there have been huge economic impact on local shops, souvenir shops, hotels and restaurants, and transportation sectors".*

Similarly, a Sri-Lankan monk named Thero (Pseudonym) expressed his thought as similar to above as,

*"The pandemic was also earlier in the time of Buddha. Buddhism says that the coronavirus pandemic is the result of human's destruction towards religious and spiritual activities. There was not any disturbance in our daily rituals and activities as*

*the COVID-19 pandemic has created an opportunity that we can relax and focus on spiritual activities but there has been a lot of economic impact on pilgrimage tourism in Lumbini since the lock-down started in March 2020”.*

The number of tourist arrivals in Lumbini has dropped significantly in recent years since the coronavirus outbreak. The thousands of tourists who visit Lumbini in May month every year for Buddha Jayanti has decreased and there were no tourist arrivals because of the coronavirus outbreak (Aninews, 2020). India is the first-highest source of tourists in Lumbini but in the recent years, Lumbini has been missing a large number of Indian tourists due to the global pandemic and national-wide lock-down imposed by the Government of Nepal (Aninews, 2020). The Chinese tourists who desired to visit Lumbini in March and April 2020 have cut their plan since the aftermath of an outbreak (Kunwar, 2021). This has resulted the cancellation of about 70% of the hotels booking in Lumbini by the Chinese groups during the peak season of the year in 2020 (Kunwar, 2021). The information collected from the Lumbini Development Trust, Information section also showed that the arrivals of international tourists to Lumbini was relatively low after February 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic and travel restrictions. As the traveler's movement for pilgrimage purposes was obstructed since the last year, pilgrimage sites are closed and businesses were completely shut-down, this has brought everything into silence in Lumbini.

The coronavirus infection is not only transmissible to human beings but has infected harshly the economic structure of the country (Ulak, 2020). In regards to the financial report of 2019-2020, Lumbini was one of the most visited places in Nepal with estimated income of 145,000 US\$ in the fiscal year of 2019-2020 but in the fiscal year of 2020-2021, Lumbini has suffered with huge financial losses as number of visitors were relatively low in the major visiting season of the year in 2020 (Kunwar, 2021). The tourist source projects like Gautam Buddha international airport at Bhairahawa and the international conference hall in Lumbini are expected to delay in operation due to the worldwide lockdown (Subba, 2020). Thus, the coronavirus pandemic has impacted the revenue of the Government and the livelihood of monks and nuns residing in Lumbini as they are fully interdependent on the donations and support from the international and local organizations for their daily maintenance and other ritual activities. The daily lives of the monks and nuns was much affected in Lumbini since the traveler's mobility was stopped.

### **Social impact**

The tourism industry needs to be safe and trouble-free to grow economically, socially, morally, and spiritually (Kunwar, 2016). The coronavirus has resulted in the closing down of the pilgrimage activities in Lumbini that has affected the socio-cultural formation and livelihood of locals in the area (Kunwar, 2021). The

international, regional and the local restrictions on movement of people has affected on the mass gatherings like cultural, heritage, religious events and ceremonies (Raj & Griffin, 2020). The lives of people can only be hassle-free when it is mentally and socially safe. But, during the pandemic, it is essential to focus on the health and security of people by ignoring unnecessary travel (Kunwar, 2021).

The above literature is supported through the opinion of a nun named Kusho from Rajkiya Buddha Bihar, Lumbini (Pseudonym) as,

*“Lumbini is a famous place for international and domestic tourism but because of the coronavirus lock-down, we have been facing a lot of troubles, frustration, fear in our daily lives as we have been locked inside the monasteries for a longer period. Our monastery is run through donations, funds, and foreign supports but because of the lack of tourists, we could not receive these supports now a days. The coronavirus and lock-down has not only impacted in our daily lives and rituals activities but also in the social lives of local people, businessmen, and residents. The authority had decided to re-open the monasteries now but we need to concern about the health and follow the safety measures such as people should be aware of the social distance, sanitizing hands, wearing masks to overcomes from the current situation”.*

Similarly, a nun named Kamesi (Pseudonym) in the Kathmandu monastery stated a similar opinion as mentioned above as,

*“According to Buddhism, coronavirus pandemic is a natural phenomenon which has also occurred in the past ages. There has been a lot of impact in Lumbini since the last eight months in 2020. It has created numerous effects on the lives of local people, cultural, religious activities, conferences, local business and lives of daily working people. The actual reason for the pandemic is because people are not engaged in religious, worship and spiritual activities. The first and foremost important thing is to protect oneself and save others. People have to follow the health protocols to reduce the transmission from coronavirus. There are ongoing worship activities since the last nine months in the Bodhi television, Lumbini. I have been praying to save the world against COVID-19. People who believed in Buddhism and they do call me to pray for them and in return, they were recovered from coronavirus”.*

It is proved from various studies that the people who were isolated for a longer period are very much likely to develop a wide range of symptoms of mental stress and disorder (Shivakoti, 2021). In these days, people are facing a considerable level of fear and worry due to the uncertain lock-down by the Government of Nepal and the long-time framework for complete eradication of virus to come back to the normal living (Shivakoti, 2021). The travel restriction was imposed as a strategy by the Government of Nepal to control the spreading of COVID-19 infection but it has adversely affected on the lives of the people inside the monastic zone in Lumbini. In the pilgrimage

site of Lumbini, there has been anxiety in the lives of the monks and nuns as they have remained isolated inside the monasteries for a longer period that has created mental effect such as fear, worry, pain, frustration, nervousness among them. The monasteries in Lumbini have been closed for a longer period which has interrupted all the social activities in the monastic zones in Lumbini. In-fact there has not been any social and religious ceremonies celebrated in the monastic zone in Lumbini since the lock-down started in March 2020. It has hampered the domestic tourism as the pilgrimage sites are closed bringing down the loss in revenue. The number of international and domestic tourists who visited Lumbini in January 2020 were huge but there was decline in the number of visitors afterward. These consequences brought major social, economic impact on national economics, individual livelihood and public spirit.

The study shows that the sudden economic fall, unemployment, economic suffering had led to significant rise in the number of people committing suicide (Paudel & Subedi, 2020). Thus, the lives of people have been affected physically, mentally, socially, financially, culturally in Lumbini. It is also declared by Kusho from Rajkiya Buddha Bihar, Lumbini (Pseudonym) that the daily lives have been stuck inside the monastery after the enforcement of lock-down in the country. Indeed, it is the primary duty of the authorities to provide morale and health counseling to the affected to reduce the impacts on their health.

### **Impact on spiritual activities**

In the decade, the world had experienced several major epidemics and pandemics but none of them had such devastating implications in the global economy as the current COVID-19 pandemic (Gössling et al., 2020). The COVID-19 outbreak has been considered as the most challenging calamity that has brought the harshest disturbance in the economy since the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War (Kunwar, 2021). The collective gatherings of spiritual pilgrim act as a major epicenter for spreading coronavirus around the world (Raj & Griffin, 2020). This has resulted in the closure of temples, mosques, churches and monasteries in the country. A professor from Buddhism University Mr. Sakya (Pseudonym) stated his opinion way as,

*“According to Buddhism, Pandemic is like a World War which creates insecurity to human lives and animals. In the modern era, there is no respect for each-others, people are money-minded, unfriendliness to animals. Thus, the world has suffered from a pandemic at the moment. We have been doing different types of religious activities and have been praying every day to save the world from the pandemic. The pandemic had made everything into silence, monasteries sites are without the pilgrimage, most of the monks and nuns had stranded in different parts of the country, flight services, transportation, hotel, and restaurant are closed for several months, cultural activities,*

*religious festivals, ceremonies are interrupted and the tourism sector in Lumbini is impacted worst by the pandemic”.*

In the same way, a monk from the Myanmar temple named Venerable Sayado Venkovita (Pseudonym) shared his opinion similar to above as,

*“According to Buddhism, coronavirus is a penalty to human beings and animals because there is more violence, jealousy, miser now a days and the pandemic did occur in the Buddha’s ages. The pandemic is like a World War that has impacted all over the world and especially on religious activities like chanting, religious festivals and ceremonies in Lumbini. The pandemic has impacted a lot in the different sectors and tourism activities in Lumbini. The country had to bear huge losses during eight months in 2020. To reduce the pandemic crisis, we are engaged in different rituals activities, and worships”.*

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted on the tourism sector and caused major disruption on the pilgrimage tourism as borders are closed, airlines are being grounded and movement of people is stopped (Raj & Griffin, 2020). The Buddhist monks have considered the coronavirus pandemic as similar to World War that had impacted the economic, social, cultural, and physical aspects. It has impacted socio-cultural activities, events, festivals, rituals, national and international conferences. The tourism sectors such as hotels, restaurants, and transportation have been hit hard since the coronavirus outbreak (Shivakoti, 2021). The current pandemic has brought pilgrimage tourism to a coma. The mass gathering events through Hajj pilgrimage in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, Christianity pilgrimage in Jerusalem, Israel and Buddhist Pilgrimage in Lumbini, Nepal has been suffered much. This has hampered on the spiritual tourism in Lumbini as religious sites are shut down since the pandemic started. Most of the outcomes of this research and academic literature from different journals also clear up that pilgrimage tourism in Lumbini has been affected a lot since the outbreak of coronavirus. The coronavirus pandemic has caused multiple effects on the pilgrimage and mass gatherings activities in Lumbini such as interruption in the cultural activities, international conferences, development projects, economic activities, social artifact and the livelihood of residents in monastic zone.

The different literature and opinion on Buddhism text also clarify that the pandemic like coronavirus is considered as a World War that has interrupted on the mass gathering events causing huge economic losses. Thus, to resume the pilgrimage tourism in Lumbini after the post-COVID-19, the formulation of effective plan and policy is needed.

### **Impact on behavior and travel pattern of pilgrims**

The global tourism industry has practiced much crisis in the past like the earthquake, Ebola, Tsunami, terrorist attack generating great threat in the destinations (Maditinos & Vassiliadis, 2008). The current COVID-19 pandemic has

caused devastating effects on the tourism industry due to the interruption in tourism activities and shutting down of tourism destinations (Jamal & Budke, 2020). Within the literature, the author found that many researchers and practitioners consider pandemic as a hindrance to the tourism industry that impact on the behavior of travelers for longer period. The tourism industry in Lumbini is also tremendously affected by the coronavirus lock-down since the year 2020. According to the monk in a Singapore monastery named Lama Tashi (Pseudonym) stated that,

*“As we are spiritual in nature and peace lovers, the coronavirus lock-down was not a problem for us. It was a peaceful moment inside the monastery for meditation. But, for the pilgrimage tourists who want to come to Lumbini to get knowledge on spiritual, it is a difficult situation. The current situation has made a difficult situation that people need to fear from one other and the values, faith and believes on Buddhism is difficult to understand because of the current situation. The current coronavirus pandemic has impacted all over the world and it has also impacted inside the monastic zone of Lumbini as everything was shut down since the last eight months in 2020. The pandemic is also mentioned in Buddhism text and had occurred in the early ages and the solution for these forms of a pandemic is through worship, praying, and chanting and we did the same activities during the coronavirus lock-down. There was no any disturbance in the daily ritual activities and ceremonies in the monastery during the lock-down”.*

Similarly, a monk in a Canadian monastery named Venerable Thilding (Pseudonym) stated his opinion in the way as,

*“The coronavirus pandemic is a cause of the human’s terrible behavior and activities in the past days, which has impacted a lot on the travel behavior of pilgrims. According to the Buddhism text, pandemic had occurred in the period of Buddha and the current pandemic is because people have been sacrificing animals and are not engaged in spiritual activities nowadays, which has resulted in the coronavirus pandemic. The pandemic had occurred in the period of Buddha impacting a lot to the people and property. We have been doing daily worships and ritual activities to minimize the coronavirus pandemic. Tourism activity in different sectors is also impacted a lot during the peak season of the year”.*

The coronavirus crisis has brought changes in the behavior of pilgrimages and their motivation to travel for the next few years. A report by Baker (2015) suggests that travel activities influence disease outbreak and helps the increase of such diseases (Hollingsworth et al., 2007). Travel for pilgrimage purposes show more meaningful mobility such as railways, airways, land transportation and the use of such system and services contribute the spread of diseases (Dahal. 2020). This has impacted the mobility of pilgrimage tourism including the tourism system. The recovery of pilgrimage tourism will be slow and difficult as the pilgrimage sites are still closed due to risk of getting infected with COVID-19 and travelers have chosen to stay

home rather than travel. Thus, the health and safety has challenged to change in their behavior to travel. There have also been important debates over pandemic and its impact on the travel mobility and vice versa (Dahal, 2020). The popular pilgrimage sites for pilgrims in the world has been interrupted by coronavirus and the destination is without pilgrims at the moment. The main attractions in Lumbini have been closed for a longer period of time and there is no any motility of religious travelers at the moment in Lumbini. This shows that there has been the change in the travel patterns of the traveler's despite of their willingness to visit Lumbini in the major visiting time of the year. Thus, online worshipping need be practice instead of offering physical ritual activities in monasteries in Lumbini.

The major research and findings of this study confirms that the pilgrimage tourism in Lumbini has been affected adversely by the pandemic causing number effects on the social system, economic, cultural, religious activities, health and living of the resident in Lumbini. The eight of the respondents of the research also responded that there have been enormous loss on the pilgrimage tourism in Lumbini since the lockdown started in March 2020. However, the first concern is to follow the rules and regulations of hygiene protocol to prevent from the infection of the pandemic.

### **Conclusion**

The study estimated the impact of COVID-19 on pilgrimage tourism in Lumbini, Nepal using the intended stakeholder's opinions. The result showed respondents were agreed that pilgrimage tourism in Lumbini has been adversely affected due to the COVID pandemic resulted into unprecedented economic crisis, social impact, cancellation of spiritual events, rising unemployment, change in travel pattern, uncertainty, and mental stress. The monasteries sites in Lumbini were turned into silence, monks, nuns and pilgrims were stranded in the different parts of Nepal, daily lives were disturbed because of the lack of donations and supports in monasteries, cultural activities, international Buddha Jayanti was affected. The research found that the pandemic like coronavirus had occurred in the period of Buddha but was eliminated with time through chanting, praying, and worship. Thus, respondents were agreed that to reduce the impact of coronavirus, people need to engage in spiritual activities i.e., chanting, worshipping, and praying. Pilgrimage destinations like Lumbini will also have to implement safety and hygiene protocols to re-open the pilgrimage sectors as health and safety is the top priority now. The significance of this study is the findings of the research that will help the authorities to formulate health and safety protocols to revive the pilgrimage tourism in Lumbini and upgrade the economic activity after the post-COVID-19. Thus, instead of an international destination, domestic travel will be preferred and the recovery is predicted to start from the domestic tourism for at least two or three years after the post-COVID-19 in Lumbini.

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# Journal of Tourism & Adventure

## Adventure Tourism in Nepal Himalayas: Environmental Effects

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### Article

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### Abstract

*Nepal is known as an ideal destination for adventure tourism with its diverse natural attractions and cultural heritage. However, The Nepali Himalayas is highly vulnerable to human influenced change, occurring at local and national scales. The objective of this manuscript is to assess the overall situation of the adventure tourism activities in the Nepali Himalayas and various environmental effects related to it. The methodology will be literature review with an evaluation of the findings. The collected data from publications of the Nepal Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation is organized and analyzed in a descriptive way where some of the data were presented in tabular form using a simple statistical tool. At the end, the manuscript will suggest the establishment of educational programs focused on different target groups and essential policy measures for local stakeholders and governmental bodies to reduce adverse environmental impacts of adventure travels.*

### Keywords

*Himalayas,  
adventure tourism,  
environment,  
trekking &  
mountaineering,  
trail degradation*

### Introduction

Adventure tourism is one of the fastest-growing categories of the global tourism industry (ATTA, 2020), as it offers novel experiences to travelers and development opportunities to countries. According to the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA, 2018), adventure tourism

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is a trip that includes at least two of the following components: involvement in physical activity, engagement with the natural environment, and culturally immersive experience that interacts with local residents. Activities incorporating these elements and usually presenting physical challenges provide travelers with “high levels of sensory stimulation” (Muller & Cleaver, 2000).

As the understanding of ‘adventure’ varies depending on how individual travelers like to shape their own experiences, adventure tourism is a broad term. Adventure tourists have their own cultural, physical, and geographic comfort zones. Expectations from outdoor activities, levels of skill, self-sufficiency, likes, dislikes, mental attitude involved, and equipment ownership changes. The confines of adventure tourism are blurred as there is no definitive distinction between adventure and non-adventure. However, the main adventure travel activities are widely accepted such as climbing (mountain/rock/ice), trekking, abseiling, sea kayaking and whitewater kayaking, skiing and snowboarding, caving, ballooning, skydiving and parapenting, mountain biking, diving and snorkeling, surfing and sailboarding, snowmobiling and off-road driving, heliskiing, safaris, rafting, and so on (Buckley, 2006).

In this paper, adventure activities in Nepali tourism industry and their adverse effects on Himalayan environment will be investigated. The paper will begin with an overview of related data showing the growth in tourism sector in the country. The main focus will be on the the adventure activities such as trekking and mountain climbing in Nepali Himalayas. Next, environmental degradation in adventure tourism destinations especially in the mountain regions will be considered through the empirical findings from previous studies in literature. Finally, the manuscript will provide concluding remarks, whereby the benefits of implementing educational programs and policy measures in highly visited adventure travel destinations will be underlined, with respect to its influences on the maintenance of Nepal’s natural heritage.

### **Adventure tourism in Nepal Himalayas**

Nepal represents the most popular destinations for adventure tourism of different types in Asia-Pacific region (Nepal, 2016). Nepal’s tourism sector has experienced exceptional growth in the last years due to its abundant possibilities of attracting tourists with diverse natural and cultural heritage and unique geographical features in the country. Tourism is a resource of relatively easily generated national income as it can be promoted and developed with minimum investment. Additionally, it is the main contributor of foreign income earnings and is a driving force of economic development in Nepal. Furthermore, it increases the employment in many tourism related sectors such as accommodation and transportation. It offers job opportunities in as adventure destinations located among isolated, subsistence populations and

improves the living standard of residents. With adventure travel being fundamental for Nepal's economic development, the Nepalese government upgraded its adventure travel objectives recently.

Adventure tourism is going to remain popular as long as human body creates adrenaline. There are around 100 some various kind of applicable adventure tourism activities around the globe. Since there is always room for improvements, on one hand we can improve the varieties on the other hand we can extend the sharing age group. Under the light of technical advancements and innovative approaches to the subject we can keep adventure tourism always up-to-date. In the case of Nepal, there are only a few adventures activities in mind although there are more than a dozen such activities are available for whole family with various age group and gender.

Nepal reached one million tourists arrivals in 2018 and maintained similar level of tourist attraction in 2019 (Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation 2020). The number of tourist arrivals and its growth rate are presented in the Table 1. The downturn in 2015 was due to Gorkha Earthquake and unofficial barrier along the Nepal-India border. However, numbers soon returned to their previous levels which imply growth prospects of tourism industry in the country.

**Table 1: Tourist arrival and average length of stay, 1994-2019**

Year	Total		By air		By Land		Average Length of Stay
	Number	Growth Rate (%)	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
1994	326,531	11.2	289,381	88.6	37,150	11.4	10.00
1995	363,395	11.3	325,035	89.4	38,360	10.6	11.27
1996	393,613	8.3	343,246	87.2	50,367	12.8	13.50
1997	421,857	7.2	371,145	88.0	50,712	12	10.49
1998	463,684	9.9	398,008	85.8	65,676	14.2	10.76
1999	491,504	6.0	421,243	85.7	70,261	14.3	12.28
2000	463,646	-5.7	376,914	81.3	86,732	18.7	11.88
2001	361,237	-22.1	299,514	82.9	61,723	17.1	11.93
2002	275,468	-23.7	218,66	79.4	56,808	20.6	7.92
2003	338,132	22.7	275,438	81.5	62,694	18.5	9.60

Year	Total		By air		By Land		Average Length of Stay
	Number	Growth Rate (%)	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
2004	385,297	13.9	297,335	77.2	87,962	22.8	13.51
2005	375,398	-2.6	277,346	73.9	98,052	26.1	9.09
2006	383,926	2.3	283,819	73.9	100,107	26.1	10.20
2007	526,705	37.2	360,713	68.5	165,992	31.5	11.96
2008	500,277	-5.0	374,661	74.9	125,616	25.1	11.78
2009	509,956	1.9	379,322	74.4	130,634	25.6	11.32
2010	602,867	18.2	448,8	74.4	154,067	25.6	12.67
2011	736,215	22.1	545,221	74.1	190,994	25.9	13.12
2012	803,092	9.1	598,258	74.5	204,834	25.5	12.16
2013	797,616	-0.7	594,848	74.6	202,768	25.4	12.60
2014	790,118	-0.9	585,981	74.2	204,137	25.8	12.44
2015	538,970	-32	407,412	75.6	131,558	24.4	13.16
2016	753,002	40	572,563	76	180,439	24	13.4
2017	940,218	25	760,577	81	179,641	19	12.6
2018	1,173,072	25	969,287	82.63	203,785	17.37	12.4
2019	1,197,191	2.05	995,884	83.19	201,307	16.81	12.7

*Source: Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (2020)*

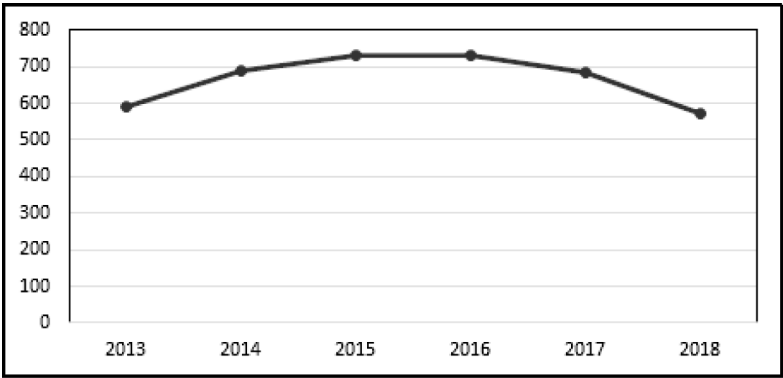
Nepal earned foreign currency equivalent to NRs 75,808.56 million from tourism sector in 2018/19. Gross foreign currency earnings through this sector amount to NRs 42,736.91 million in the first six months of current fiscal year 2019/20 (Table 2). Annual foreign currency earned per person shows a decreasing pattern after the year 2015 with the continual increase in number of tourist arrivals in Nepal (Figure 1). The sudden drop in the number of tourist arrival in 2015 was due to the negative effect of the earthquake and the obstruction at the Nepal-India border.

**Table 2: Gross foreign exchange earnings from tourism by fiscal year, 2000/2001-2019/2020**

Fiscal Year	Total Earnings ( Net Received )			%Change in US\$
	NRs.( million)	Annual Average Exchange Rate	US\$ (million)	
2003 / 2004	18,147.4	-	245.9	62.9
2004 / 2005	10,464.0	71.76	145.2	-41.0
2005 / 2006	9,556.0	72.03	132.1	-9.0
2006 / 2007	10,125.0	70.19	143.6	-8.7
2007 / 2008	18,653.0	64.72	286.9	99.7
2008 / 2009	27,960.0	76.58	363.7	26.8
2009 / 2010	28,139.0	74.24	377.5	3.8
2010 / 2011	24,611.0	72.07	340.4	-9.8
2011 / 2012	30,703.8	81.02	379.0	11.3
2012 / 2013	34,210.6	87.96	388.9	2.6
2013 / 2014	46,374.9	98.21	472.2	21.4
2014 / 2015	53,428.8	99.49	544.1	15.2
2015 / 2016	41,765.4	106.35	392.7	-27.8
2016 / 2017	58,526.9	106.21	551.0	40.3
2017 / 2018	67,094.6	104.37	642.9	16.7
2018 / 2019	75,808.56		670.6	4.3
2019 / 2020*	42,736.91		375.7	
* 1st 6 month				

*Source: Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (2020)*

**Figure 1: Annual foreign exchange earnings per person, 2013-2018**



*Source: Own construction*

Nepal's adventure tourism market is dominated by land-based adventure activities, such as mountaineering subdivided into trekking and mountain climbing (Beedie and Hudson, 2003). The numbers representing trekking and mountaineering are illustrated in Table 3. The projection of earthquake in the numbers is evident again. The demand for trekking and mountaineering substantially drops in 2015 when climbing bans are prevailing, then continually surges as the tourism industry recovered.

Apart of mountaineering, other popular and established adventure tourism activities includes white water rafting, air adventure sports mainly represented by paragliding and skydiving (Wengel, 2019). Other established activities are kayaking and Jungle safaris (Aryal, 2019). Skiing and mountain biking, canyoning and stand-up-paddle boarding, as well as zip-flying and bungee jumping are other emerging adventure activities in Nepal (Wengel, 2020).

**Table 3: Annual trekking and mountaineering numbers for Nepal, 2006-2019**

Year	Trekking& mountaineering	%	Total
2006	66,931	12.7	383,926
2007	101,320	19.2	526,705
2008	104,822	21.0	500,277
2009	132,929	26.1	509,956
2010	70,218	11.6	602,867
2011	86,260	11.7	736,215

Year	Trekking& mountaineering	%	Total
2012	105,015	13.1	803,092
2013	97,309	12.2	797,616
2014	97,185	12.3	790,118
2015	9,162	1.7	538,970
2016	66,490	8.83	753,002
2017	75,217	8.0	940,218
2018	187,692	16.0	1,173,072
2019	197,786	16.52	1,197,191

*Source: Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (2020)*

### **Environmental effects of adventure tourism**

There are several tourism-induced environmental problems in the Nepali Himalayas. The large influx of visitors in some mountain destinations has resulted in the accumulation of garbage left behind by trekkers and mountaneers including food cans and wrappers, bottles, empty oxygen cylinders, spent batteries and ropes. These materials increases stress on environment by posing disposal problems. Trail erosion caused by increased trekking traffic is another adverse impact of adventure travel activities. Rapid population growth and the consequent exploitation of resources further contributes to destruction of forests and expansion of agricultural lands.

### **Trail deterioration**

Various studies have shown that physical impacts on hiking trails caused by trekking are tread widening, incision, loss of vegetation cover multiple treads, muddiness, soil erosion on the tread surface, soil compaction, proliferation of informal trails, and the results of various depreciative behaviors such as littering and cutting of trail switchbacks (Nepal, 2004). Biological impacts contain vegetation trampling and degradation, forest thinning, decrease in biodiversity, wildlife disturbance, habitat fragmentation and introduction of exotic species. Furthermore, disposal of waste along the trail may pollute surface and groundwater. Formal and informal recreational trails contributes to forest degradation in urban areas and impacts tree structure. Therefore, management of trail networks especially in areas of high conservation value is highly important (Pickering & Norman, 2017; Ballantyne & Pickering 2015).

Trail impact features are roughly grouped into five categories consisting of vertical, lateral, structural, wetness-related, and others. There is a strong correlation between

trail degradation and tourist use. Apart from intensive use by tourists, there are other factors causing trail degradation such as altitude, gradient, vegetation, soils, landslides, and high relief, as seen by the degradation in lesser used trails (Nepal & Nepal, 2004).

Mutana and Mukwada (2018) concluded that decisions about trail maintenance should consider which sections are crowded, which are in a critical state of damage, and the site-specific problems. This involves effective policies aiming for tourist and trail management. For example, when tourist management policies control number of visitors and mobility within the protected area, alternatives for opening new routes or closing crowded routes should be explored.

### **Solid waste accumulation**

The generation and accumulation of solid waste is one of the major threat to environment in mountain destinations which attracts high number of tourists. Garbage including plastics, glass bottles, tins, foil, batteries, tents by trekkers and climbers was so substantial that Bishop (1988) called the Nepalese Himalayas the 'highest junkyard on earth'. The study of Lama and Sherpa (1994) estimated that an average trekking group of fifteen people generated about 15 kg of non-biodegradable, non-flammable waste in ten trekking days.

There are other factors causing the disposal of human waste directly into rivers and streams such as the water pollution from toilets that are located close to streams and drinking water sources, the use of chemical soaps, and the washing of dishes and clothes (Huddart & Stott, 2020). A study found that disposal of glass, metal, and plastic is not carried out correctly in the Sagarmatha National Park (Manfredi et al, 2010). Particularly, floods in the rainy season increase the possibility of water contamination by burning or disposal in open dumps near the watercourses.

The accumulation of solid waste in mountainous regions exacerbated by inadequate disposal sites, waste management authorities, and infrastructure to contain waste produced by expedition travelers in these areas. Environmental impacts of the waste disposal along the trails are mostly undermined by visitors and locals. Large piles of waste remains unnoticed by the average tourist, as it is often hidden in holes around the trails or base camps (Kaseva & Moirana, 2010; Kuniyal, 2002).

Waste practices, environmental concern and knowledge sociodemographic and travel-related characteristics may differ among travelers. In improving awareness about waste issues, implementing educational programmes with specific focus on different tourist types may be more sustainable (Poudel and Nyaupane, 2017). Studies have shown that structured educational programme could lead tourist behaviors to become more environmentally responsible (Orams, 1997). Thus, educational measures may play a fundamental role in advancing the overall waste situation in

sensitive mountain areas by informing travelers on the consequences of their waste disposal practices.

Cullen (1986) proposed several rules to be implemented by authorities to deal with the expedition garbage pollution. These are the establishment of disposal method for each site, continuing checks on garbage disposal according to prespecified disposal time, the inclusion of a refundable levy for ecological protection in climbing payments, authorization to headquarters staff for enforcing regulations.

### **Concluding remarks**

Unique natural features, including the highest peak in the world, biodiversity, and natural landscapes, have made the Nepali Himalayas a major tourist destination for adventure activities. Thus, the tourism industry has a significant role in ameliorating economic conditions and in capturing a big share in national revenue. However, major growth in tourist arrivals in destinations of adventure tourism has imposed environmental risks in these areas. This paper intends to examine the impacts of adventure tourism in Nepali Himalayas and provides a regional perspective on assessing the management of trail erosion and solid waste in terms of policy implications in protected areas of Nepal.

There is a lack of awareness among adventure tourists about the potential burden of their waste disposal attitudes to nature in mountains and trekking trails. Tourism industry leaders and governmental bodies have begun to address issues concerning the adverse impacts of the tourism sector. Furthermore, relevant policies have been developed by national governments to offset the damages associated with adventure activities. Yet, implementation of these policies has not been successful in reducing given the complexities involved. For accurately determining the effects of tourism activities a more systematic and experimental impact assessment on various types of landforms is needed. Further research on the issue should be conducted in order to minimize damages to the ecosystem. The educational programs and policy actions need to be considered as a collaborative effort between various players in the tourism industry. Government agencies, tourism operators, and local people must cooperate in protecting the ecosystem to achieve a sustainable environment condition in Nepali Himalayas.

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# Sharia Compliance Implementation Among Hoteliers in Klang Valley, Malaysia

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### Abstract

*Sharia compliance hotel has been created to cater to Muslim guests as demand and awareness for Islamic products and services increased. This innovative development can be found in countries where Muslim residents are the majority like Malaysia and Indonesia. However, there is a limited of study on the sharia compliance hotel acceptance among hoteliers particularly in Malaysia. Thus, the main purpose of the study is to examine the factors that contribute to the acceptance of sharia compliance hotel concept implementation among hoteliers. This study focuses on the middle management level employees in 3-5 star hotel situated in the Klang Valley, Malaysia. Drawing from Theory of Planned Behaviour, the specific research objectives are three-fold: 1) to examine the relationship between attitude and sharia compliance hotel acceptance, 2) to investigate the relationship between subjective norm and sharia compliance hotel acceptance, and 3) to examine the relationship between perceived behavioural control and*

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*sharia compliance hotel acceptance. The study utilized quantitative research approach to achieve the stated research objectives. For data collection, a self-administered questionnaire was deployed which was developed based on previous studies. For the purpose of the study, the data collection was conducted in fifteen hotels in the Klang Valley that include hotels in Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Putrajaya and Cyberjaya. The results verified hotelier's attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control are salient attributes of sharia compliance hotel acceptance in the hotel industry. The research model based on the theory of planned behavior managed to explain more than 60 per cent of the variance in sharia compliance hotel acceptance.*

### **Introduction**

The hotel industry increases in the central and reconstructed city where job opportunities and economic activities occur drastically. Sharia Compliance Hotel has been one part of the industry where we can see the numbers of hotels' operators following the practice. Malaysia, for instance, has been taken a step to empower the halal tourism industry. According to the Department of Statistic Malaysia (DOSM), in 2019, 61.3% of the Malaysian are Muslim, followed by Buddhist at 19.8%, Christian 9.2%, Hindu at 6.3% and others. As most of the population are Muslim, most of the hotels' operators are in line with Islamic values indirectly; for instance, some of the hotels providing Buffet Ramadhan during the fasting month, prayer room to perform prayers and promote traditional halal food.

According to the Malaysia Islamic Tourism Centre (ITC), in 2018, Malaysia welcomed an estimated 5.3 million inbound Muslim tourists (Islamic Tourism Centre, 2019). A report on Global Muslim Travel Index 2018 by Mastercard-Crescentrating (2018) highlighted that, there were an estimated 131 million Muslim visitor arrivals globally in 2017 compared to 121 million in 2016, and this figure forecasted to grow to 156 million by 2020, which will represent 10 per cent in the travel segment. While, in 2016, Malaysia received a total of 287,398 Middle Eastern tourists that contributed MYR2.56 billion to the country's revenue (Islamic Tourism Centre, 2017).

Considering the size and the opportunity lies ahead for halal tourism, hotel industry player should grab to ensure that the forecasted Muslim visitor is attracting to visit Malaysia. They should allow their hotels to implement the Sharia principle as an innovation in this segment. The market for Islamic products and services is one of the strategic advantages for hotel operators. The influx of tourists from the Middle East into Malaysia offers the Sharia Compliance Hotel (SCH) an enormous opportunity to attract them, increasing the hotel's profits (Mohd Salleh 2015).

Today, the halal market is not exclusive to Muslims and has gained more recognition among non-Muslim consumers who associate halal with ethical consumerism (Mastercard-Crescentrating 2018). For Muslims, it's no longer merely

a religious obligation or observance. Halal, meaning lawful, has become a robust market. According to ITC (2017), Islamic tourism can have high impacts on Malaysia's tourism industry from economics, social, environmental and politic. This is because Islamic tourism provides new peculiar and universal needs which will influence the development of the tourism industry in Malaysia. Suid, Nor and Omar (2018) mentioned this industry promises a profitable chain of economic opportunities.

Nonetheless, most traditional hoteliers hesitate to move to SCH because of the term's lack of knowledge and comprehension. Capacity hotel management refers to room constraints and facilities provided to hotel resource customers. The hotel must handle the efficiency of its rooms well because this influences its returns. Additional costs incurred for renovating the existing pool and spa facilities can add to the challenges facing existing hotel operators (Samori and Sabtu 2014). In designing proper Sharia hotels such as; the separation of rooms for men and women, architectural and interior design is suggested, which demands comfort and space for prayer (Samori and Sabtu 2014). Ideally, hoteliers are advice to hire consultant or officer who knows the SCH concept to ensure that everything conforms to the guidelines. According to Zailani, Omar and Kopong (2011) mentioned in their exploratory study, most of the managers are not well understood the importance of Halal certification, however they still can have a successful business without it.

Previous studies indicated that, the level of awareness and profit are their biggest concerns to follow the requirement of SCH. Meanwhile, most industry player in Malaysia refuse to accept this concept due to acceptance. Acceptance towards the concept from the operators, the customer and the regulation. Until today, there is a lack of research on the acceptance level among the hoteliers on this concept. Drawing from Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), the specific research objectives are three-fold: 1) to examine the relationship between attitude and sharia compliance hotel acceptance, 2) to investigate the relationship between subjective norm and sharia compliance hotel acceptance, and 3) to examine the relationship between perceived behavioural control and sharia compliance hotel acceptance.

### **Literature review**

This section will explain about the related literature review of the topic. The focus will be on literature reviews about shariah compliant (or compliance) hotel (SCH), theory of planned behaviour, attitude and acceptance, subjective norm and acceptance and finally perceived behavioural control and acceptance.

### **Shariah Compliant Hotel (SCH)**

The SCH is a hotel that delivers not only halal food and beverage services in accordance with Sharia principles, but also covers the entire hotel business (Razalli, Mohd Ismail and Yaacob 2015). This definition was supported by Mohamad Rasit,

Hamjah and Mansor (2016), that stated Muslim or Islamic hotel is a hotel that provides sharia-compliant services as a moral code to lay the guideline for Islam's whole life.

In addition to providing a tranquil, cozy and healthy environment with guest-friendly services, Baharudin, Hisyam, Muhamad and Mohsin (2015) defined a Sharia hotel as one with its management and services delivered based on the Muslim Sharia principle. Saad (2014) stated that a hotel compliant with Sharia is defined as a hotel providing Sharia-compliant services. Besides, Samori and Sabtu (2014) argued that a hotel which is Sharia-compliant does not merely supply halal food and drink but involves the entire operations of the hotel.

Sharia is an Arabic word meaning the oath that Muslim should follow (Doi 1984). The Sharia Compliance Hotel can therefore be defined as a hotel providing Sharia principle-based services (Yusuf 2009). Reviews of work of literature differed between three categories of hotels covered by the Islamic Hospitality Concept; dry hotels which serve non-alcoholic in their centres; partly SCHs that provide a few additional Islamic services, such as Halal food and prayer rooms; Qur'an and prayer rug in each room as well as split facilities between men and women, and fully controlled by the Sharia from its design, interior to hotel accounts (Zulkharnain and Jamal 2012).

The SCH can be defined as a hotel entity that provides all services according to the Sharia principles (all the commands of Allah Subhanahu Wataalla in all aspects) (Samori and Sabtu 2014). Further, Shaharuddin, Kassim, Yusof, Bakar and Talib (2018) stated that SCH is defined as the hotel that is governed by Sharia standard which goes beyond the concept of dry and Islamic hotels. Henderson (2016) explained that the SCH as not serving non-halal food and no alcohol at the premises or hotels only. The holy book Qur'an must be put in the room and the room must be provided with a prayer mat and a *qibla* sign. The beds and toilets must not be positioned facing the *qibla* and the prayer room has to be available in the premises and hotels, and no inappropriate entertainment.

### **Research framework: Theory of planned behavior perspective**

TPB is basically an extension model of Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Ajzen 1991; Ajzen and Madden 1986) and is one of the most researched models for a social psychologist to predict behavioral intentions (Armitage and Conner 2001). TPB allows the examination of the influence of personal determinants and social surroundings as well as non-volitional determinants on intention (Han and Kim 2010). TPB was developed due to the limitation of the original models in dealing with behaviors that people have incomplete volitional control.

The theory postulates three conceptually independent determinants as the main model where attitude is the psychological tendency to evaluate a certain entity in some degree of favor or disfavour (Eagly and Chaiken 1993). The subjective norm evaluates

the social pressure on persons to perform or not to perform certain behaviour. The perceptions of behavior are described as the degree to which behaviour, or to which people perceive control, is regarded as controllable (Liou and Contento 2001).

Past research has shown that TPB offers an excellent framework to identify predictors of the intention to buy automotive technology e.g., autonomous (Kelkel 2015), environmentally friendly vehicles (Afroz, Masud, Akhtar and Islam 2015). Apart from that, applications for the use of TPB were also used to study safety behaviors such as motorcycle helmet use (Ali, Mahmoodabad, Saeed and Mohammad 2011) and occupational health-related behaviour (Colemont and Van den Broucke 2008). In hospitality, TPB is used to explain consumer's decision-making process of visiting green hotels (Han and Kim 2010). Apart from that, TPB is also being used to study on the intention to purchase halal food product (Mohd Suki and Abang Salleh 2016).

### **Attitude and intention to accept SCH concept**

TPB assumes a behavior attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control are three cognitively independent determinants. The first important factor for behavioral intent is the attitude which can be described as the extent to which the individual has a favorable or unfavorable assessment or evaluation of the behavior concerned (Ajzen 1991). Ajzen (1991) also mentioned that the more favorable the attitude concerning behavior, the stronger is the individual's intention to perform the behavior under consideration. Attitude toward a behavior is assumed to be the result of one's own prominent beliefs that represent perceived effects of behavior and his assessment of the important impacts it delivered. According to Blackwell, Miniard and Engel (2006), attitude is the evaluation of performing a particular behavior involving the attitude object, such as buying the product. In addition, it also includes an assessment as to whether the behavior is good or bad and whether the actor wants to do it (Leonar, Graham and Bonacum, 2004). Ramayah, Lee and Mohamad (2010) reported that attitudes involve perceived behavioral consequences. According to Chen and Tung (2014), the main predictor of behavioral intentions is attitude and also as a psychological emotion routed through consumers' evaluations and, if positive, behavioral intention tend to be more positive. Miniard and Engel (2006)

A person will most likely evaluate the benefits and costs resulting from a behavior when determining whether to perform a particular behavior (Cheng, Lam and Hsu, 2006). A person tends to be favorable when the outcomes are assessed positively and is therefore having a high tendency to engage in that particular behavior (Cheng et al. 2006). In this context, hoteliers will accept the implementation of SCH on their premises if only they have sufficient assessment to identify the outcomes. They have to put into consideration the attributes of SCH and at the same time, they are not losing anything. Other than that, if they accept SCH, will it change their workflow, their

SOP or maybe their attitude in serving their guest because an individual's attitude toward a certain behavior will strengthen his/her intention to perform the behavior.

### **Subjective norm and intention to accept SCH concept**

In the TPB model, the second determination of behavioural intention is the subjective norm. The term "subjective norm" is defined as the social pressures perceived for performing or not performing the behaviour (Ajzen 1991). Hee (2000) highlighted the influence from others close to the person like close friend, family members, relative, colleagues or business partners. Subjective norm captures a sense of social pressure of an individual for a certain behaviour. Subjective norm is usually defined as the normative beliefs of a person concerning what prominent references he or she thinks should or should not make and its motivation to meet these referents (Ajzen & Fishbein 1980). Prior research by Sukato (2008) and Webster (2000) and Yoh et al. (2003) stated that friends and family members actually influence the decision-making of consumers. This argument is further supported by Mohd Suki and Abang Salleh (2016), who have found the most important predictor of the consumer's behavioral intentions to be subjective norms.

Many studies have documented subjective norms in the marketing and consumer behavior context as being an important determinant of intentions, including participation intention (Lee, 2005), technology use intention (Baker, Al-Gahtani & Hubona 2007), green hotel revisit intention (Chen & Tung 2014). In a study by Al-Nahdi (2008), the intention of consumers to patronize Halal food was shown to be significantly linked to the subjective norm. Shah Alam and Sayuti (2011) confirmed the same conception further, who found social pressure remained a strong influence on the intention of the consumer to purchase Halal food.

### **Perceived behavioral control and intention to accept SCH concept**

Among these three antecedents in TPB, perceived behavioral control (PBC) is most significant when behavioral control is partially controlled by will. The term PBC refers to perceived behavioral ease or difficulty (Ajzen, 1991) and actually reflects previous experiences and expected barriers. According to Zhou, Thøgersen, Ruan and Huang (2013) behavioral control and motive determines behavior. In particular, PBC evaluates how well factors can be controlled that can make the actions required to deal with a specific situation more simple or restrictive. PBC is defined to be a function of control beliefs (CB) that refers to one's perception of the existence or lack of the resources or opportunities required to conduct a particular behavior, and its determination of the extent of importance of such resources or opportunities to the outcome (Ajzen & Madden 1986).

Many studies showed that in several research contexts, such as recycling, PBC is positively linked with the intention (Taylor & Todd 1995), conservation (Albayrak,

Aksoy & Caber 2013). green hotels (Han et al. 2010; Chen & Tung, 2014; Chang et al. 2006). Research has shown that PBC has an impact on consumer intention to purchase and re-patronize Halal foods like food service facilities (Al-Nahdi 2008; Shah Alam & Sayuti 2011). Thus, for this study, perhaps PBC has a direct influence for hoteliers to accept the implementation of SCH as mentioned by the previous scholar that peoples' intentions are positively influenced by their self-confidence in their ability to perform the behavior (Baker et al. 2007; Cheng et al. 2006; Conner & Abraham 2001).

### **Methodology**

In this chapter the process of getting data will be discussed. The study utilizes the quantitative research method, using a survey questionnaire as a tool for data collection. The questionnaire was developed based on TPB, adapted from the studies of Paul, Modi and Patel (2016), and Chen and Tung (2014). They used TBP on studies in predicting consumers' intention to visit green hotel.

For this study, the questionnaire consists of six sections. Section one is a set of demographic questions used for respondent segmentation. Section two test on Sharia compliance attributes by testing hoteliers understanding and knowledge about SCH. Section three discuss on the hoteliers' acceptability towards the SCH concept . Section four test on attitude as the first variable in the TPB, followed by section five that test on subjective norms and section six on perceived behavioural control. Respondents indicated their level of agreement using the semantic Likert scale for questions in Section two till six. The reliability of the questionnaire were tested using the Cronbach Alpha to ensure that all questions are reliable to measure the variables.

### **Research respondents**

For this research, the respondents are hoteliers in the Klang Valley area. They were categorised according to their star rating hotels. Using a cluster sampling technique, staffs from the supervisor level to senior managers were selected to participate in this study. Cluster samples in this study are hotels that have not applied for Halal Certification from JAKIM and rating from 3 to 5 stars. The sampling size was determined using the Cochran's formula. Although the sample size for the study is 400 respondents, however only 391 respondents returned the survey with valid data.

### **Results**

For this section the result obtained from data collection process will be presented. Firstly, pilot study result will be presented followed by full-scale study and finally multiple regression.

### Pilot study reliability analysis

Pilot study was conducted by this study to ensure that it is reliable and valid before the full-scale test is conducted. Based on the reliability analysis shown in table 1, the acceptance score  $\alpha = .921$ , attitude  $\alpha = .968$ , subjective norm  $\alpha = .948$  and perceived behavioural control  $\alpha = .824$ . This indicates that all question are significant and reliable for this study.

**Table 1: Reliability analysis**

Factor	$\alpha$	N of Items
Acceptance	.921	7
Attitude	.968	14
Subjective Norm	.948	6
Perceived Behavioural Control	.824	8

### Full-scale study

The questionnaires were distributed to gather demographic information like age, gender, religion, years of service and their position can be used to grouping the respondent for future use. The findings are as below:

**Table 2: Frequency distribution of respondent's demographic information**

Demographic information	Frequency <i>n</i> =391	Percent
<b>Age</b>		
20 to 30 years	202	51.7%
31 to 40 years	127	32.5%
41 to 50 years	26	6.6%
51 to 60 years	24	6.1%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	168	43.0%
Female	202	51.7%%

Demographic information	Frequency <i>n</i> =391	Percent
<b>Religion</b>		
Islam	318	81.3%
Buddha	34	8.7%
Hindu	26	6.6%
Christian	13	3.3%
Others	0	0%
<b>Years of service</b>		
1 to 5 years	127	32.5%
6 to 10 years	55	14.1%
11 to 15 years	29	7.4%
16 to 20 years	17	4.3%
21 and over	28	7.2%
<b>Position</b>		
Head of Department	40	10.2%
Senior Manager	18	4.6%
Junior Manager	89	22.8%
Supervisor	82	21.0%

Based on the above table, 391 respondent are male (43.0 %) and female (51.7%). Most of the respondents are between 20 to 30 years old (51.7%) and the majority of the respondent are Muslim (81.3%). A total of 127 respondents have worked between 1 to 5 years and 7.2% of the respondents have been working at the same hotel for more than 21 years. In addition, 40 respondents are Head of Department while the majority of the respondent 22.8% are junior manager.

**Level of awareness of SCH in Malaysia**

To assess the level of awareness of SCH in Malaysia, the result has shown that most of our hoteliers are aware of the SCH implementation in Malaysia. As we can see, 95.4% of respondent are aware that Malaysia is one of the leading Muslim tourist destinations and 92.6% or 362 respondents understand about Sharia compliance hotel. Similarly, 92.6% of the respondents are aware of the needs of Muslim tourists. Furthermore, 312 respondents or 80% of the respondents are equipped with information on the attributes of Sharia compliance hotel.

Based on the question given, 78% or 304 respondents were not aware whether their premises are certified Halal by JAKIM or JAIN and only 22% of respondent were aware that their premises are certified Halal by JAKIM or JAIN.

About 89% of respondents think it is important for their premises to run according to the SCH attributes. Only 11% of the respondents think it is not important for their premises to implement based on the SCH attributes. Out of 391 respondents, 304 respondents mentioned that their premises sell Non-Halal food and beverages at their premises to capture the Non-Muslim market.

**Table 3: Level of awareness among hoteliers in Malaysia.**

<b>n=391</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Malaysia is a top Muslim tourist destination	373 (95.4%)	18 (4.6%)
Understand about Sharia compliance Hotel.	362 (92.6%)	29 (7.4%)
aware of the need for Muslim tourist	362 (92.6%)	29 (7.4%)
Premises certified Halal	87 (22.3%)	304 (77.7%)
attributes of Sharia compliance Hotel	312 (79.8%)	79 (20.2%)
Important runs according to Sharia compliance attributes	348 (89.0%)	42 (11.0%)
Selling Non-Halal food and beverage	304 (77.7%)	28 (22.3%)

Based on the frequency test, majority of hoteliers have high level of awareness about SCH implementation in Malaysia. Besides that, most of the hotel operators are starting to target the Muslim market due to the major influx from the Middle Eastern continent.

#### **Relationship between attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control on the acceptance of SCH implementation**

Four correlation coefficients were tested via Person's product-moment correlation and the significance level was set at 0.01 level (2-tailed). The strength of the relationship can be determined via the Pearson correlation ( $r$ ). If the  $r$ -value is 0, then it indicates no relationship between the two variables and if the  $r$  value is 1, then it can be interpreted as perfect positive correlation, while if the  $r$  value is -1, it can be interpreted as a negative correlation. The summary for the matrix for correlation of these four variables is presented in the table below:-

**Table 4: Correlation between attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control and acceptance**

Factors	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
(1) Attitude	1			
(2) Subjective Norm	.494**	1		
(3) Perceived Behavioral Control	.476**	.719**	1	
(4) Acceptance	.736**	.661**	.492**	1
Mean	6.01	5.85	5.86	5.68
SD	.761	.916	.614	.917

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Relationship between attitude and acceptance**

Based on the result, there is a strong relationship between hoteliers' attitude and their acceptance towards the implementation of Sharia compliance with a positive correlation ( $r=.736, p<0.01$ ). These findings suggest that hoteliers have a positive attitude towards the acceptance of Sharia compliance hotel implementation. Attitude is an important factor in influencing people's intention to accept because those with high positive attitudes appeared to have greater intention to accept the implementation of SCH. Several past studies have found that attitude has a significant direct relationship with intention to accept (Baker et al. 2007).

**Relationship between subjective norm and acceptance**

The result indicates a strong relationship between subjective norms and the acceptance towards SCH implementation with a positive correlation ( $r=.661, p<0.01$ ). This shows that the subjective norms such as peer pressure and family background have a significant positive relationship to the acceptance of SCH implementation. SN is important in influencing people's intention in this context, hotelier's intention to accept SCH. Consistent to the research by Afendi, Azizan and Darami (2014), SN was positively and significantly related to the intention which is can be interpreted into acceptance.

**Relationship between perceived behavioural control and acceptance**

There is a medium-strength relationship between perceived behavioural control and acceptance towards SCH implementation among hoteliers in Malaysia with a positive correlation ( $r=.491, p<0.01$ ). The analysis indicates that perceived behavioural control has a significant value in hoteliers' acceptance towards SCH implementation. This is because control could directly affect behaviour by increasing effort to goal achievement. In collectivistic cultures such as the Muslim culture, people tend to perceive themselves as interdependent with their group and tend to strive for in-group rather than personal goals Afendi et al. (2014).

### Multiple regression

In this study multiple regression assumes that the sample size is large enough. Stevens (2002) recommends that 'for social science research, about 15 participants per predictor are needed for a reliable equation. However, for this research, the researcher following Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) rule of thumb by following the equation, the sample size shall be greater than 82 participants. Since our sample size is 391 it meets the rules. Besides that, referring to  $r$  value that less than 0.9, hence, no multicollinearity exist.

**Table 5: Regression analysis summary**

Source of Variation	$\beta$ - value	$t$ -value	p-value	R	$R^2$	F-value
Attitude	.558	16.144	.000			
Subjective Norms	.462	10.573	.000			
Perceived Behavioural Control (PBC)	.106	2.445	.000			
Acceptance				.815	.664	255.500

a. Dependent Variable: Acceptance

b. Predictors: (Constant), SN, Attitude, PBC

To provide answer to the research question, regression analysis has been conducted and the result as show above. Based on the result given, it explained on the  $R$  square, the result indicates that 0.664 which means that this model explains 66.4% of the variation of SCH implementation acceptance can be explained by the model containing attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control ( $R^2=.664$ ). It is very high and regression equation forecasts are relatively accurate. It also means that 33.6% of the variation is still unexplained so the addition of other independent variables could improve the model's fit. The model in this study reaches statistical significance (Sig. = .000; this means  $p<.005$ ).

As can be observed from the table above, the relationship between acceptances of the three predictors was examined by the multiple regression. The result shows the three predictors have been statistically significant ( $p<0.05$ ). Results showed that attitude explained the largest portion of individual acceptance of SCH at 55.8% ( $p=0.000$ ); closely followed by subjective standards (46.2%,  $p=0.000$ ) and perceived behavioral control (10.6%,  $p=0.000$ ).

## Conclusion

The findings of this study found that majority of hoteliers in Klang Valley, Malaysia are aware and understood about the Sharia compliance hotel concept and its attributes. Besides that, their intention to accept the SCH concept to be implemented is also influence by their attitude, subjective norms and PBC. Thus, the result can be used as a reference to the tourism industry and regulators bodies that monitoring and controlling the tourism situation in Malaysia. Importantly, the result shows that Malaysia can go fully SCH to capture the growing demand of Muslim tourists since Islam is the country's official religion. That can lead to the positive outcome for SCH concept to be implemented significantly among the hoteliers. Nonetheless, more studies from all aspects of SCH are needed to strengthen the SCH concept.

Although, SCH 's attractiveness is tempting, as a hotel operator requires careful consideration and needs to balance with Malaysia's current hotel scenery market to avoid the hotels losing other tourists. The function of government bodies such as the ITC is intended to assist hotel operators and tourists from other countries in raising awareness of the SCH concept. For example; Halal can be generalized as promoting cleanliness and hygiene from housekeeping to preparing food for guests. Besides that, ITC can help to penetrate more market for SCH to keep them relevant in the industry rather than being just another market trend. Other than that, it contributes to the body of knowledge about SCH by referring to the result and also the use of the theory of planned behavior in predicting human intent to choose. It can reinforce the theory for use in various study disciplines.

In order to encourage more hotels in Malaysia to accept the SCH concept, the existence of the universal SCH standard is important. The benefits of SCH are many and one of them, because of the significant demand for Islamic goods and services, it could be a competitive advantage for the tourism industry. As a conclusion, this paper has identified the level of awareness and understanding of hoteliers in Klang Valley, Malaysia on SCH concept.

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**Measuring Cultural Diversity Impact in Hospitality  
Industry Leadership: Managerial Communication  
Perspective from Five Star Hotels in Kathmandu  
Valley, Nepal**

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**Abstract**

*This study aims to measure the cultural diversity impacts in hospitality industry leadership from the perspective of managerial communication. Data were obtained from all the 10 five star hotels in Kathmandu valley. 167 respondents were sampled from the managers of five star hotels in Kathmandu valley, Nepal using structured questionnaire. Data analysis is made using descriptive analysis and Leadership Practices Index measured through dimension suggested by GLOBE Model. The study found out that maximum majority (48.48%) employees were the residents of Bagmati Province itself. For effective functioning of any organization workplace communication plays crucial role. Though numerous challenges are faced by employees working*

*in hospitality industries in terms of communication 96% of respondents believed that managerial communication problem could be overcome if better tactics were used. Upon responding the importance of communication in workplace 54.76% employees stated that effective communication would help managers to set goals and targets for attaining objective of the hotel or their department followed by its importance at the time of serving guests and working in team while coordinating. Likewise, 41.07% feels that effective communication makes employees feel secure and helps to achieve targets. Also, 40.48% feel easy to work in team with the help of effective communication. 19.05% thinks through effective communication exchanging necessary ideas become easier. Communication leadership scale suggested by GLOBE model shows the maximum number of leaders are performance oriented i.e., 83.03% whereas assertiveness, Power Distance and in-group collectivism are the least but still above the 50%, which shows the leader still maintain power distance, least in-group collectivism. Hence, based on the findings of the study, the study concluded that managerial communication skills impact in hospitality business for its growth and maximization. This original study is crucial for hotels, government agencies and prospective employees of hospitality sector of Nepal and worldwide at large.*

### **Background**

Entrepreneurial orientation has three dimensions characterized as innovation, proactiveness and risk-taking (Covin, Jeffrey and Slevin, Dennis, 1989). Internationalization has become a necessity for long-term survival in today's globalized economy (Calabrò, et al., 2018), government and societal influences are stronger in these emerging economies than in developed economies (Lammers and Garcia, 2017, Hoskisson et al., 2000 and Lammers and Garcia, 2017). The internationalization of firms requires professionals from different nations and cultures, with varying sets of values, business rules, communication styles, and not least different languages, to find ways to work together effectively (Holtbrügge, et al., 2013). The past half-century has seen a remarkable worldwide movement toward gender equality on many key economic and social indicators but trends have not been uniform (Charles, 2011). Increased rates of global migration, employees now commonly have multicultural backgrounds, and this is changing the workplace demographic (Szymanski, et al., 2019). Labor migrants were often disadvantaged in two of the three social categories—race, class and gender (Raghuram, 2004). There has not been a great deal of research in recent years on the effect of the business cycle on interregional migration (Milne, 1993).

Cultural differences both within and across countries can result in conflictive communication; therefore, communication strategies such as conflict resolution may provide an important means of bridging diverse cultural perspectives (Hofstede, 1983, Ting-toomey et al., 2000 and Holt, et al., 2005) equality does not always

appear in the expected places. Some of the most sex-segregated labor markets and educational systems are found in precisely those countries reputed to be the most gender-progressive in their cultural values and social policy provisions (Charles, 2011). Even in the present rush toward global expansion, the literature has given only limited attention to the role of culture in service marketing (Winsted, 1997 and Mattila, 1999). By examining a number of hospitality and hotel association websites from around the world, eight main areas of concern for the hospitality industry were highlighted and examined in more detail. These areas included employment issues, taxation levels and environmental issues (Duncan, 2005). The total contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP was USD8,811.0bn in 2018 (10.4% of GDP) and is expected to grow by 3.6% to USD9,126.7bn (10.4% of GDP) in 2019 (Wattanacharoensil et al., 2019).

Multicultural issues in the workplace are more pervasive, complex, and subtle, however, than simply questions about what language or languages will be spoken. Even when people of different racial and cultural backgrounds speak the same language, they have difficulty in communicating with one another. People from different cultural backgrounds bring different meanings, values, assumptions, and discourse styles into the workplace conversation; such differences often lead to misunderstandings and breakdowns in communication, and can threaten a common orientation to organizational goals (Fine, 2018). Hotel guests interact not only with the hotel's physical environment and its employees but also with the hotel's other customers (Mattila, 1999). The total contribution of Travel & Tourism to employment was 318,811,000 jobs in 2018 (10.0% of total employment). This was forecasted to rise by 2.9% in 2019 to 328,208,000 jobs (10.1% of total employment) (Wattanacharoensil et al., 2019). People in different cultures experience workplace bullying differently with different notions of bullying than researchers do (Lutgen-Sandvik et al., 2007). Creating a multicultural organization, however, is not simple. Existing theories of organizing do not account for cultural differences; they assume either that those who are different will assimilate into the existing organizational culture or that their common interests will allow them to form political alliances with others. Fine (2018) diversity among workforce results in positive affects like creativity, problem solving, innovation but on other hand diversity may results in some negative aspects like increasing conflicts, decreasing group performance and decreasing group cohesiveness. (Marie, et al., 2010 and Saxena, 2014).

Only a few studies have directly addressed the perceptual congruence between superiors and subordinates concerning communications issues related to hospitality (Schnake et al., 1990). People may speak different languages at work place because of different geographical region to which they belong. Due to which the people may find some problems. Employees coming from various geographical regions

with their different mindset create contradiction among employees (Saxena, 2014). National cultural differences undermine the absorptive capacity to a greater extent than organizational cultural differences, for example due to language differences and related communication problems (Ambos and Ambos, 2009). Vaara, et al. (2012) Cultural difference has been found to have a negative impact on efficient technology transfer. Nasir and Morgan (2017) communication problems were not only caused by cultural differences, but also by the convenience of excluding the local personnel from some decisions (Jonasson and Lauring, 2012).

Within the workplace, how one chooses to resolve a conflict may be affected in large part by the status of the other party—whether superior, subordinate or peer to oneself. Despite the fact that intuitively, individuals from various cultural backgrounds, of different genders, and within the workplace would appear to solve conflicts in very different ways, there are no conclusive findings (Holt and DeVore, 2005). From observations it seemed that the expatriates ignored the potentials for being flexible in communicating with their local peers in the management team. Instead, they chose to blame the cultural differences for any communication problems (Jonasson and Lauring, 2012). The intercultural perspective, issues related to cultural diversity in organizations have to do with the problems people in organizations have in communicating with one another, with the different meanings they bring to organizational discourse. The locus of change is placed in people and their relationships with one another. That perspective glosses over organizational policies and practices that exclude people who are different, and the power differentials within the organization and the larger culture that perpetuate those policies and practices (Fine, 1996).

Differences in communicative behaviors resulting from differences in expectations will certainly affect the work behavior of expatriates, and the latter will have to address this problem and adapt for successful work outcomes (Abugre, 2018). Nepal is one of the multicultural country Kathmandu is regarded as a capital city of Nepal in which there are large number of religions are residing out there. According to census 2011, the result shows that maximum number of Hindus are staying following by Buddhist, Christian, Muslim, Kirati and Jain religion while other religions are none (CBS, 2018). Tourism and hospitality sector are one of the major backbones of Nepalese economy. Nepal government has consistently made efforts to upscale Nepal's tourism capabilities and its contribution towards Nepalese economy (Devkota et al., 2020a, 2020b, 2021). However, the study in cultural diversity in hospitality sector of Nepal is still lacking. Thus a proper assessment is required to measure cultural diversity in managerial communication in hospitality industry in Kathmandu valley. It aims to measure cultural diversity in managerial communication in hospitality industry in Kathmandu valley.

Thus this study is earliest attempts in this sector in Nepalese context. More specifically, in this research, researchers aim to explore several questions: (i) what is current situation in hospitality in Kathmandu Valley? (ii) What are the challenges faced by managers in managerial communication in hospitality industry? and (iii) what will be the managerial solution for harmonizing cultural diversity in managerial communication? A proper assessment is required to explore these questions in the context of measuring cultural diversity in managerial communication in Hospitality Industry in Kathmandu valley. Thus, the aim of this research is to address the above-mentioned questions.

The study is further divided into four sections, second section showcase the methodology used in this study, third section deals with result generated and fourth section concludes the study.

### **Research methods**

#### **GLOBE model**

GLOBE Model is a multi-method, multiphase research program designed to conceptualize, operationalize, test, and validate a cross-level integrated theory of the relationship among culture and societal, organizational, and leadership effectiveness (House, 2007). This model was developed by drawing on implicit leadership theory, value and belief theory of culture, implicit motivation theory, and structural contingency theory of organizational form and effectiveness. The central premise of this integrated model is that the attributes and entities that differentiate cultures from one another are predictive of organizational practices and leader attributes most frequently enacted and seen as effective in those cultures.

The model driving the GLOBE project included variables believed to operate at different levels of analysis. To be more specific, this model indicated that both organizational and societal cultures would uniquely influence the attributes contained in middle managers' CLT profiles (Dickson, BeShears, & Gupta, 1984). Conceptual models that include variables operating at different levels of analysis have been referred to as multilevel (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000), cross-level (Rousseau, 1985), meso (House, Rousseau, & Thomas, 1995), or mixed-determinant (Klein, Dansereau, & Hall, 1994) models or theories in the scientific literature. Consistent with the multilevel model driving the GLOBE project, Globe model has developed scales that measured these constructs at the appropriate level of analysis (Hanges & Dickson, Chapter 8). The dimensions for the scale are adapted in covering nine categories (Figure 1).

More specifically, the Global CLT scales were computed by first standardizing each of the 21 first-order leadership scales, creating composite scores by adding the appropriate standardized scales together, and then converting the obtained composite

score to unstandardized values by using the classic test theory formulas for means and standard deviations of composite scores (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). For this study, the responses in the GLOBE database came from middle managers employed hospitality industries from five stars hotel.

**Table 1: Dimensions of culture measurement in GLOBE model**

Dimensions	Definitions
Power Distance	The degree to which members of an organization or society expect and agree that power should be shared unequally.
Uncertainty Avoidance	The extent to which members of collectives seek orderliness, consistency, structure, formalized procedures, and laws to cover situations in their daily lives.
Institutional Collectivism	Level at which a society values and rewards “collective action and resource distribution.
In-Group Collectivism	Level at which a society values cohesiveness, loyalty, and pride, in their families and organizations.
Humane Orientation	Ideas and values and prescriptions for behavior associated with the dimension of culture at which a society values and rewards altruism, caring, fairness, friendliness, generosity, and kindness.
Performance Orientation	Level at which a society values and rewards individual performance and excellence.
Assertiveness	A set of social skills or a style of responding amenable to training or as a facet of personality.
Gender Egalitarianism	Level at which a society values gender equality and lessens role differences based gender.
Future Orientation	The extent to which members of a society or an organization believe that their current actions will influence their future, focus on investment in their future, believe that they will have a future that matters, believe in planning for developing their future, and look far into the future for assessing the effects of their current actions.

*Source: Shi and Wang (2011)*

For this research, data analysis is made using descriptive analysis and leadership practices index. Leadership Practices Index measured through including necessary dimension suggested by GLOBE Model i.e. institutional collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, future orientation, in-group collectivism, performance orientation, assertiveness, gender egalitarianism, human orientation and power distance. Ranking

are given as per GLOBE Model suggestion scale. To measure communication index with the people working in cultural diversity, GLOBE Model has used managerial communication with cultural diversity index. Here two set of questions social cultural practices (as is) with 24 questions and socio-cultural practice (should be) with 46 questions is major to deal with managerial communication with culturally diverse workplace. As suggested by GLOBE Model, mean value of each question under nine headings was calculated in order to see the difference between as is and should be index.

### **Study area and study population**

Kathmandu valley of Nepal is selected. Nepal has 77 districts, and from the 77 district, three districts encompass in Kathmandu valley (Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur) located in Bagmati province were taken for the test place of this studies. Kathmandu Valley lies at 1,300 hundred meters above sea level and is positioned amongst latitudes 27°32'13" and 27° forty-nine'10" north and longitudes 85°11'31" and 85° five'31'38" east. Its three districts, Kathmandu, Lalitpur, and Bhaktapur, cowl a place of 899 square kilometers, while the vicinity of the valley as an entire is 665 rectangular kilometers. The valley encloses the whole region of Bhaktapur district, 85% of Kathmandu district and 50% of Lalitpur district (Mohanty, 2011). As the study was conducted in Kathmandu valley of Nepal. The target populations were people who are working in 5 start hotels in Kathmandu Valley. According the Kathmandu post 2019/02/22 Number of five-star hotels in Nepal reaches 12, out of them 10 lies inside the Kathmandu valley. They are Soaltee Crowne Plaza, Hyatt Regency, Hotel Annapurna, Hotel Radisson, Hotel Yak and Yeti, Hotel Shangri-La, Hotel Everest and Hotel Malla inside Kathmandu valley. Also, Pokhara Grande Hotel, Fulbari Resort are in Pokhara; Soaltee Westend Premier Nepalgunj, and Tiger Palace Resort, Bhairahawa are the five star hotels in Nepal. For the research purpose we take census data located within the Kathmandu valley. From the entire 5 stars hotels in Kathmandu valley, total 167 managers are interviewed.

### **Research instruments and data collection**

Research instruments used in this research are observation, expert opinion, survey questionnaire and reports. To be clearer about the managerial communication and culture diversity couple of times Tourism Ministry, Nepal Tourism Board and Five-star hotels are visited and conducted KII with the experts. Mrs Mira Acharya and Mr Kanchha Ram Dulal Directors from Ministry of Tourism were primarily discussed for the overall study concept and road ahead. Similarly, researcher visited different communication experts and they suggested Globe model for the study. It is based on questionnaire survey. Questionnaire is prepared as per the objective of the study. After the questionnaire was finalized, they were deployed into Kobo toolbox

which is an easy way if filling the questionnaire through mobile. Once questionnaire preparation has completed, a pre-test of the questionnaire was done. Pre-test was done with 20 respondents, among the targeted group from five star hotels, to verify whether the given questions provide sufficient information or not. After pre-test certain modification and additional questions were added to obtain more useful information from the respondent especially from the user. Survey was done through questionnaire. Questionnaire was asked with the middle level and higher lever manager in Kathmandu valley of 5 start hotels. It took three months to collect the data. Due to COVID-19 it was difficult to reach to every manager and get easy access to one-to-one interview and questioners. Some of the 5-star hotels have difficulties to access due to direct hit by outbreak of COVID -19 and tedious process to enter into premises. So, the data were collected from email, telephone interview and face to face interaction with respondent as per their convenient. Some of the respondent also provides response through online with the use of kobo tool box.

## **Results and discussion**

### **Socio-demographic characteristics**

There were altogether 93% male and 7% female respondents for this study. The ratio of male is higher than female because of recent COVID-19 hit. These response shows maximum numbers of workers in five star hotels are male. Majority of respondents are from age group 30-40 years i.e., 45.46% and only 3.64% workers are from age group 50 and above. This shows the employees of 5-star hotels in Kathmandu valley are of young age. As the study was centered in Kathmandu valley majority (48.48%) employees were of Bagmati Pradesh itself. Also, due to recent covid-19 hits employees from outside of Kathmandu valley are either in force leave or in half paid leave. Hence maximum numbers of people working in 5 star hotels are resident of Bagmati province. However, people from each of the 7 provinces were employed here in hotels of Kathmandu. Minimum employment rate in hotel industry was from province 2 i.e. 4.24%. 31.52% of the workers in hotel are from Chhetri family followed by Brahman (30.91%). This shows people of Brahman and Chhetri community are more involved in hospitality sector of Kathmandu valley than people of other communities. Similarly, most (83.03%) of the employees were found to be married and majority (58.19%) of them belonged to nuclear family. In regards to the training related to their field 78.18% have had vocational trainings whereas, still 21.82% employees had not taken any sort of vocational trainings. Majority (61%) of employees had their salary ranging from NRs. 40,000-70,000 whereas, only 3% had salary less that NRs. 40,000 and 4% had salary above NRs. 1 lakhs. It was found that employees used Nepali language while communicating with each other (56%) however, 44% stated that they use English language while communicating. With respect to respondent belongingness to different cultural group in work place, most of the people belongs to

Hindu culture whopping 98.80% followed by Buddhist 32.93% and Christian 12.57% in work place and 12.57% represents Muslim community.

**Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics**

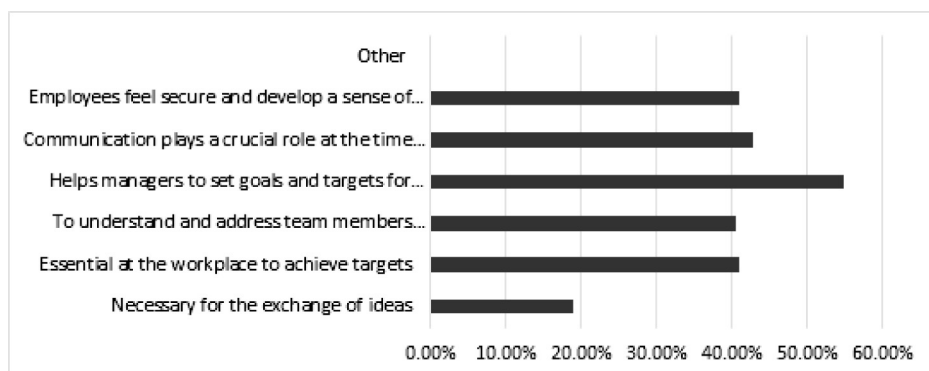
	Number (n)	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	375	93
Female	28	7
<b>Age (years)</b>		
20-30	51	12.73
30-40	183	45.46
40-50	154	38.18
50 and Above	15	3.64
<b>Province</b>		
Province 1	46	11.52
Province 2	17	4.24
Bagmati	195	48.48
Gandaki	42	10.30
Lumbini	22	5.45
Karnali	20	4.85
Sudurpaschim	61	15.15
<b>Ethnic Background</b>		
Brahmin	125	30.91
Chhetri	127	31.52
Madhesi	24	6.06
Dalit	10	2.42
Newar	33	8.18
Janajati	37	9.09
Others	7	1.81
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	335	83.03
Unmarried	68	16.97
<b>Family Type</b>		
Joint	168	41.81
Nuclear	235	58.19
<b>Vocational Training(s)</b>		
Yes	315	78.18
No	88	21.82

<b><i>Income (per month)</i></b>		
Less than 40,000	12.09	3
40,000-70,000	246	61
70,000-1,00,000	129	32
Above 1,00,000	16	4
<b><i>Language used at work</i></b>		
English	177	44
Nepali	226	56
<b><i>Ethnicity</i></b>		
Hinduism	249	61.7
Buddhism	65	16.2
Christianity	133	32.93
Muslim	51	12.57

### Importance of communication in workplace

For effective functioning of any organization workplace communication plays crucial role. Upon responding the importance of communication in workplace 54.76% employees stated that effective communication would help managers to set goals and targets for attaining objective of the hotel or their department followed by its importance at the time of serving guests and working in team while coordinating. Likewise, 41.07% feels that effective communication makes employees feel secure and helps to achieve targets. Also, 40.48% feel easy to work in team with the help of effective communication. 19.05% thinks through effective communication exchanging necessary ideas become easier.

**Figure 1: Importance of communication in workplace**

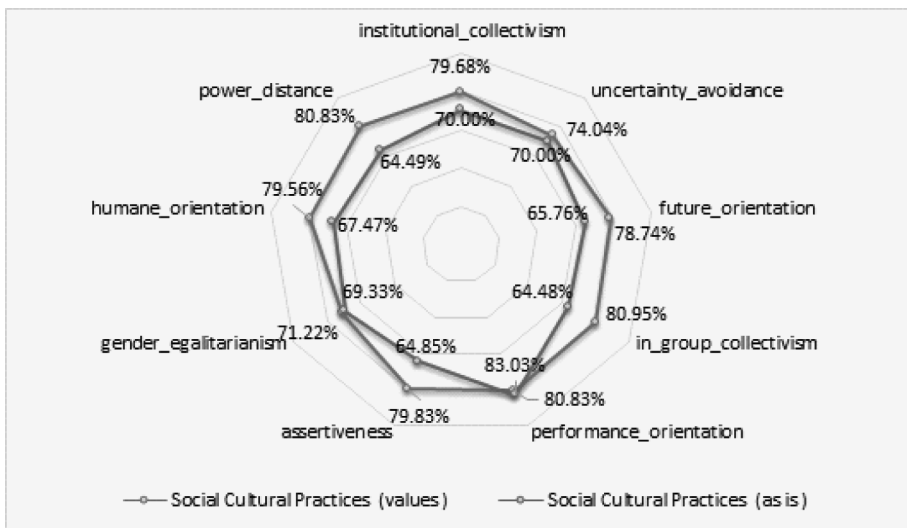


### Managerial communication leadership (with cultural diversity) index

From the respondent the communication leadership scale suggested by GLOBE

model shows the maximum number of leaders are performance oriented i.e., 83.03% whereas assertiveness, Power Distance and in-group collectivism are the least but still above the 50%, which shows the leader still maintain power distance, least in-group collectivism. As figure 2 shows managerial practices into hospitality industry as per respondent Institutional Collectivism is 70.00%, Uncertainty Avoidance is 70.00%, Future Orientation is 65.76%, In-group Collectivism is 64.48%, Performance Orientation is 83.03%, Assertiveness is 64.85%, Gender Egalitarianism is 69.33%, Humane Orientation is 67.47%, Power Distance is 64.49% whereas value of leadership in institutional collectivism is 79.68%, uncertainty avoidance is 74.04%, future orientation is 78.74%, in-group collectivism is 80.95%, performance orientation is 80.83%, assertiveness is 79.83%, gender egalitarianism is 71.22%, humane orientation is 79.56% and power distance is 80.83%

**Figure 2: Managerial communication leadership (with cultural diversity) index**



## Conclusion

Conclusively, the study measures managerial communication leadership in hospitality industry of Nepal. Majority of the employees working at 5-stars hotel think encouraging feedback and giving chance to correct their messages would help to minimize challenges arising in communication process. Multi-cultural communication seems to be barrier for effective communication in hospitality industry. Also, employees feel that to solve or mitigate the problems arising from such situations Board of Directors of respective hotels should be responsible. Thus,

this study indicates that there is greater chance that challenges of communication in hospitality sector can be minimized to least point if the strategies being suggested are considered carefully. The study also shows that if concerned authorities pay careful attention and try to reach to root of the problem that the problems can be minimized to greater extent for this every employees going through these challenges should be listened and address the problem carefully because if the communication process went wrong while trying to solve the problem that might generate negative impact among the employees and complicate the challenges.

As this study is new of a kind in Nepalese context this study has tried to incorporate necessary variables required for the study however, some considerable variable might have missed therefore, further study can incorporate other considerable variables as well. Likewise, this study only covers only 5-stars hotels of Kathmandu valley due to time constraint, future studies can include hospitality industry from various parts of Nepal for effective output and greater coverage. Also, this study is based on descriptive nature future researcher could use various tools and techniques and make inferential study as well which will make the study stronger.

In short, managerial communication challenge is found to be dominant in the hospitality industry. So, in order to mitigate such challenges budding due to cultural diversity, government agencies and Hotel Association Nepal should take the initiatives. As the dividends, learning different languages, acquiring knowledge of multiple cultures, visiting diverse places and keeping ethno relative viewpoints can minimize misunderstanding in managerial communication to a great extent.

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### Extreme Sport: Understanding the Concept, Recognizing the Value

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Minds are of three kinds: one is capable of thinking for itself, another is able to understand the thinking of others, and a third can neither think for itself nor understand the thinking of others. The first is of the highest excellence, the second is excellent and the third is worthless (Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*; Craig, 2008, p. 8).

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#### Article

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#### Keywords

Extreme sport,  
motivation, risk,  
wellbeing and  
wellness, lifeworld  
approach.

#### Abstract

*Extreme sport is one of the fastest-growing areas in sporting activity in this century. Extreme sport appears to be used interchangeably with high-risk sport in much of the research literature. Both high-risk sport and extreme sport are defined as any sport where one has to accept a possibility of severe injury or death as an inherent part of the activity. Extreme sports are rapidly becoming the physical activity of choice. Extreme sports have diffused around the world at a phenomenal rate and far faster than established sports. Commercially, extreme is the password for corporations and advertisers to access young population. Extreme sports increasingly attract participants from different social classes and age groups, as well as females and minority groups. The extreme sport comprises tourist activities, therapeutic activities, recreational activities, and sporting activities. They have become a sporting spectacle. Extreme sports are even discussed in marketing (niche market), management, and policy literature as legitimate niches that require their peculiar understanding or inappropriate activities that need to be banned. Adventure and risk-taking sports such*

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*as mountaineering, whitewater rafting, surfing, skiing, skydiving, downhill mountain biking, rock climbing, and BASE (Building, Antenna (or Aerial), Span (i.e., bridge), Earth (cliffs or other rock formations)) have increased in popularity in recent years. This study is an overview of previous studies carried out by eminent scholars of psychology and different disciplines. The objective of this study is to understand extreme sport in better way on one side and how extreme (or adventurous) sport has been theoretically conceptualized and re-conceptualized on the other. The researcher made an effort to disseminate the knowledge of extreme sports to the students, researchers, entrepreneurs, media personnel, and other concerned authorities, related organizations, and institutions. It is also believed that this study will help to promote adventure education, adventure tourism (niche tourism) and deep ecology. The participants strongly believe that the natural world acts as a facilitator to a deeper, more positive understanding of self and its place in the environment. Fear, emotion, stress, risk, uncertainty, motivation, wellness, wellbeing, personality traits and determination are the key elements of extreme sports.*

## **Introduction**

The term 'sport' is often viewed as synonymous with structured competition. McPherson et al. (1989) defined sport as "a structured, goal oriented, competitive, contest based ludic physical activity" (McPherson, Curties & Loy, 1989; in Kunwar, 2013). However, from an etymological perspective, the English word 'sport', derived from the old French word 'desport', originally refers to a 'pastime' (Online Etymology Dictionary [Internet]; in Brymer, Orth, Davids, Feletti, & Jaakkola, 2017). Also, for example, the Finnish equivalent 'urheilu' is derived from 'urhea', referring to the adjectives 'brave' or 'valiant' and can be defined as an activity to maintain physical fitness, recreation or as a competition according to specific rules. Specifically, sports are considered to be multifaceted, boundary-crossing activities that do not necessarily involve structured competitive activity, regulated performance environments, rules, or institutions (Brymer et al., 2017). A very fitting definition comes from Tony Mason (1989; in Puchan, 2004) who defined sport as 'a more or less physically energetic, competitive, recreational activity...usually...in the open air (which) might involve team against team, athlete against athlete or athlete against nature, or the clock'. This study begins with what is extreme sport? In order to get answer of the question, the researcher consulted with many secondary sources of extreme sport as an academic subject. 'Understanding the concept, Recognizing the Value' as an approach has been borrowed from Williams (2010; in Kunwar, 2013, p.14) for making the title of this study.

Before describing extreme sport, an effort has been made to make clear about the meaning of 'extreme'. Extreme may be defined as recreational physical activity, which carries a risk of serious physical injury or even death. Extreme is a popular adjective used to describe a range of individualistic, adventure-type pursuits and sports with

various elements of risk (Booth & Thorpe, 2007, p.181). According to Merriam-Webster's online dictionary (retrieved September 2018) the word extreme means: (1) Exceeding the ordinary, usual, or expected. (2) Existing to a very high degree. (3) Going to a great, or exaggerated length. Therefore, extreme as used in "extreme sport" suggests a deviation beyond what is generally viewed as "normal" or "traditional" activity and assumes participants pursue activities beyond these limits. Extreme sports are defined as leisure activities where the most likely outcome of a mismanaged mistake or accident is death. Extreme sports and extreme sport participants have been most commonly explored from a negative perspective, for example, "they need to take the unnecessary risk". Typically, participation is considered to be about crazy people taking unnecessary risks, having "no fear" or holding onto a death wish-why else would someone willingly undertake a leisure activity where death is a real potential? (Brymer & Oades, 2009).

The online Oxford University Dictionary (2018) defines "extreme sport" as "Denoting or relating to a sport performed in a hazardous environment and involving great risk." So, the concept of "going beyond normal limits" and "risk" seems integral to what constitutes an extreme sport. Booker (1998; in Cohen, Baluch, & Duffy, 2018, p. 2) stated that "extreme sports" were beyond the boundary of moderation; surpassing what is accounted for as reasonable – i.e., radical, and sports that are located at the outermost. Breivik et al. (1994), defined extreme sport' as a high-risk sport where the possibility of severe injury or death is a possibility as well as integral to the sport or activity. So, the components of these definitions include going beyond the norm of what is considered reasonable and may result in severe injury or death, i.e., high physical and/or psychological risk. "Extreme Sports" appears to be used interchangeably with "high-risk sport" in much of the research literature. Both "high risk" and "extreme sport" are defined as any sport where one has to accept a possibility of severe injury or death as an inherent part of the activity (Breivik et al., 1994).

Taking risks with one's life in sport competitions is nothing new in the human experience. Extreme sports have diffused around the world at a phenomenal rate and far faster than established sports. Extreme sports have benefited from a historically unique conjecture of mass communications, corporate sponsors, entertainment industries, political aspirations of cities, and a growing affluent and young population. Extreme sports are about taking risks, pushing the limits, breaking the rules, and at least sometimes about having fun. They are also a major cultural, economic, and media phenomena with far-reaching implications that go beyond the few active participants. Culturally, extreme sports are seen as representing values such as fierce individualism, civil disobedience, the quest for human potential, taking control of one's own life, and intimate engagements with the environment. Commercially, extreme is the password for corporations and advertisers to access young population. Some are indeed very free while others are codified and commercialized. Extreme

sports increasingly attract participants from different social classes and age groups, as well as females and minority groups (Booth & Thorpe, 2007).

The extreme sport comprises tourist activities, therapeutic activities, recreational activities, and sporting activities. They have become a sporting spectacle. They are discussed in medical literature by those interested in injury or other medical concepts, in psychology by those interested in motivations, performance, and health, in psychology by those interested in how the body functions in extreme conditions and in the military to enhance performance. Extreme sports are even discussed in marketing, management, and policy literature as legitimate niches that require their peculiar understanding or inappropriate activities that need to be banned (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2017).

Cohen, Baluchi, and Duffy (2018) argue that “extreme sport” is predominantly competitive (comparison or self-evaluative) activity within which the participant is subjected to natural and unusual physical and mental challenges such as speed, height depth, or natural forces. Moreover, an unsuccessful outcome is more likely to result in the injury or fatality of the participant of mainstream sport. Therefore, it is suggested that incidents of injury/ fatality are the defining factors that separate extreme sports from other sports which fit into the alternative categories listed, i.e., adventure sport, and alternative sport. High-risk sport immediately evokes a sense of danger and extremism, activities similarly to nature of extreme sport (Cohen et al., 2018).

Robinson (1992; in Cohen et al. (2018), p.99), viewed “extreme sport as an activity based on both cognitive and emotional components as a variety of self-initiated activities that generally occur in natural environment settings and that, due to their always uncertain and potentially harmful nature, provide for intense cognitive and affective involvement”. Tomlinson et al. (2005; in Cohen et al., 2018) also recognized the “emotional dimension” within “extreme sport” which can be identified as a sensation of wholeness. This is akin to the concept of flow which Csikszentmihalyi (1977; in Cohen et al., 2018) described as a conscious state of being completely absorbed in a situation of sport. For Olivier (2006), the exact nature of extreme or adventure sport remains unclear (Olivier, 2006; in Brymer & Houge Mackenzie, 2015, p. 129).

Extreme sports, in the context of outdoor adventure activities, are a rather recent term. The only published use identified by Google R Scholar prior to 1990, is in an analysis of the Hungarian health insurance system, identifying a category of excluded risks (Kereszty, 1989; in Buckley, 2018, p.3). In the popular mass media, the term extreme carries a dramatic connotation, not specifically differentiated from adventure more broadly. In the medical literature, and also in the legal literature of medical insurance, the terms “extreme sports” and “adventure sports” have been used jointly and interchangeably, to refer to a particular group of the category of outdoor

activities. In some cases, these activities are listed explicitly. As noted by Brymer (2005, unpublished; in Buckley, 2018, p.3), each of these activities can be carried out at various degrees of difficulty, danger, and expertise.

One feature of how the sport is defined is the distinction between extreme and non-extreme sport. BASE (Building, Antenna (or Aerial), Span (i.e., bridge), Earth (cliffs or other rock formations) jumping is an example of an “extreme sport” because it involves a high degree of risk, whilst swimming is classified as “non-extreme” because the risks involved are minimal. Extreme sports differ from traditional in other ways as well. For example, traditional sports have very tightly defined rules and regulations that govern how a sport is to be played whereas extreme sports are not governed by such rules and regulations. Traditional sports are also tightly constrained by fixed and well-maintained environments that have been designed for the sole purpose of carrying out the sport. Extreme sport, on the other hand, is most often about adapting to the natural environment (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2017).

The literature shows that the world has introduced altogether 75 different types of high-risk sports identified until before 2007 (Booth & Thorpe, 2007). All those sports are categorized into Air Sports, Water Sports, Terrestrial Sports, Climbing Sports, Ice and Snow Sports, Combative Sports, and Wheeled Sports. The label ‘Extreme sport’ has become a well-known denominator for activities such as bungee-jumping, skydiving, skate-and snowboarding, surfing, hang gliding, paragliding, rock-climbing, kayaking, rafting, cannoning, and so on.

‘Extreme sport’ and ‘Adventure sport’ encompass a wide range of non-traditional sporting activities (Buckley 2018; Cohen, Baluch, & Duffy, 2018). Other terms commonly used to categorize similar activities include action sports (Thorpe, 2017; Thorpe & Wheaton, 2011; Brymer & Feletti, 2019), nature sports (Houge Mackenzie & Brymer, 2018), youth sports (Coakley 2011; Brymer & Feletti, 2019), lifestyle sports (Gilchrist & Wheaton, 2017; Brymer & Feletti, 2019), high risk sports (Castanier, Le Scanff, & Woodman, 2010) and outdoor sports (van Bottenburg & Salome, 2010; Brymer & Feletti, 2019). While each of the sports highlighted within each category has unique characteristics, there are common aspects (Collins & Brymer, 2018, Online first; in Brymer & Feletti, 2019). For example, nature sports emphasize that the sport is undertaken in a natural environment, action sports emphasize the notion of a cool and desirable culture (e.g., skateboarding), and lifestyle sports portray passion, camaraderie, and alienation from mainstream sports, (Cohen, Baluch, & Duffy, 2018). Activities such as climbing and snowboarding are examples of sports that can fit across several categories (Brymer & Feletti, 2019).

Among the various extreme sports, here it is noteworthy to mention about the BASE jumping as one of the most dangerous sports which has been internationally

recognized. BASE jumping is a parachute sport in which participants jump from solid structures such as buildings, cliffs or Bridge-stone might be only a few hundred feet off the ground (Celsi et al., 1993; Brymer & Schweitzer, 2017), while skydivers use safety devices such as warning technology and second parachutes. BASE jumpers do not have such mechanisms. The low altitude means that warning devices will not work and if a participant did carry a spare parachute the likelihood is that a jumper would hit the solid structure or the ground before the parachute could be deployed. This is not a new sport whose history goes back to the 1700s, it has just been defined in the mid-1970s because its technology replaced the devices of skydiving. Proximity flying is a version of BASE jumping whereby flyers or pilots wear a specially designed suit called wingsuit that facilitates forward motion. A proximity flyer is able to travel forwards for a few kilometers, often at speeds of 200 miles per hour (over 300 kph) (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2017, p.4). Like many extreme sports, extreme skiing also began in the 1970s. Extreme skiing requires that the skier descend long, dangerous and sheer mountain cliffs with gradients Picardy close to 50 to 60 degrees. The terrain is often littered with large boulders, trees, or steep cliffs. A fall in this terrain results in the skier tumbling out of control (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2017, p.4). Big wave surfing takes surfers into a wave over 20 feet (6.2 meters) tall, where even renowned surfers have died. Surfers are often towed into the wave by a jet ski because the speed and size of the wave are too great for the surfer to reach their destinations unaided. If a surfer falls off their board they are forced deep underwater. To recover from this the surfer will have a matter of seconds to reorient and resurface before being hit by the next wave. Waterfall kayaking involves kayaking over waterfalls often over 30 meters high (Brymer et al., 2009, p.194; Brymer & Schweitzer, 2017). At this level it is not only the height of the waterfall that contributes to the sport's extreme nature but also the power of the water that comes with it. The record of the highest successfully descended by kayak is 57 meters. Extreme mountaineering is harder to define as standing on the roof of the Worldham becomes a tourist quest. At its core, it involves mountaineering over 8000 meters. At this level, often called the death zone, the mountaineer must have the skills to manage the terrain and weather conditions even though the oxygen level is so low that normal breathing is mostly impossible. Most climbers at this level require oxygen bottles, however, a few mountaineers have climbed above this level successfully without oxygen. Reinhold Messner is credited as the first person to solo Everest (of Nepal) without oxygen, in 1980 (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2017, pp.4-5).

### **Review of literature**

Review is defined as 'to view, inspect, or examine second time or again' (*Oxford English Dictionary*, 2008; in Grant & Booth, 2009). According to Steward (Capocchi et al. 2019), a good review should be comprehensive, fully referenced, selective, relevant, a synthesis of key themes and ideas, balanced, critical, and analytical. A literature

review can provide a concise examination and discussion of evidence in a particular subject or area of reviews play, and essential role in academic research to gather existing knowledge and to examine the state of a field (Linnenluecke et al., 2019).

This study is based on published literatures and analytical approach methodology and has described the nature and scope, typologies, motivation, concept, theories, approaches, wellbeing and wellness, fear and emotion, and tragedy found in various studies of extreme studies. Unlike original articles, literature reviews do not present new data but intend to assess what is already published, and to provide the best currently available evidence (Ferrari, 2015, p.230; in Maphanga & Henama, 2019). A literature review looks at surveys published articles and other literature sources related to the topic of interest. A literature review must be an objective, thorough summary, and critical analysis of the relevant available research (Cronin et al., 2008, p.38; in Maphanga & Henama, 2019). Hart (1998; in Maphanga & Henama, 2019) acknowledged that a literature review is an objective that summarizes and makes serious analysis of the relevant research and non-research literature on the topic being studied. A plethora of sources was consulted during the secondary data analysis process to try to fill the scarcity in the academic gap on extreme sports

In a review of participation in extreme sports Kaufman (2001; in Puchan, 2004) stated that 100 million people worldwide participated in aggressive inline skating, whitewater canoeing and kayaking, skateboarding, mountain biking, snowboarding, snowmobiling, BMX riding, wakeboarding, surfing, rock climbing, artificial wall climbing and adventure racing in 2000 (Kaufman, 2001; in Puchan, 2004, p. 173). Campbell and Johnson (2005; in Willig, 2008) report in the Observer newspaper that new research for Sport England into the growth of extreme sports found that over 5 percent would take part. In the USA, participation in such 'alternative' sports has increased by 244.7 percent between 1978 and 2000 (Puchan, 2004; in Willig, 2008). In addition, the demographics of participants in extreme sports have broadened to include people of all ages and increasing numbers of women (Celsi, Rose, & Leigh, 1993; in Willig, 2008, pp. 691-6920).

Over the past two decades, participation rates in these sports have grown exponentially. Between 1998 and 2001 participation rates in extreme sports far outstripped any other sporting activity (American Sport Data, 2002; in Brymer, 2009). According to Puchan (2004), involvement has been shown not to be just a 'flash in the pan' but a signed of the times in which people are looking for a new way to define their lives and to escape from an increasingly regulated and sanitized way of living (Puchan, 2004, p.177). In extreme sport, there is no second chance, the most likely outcome of a mismanaged error or accident is death (Brymer, 2005; in Brymer & Oades, 2009).

A report published in 2016 by the physical activity council in the United States of America (USA) estimated that about 50% of active people, that is, 22 million people in the USA, undertook adventurous outdoor activities. Participation rates published by sport England in 2015 concluded that 50% of people who were active in sport participated in outdoor sports. In 2016, approximately 130 million people undertook outdoor activities in China. Outdoor adventure activities are also becoming popular in India. In Iran, women are the surfing pioneers (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2017). Saxena and Dey (2010) have categorized adventure sports into four classes: (1) mountain sports; (2) extreme sports like bungee jumping and free fall; (3) rafting and kayaking; (4) paragliding, skydiving, and skiing. A total of fifteen motivational factors have been identified with the help of a literature review and an exploratory study. These are: Thrill, Zeal/Energy, Spells status, Builds confidence, Helps in personality development, Instills self-belief, Creates unique identity, Is a stress buster, Helps in goal- setting, Is challenging, Requires toughness, Builds a sense of achievement, Is a unique experience (Saxena & Dey, 2010).

The impact of adventure and extreme sports on the international market is perhaps most obviously appreciated through its economic impact. The US outdoor industry supports 6.1 million jobs and the spending associated with the industry is approximately \$646 billion annually. Therefore, how we understand extreme sport and extreme sport participation is important (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2017, pp. 2-3). According to Pain and Pain (2005; in Brymer, 2010), the extreme sports participants are careful, well trained well prepared, and self-aware and prefer to remain in control: Despite the public's perception, extreme sports demand perpetual care, high degrees of training and preparation, and, above all, discipline and control. Most of those involved are well aware of their strengths and limitations in the face of clear dangers. Findings of extensive research in climbers suggest that the individuals do not want to put their lives in danger by going beyond personal capabilities (Pain & Pain, 2005, p.S34; in Brymer, 2010).

Studies have also indicated that extreme sport participants are not inclined to search for uncertainty or uncontrollability. For example, the study by Celsi et al. (1993; in Brymer, 2010, p. 223) referred to numerous examples of well-respected extreme sport participants who considered that they participated well within their personal capabilities. Evidence to support this notion that extreme sports may not be about risk has come from a statistical comparison between the death rates of motorcyclists, BASE-jumpers and climbers (Storry, 2003; in Brymer, 2010, p. 223). Storry (2003; in Brymer, 2010, p. 223) found that in the UK the death rate for climbers was 1:4000 which compares favorably against motor cycle riding where the death rate is 1:500. Soreide et al. (2007; in Brymer, 2010, p. 223) undertook an analysis of 20 850 BASE-jumps in Norway over 11 years and found that the death rate was 1:2317 and while

the injury rate was high they were in the main linked to sprains and bruises. Perhaps then, as Storry (2003; in Brymer, 2010, p. 223) recognised, the tendency to focus on theories that search for labels involving 'risk' and/or 'thrills' is entirely missing the point. That is, extreme sports are not necessarily synonymous with risk and participation may not be about risk taking.

### **Motivation and personality traits**

In recent years, numerous studies as cited by Hungenberg et al. (2014) have examined sport motivation with concepts, such as involvement (Kyle, Absher, Norman, Hammett, & Jodice, 2007; in Hungenberg et al., 2014), commitment (Swanland, Carpenter, Schmidt, Simon, & Keeler, 1993) serious leisure (1992; in Hungenberg et al., 2014), and recreation specialization (Scott & Shafer, 2001; in Hungenberg et al., 2014). Each of these frameworks has provided a unique contribution to understanding and measuring an individual's dedication to sports. However, a serious leisure framework was chosen based on its ability to aid participants in overcoming barriers (Jackson et al., 1993) by heightening one's competence and revealing the value individuals place in affiliating with the activity (Hungenberg et al., 2014).

Participant motivations, as cited by Brymer (2010), have been explained through the range of analytical frameworks, including, sensation seeking (Rossi & Cereatti, 1993; Zuckerman, 2000), edgework (Lyng, 1990; Lauredeau, 2008), Psychoanalysis (Hunt, 1995a), neoliberalism or sub-cultural formation (Midol & Broyer, 1995) and masculinity theory (Polay, 2001; Wheaton, 2003). These perspectives argue that a combination of personality traits, socialization processes, and previous experiences induce a desire for a participant to put their life at risk through extreme sports (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2012). Psychological theories presented include type 'T' (arousal seeking) and type 't' (arousal reducing/avoiding) (Self et al., 2007), psychoanalysis (Hunt, 1996), and sensation seeking (Breivik, 1996; Goma, 1991; Robinson, 1985; Rossi & Cereatti, 1993; Slinger & wann, 1999; Straub, 1982; Zarevski et al., 1998; Rudestam, 1997; Zuckerman, 2007; in Brymer 2010, p.4).

Almost all the adventure tourism literatures show that the tourists are motivated by peak experience. But in this study, there was found a concept known as "plateau experience". Emmons (1999; in Brymer & Oades, 2009) indicated that severe stress, most likely in the forms of trauma, tragedy, or death, drastically changes life. Maslow considered that these severe events would only result in deep changes if a person was initially emotionally stable. The plateau experience as a concept was first coined by A. Maslow on March 17, 1971. For him, the term refers to "a constellation of extraordinary experiences, which shared some similar features with peak experiences but were also distinctly unique" (Krippner 1972; in Brymer & Oades, 2009). Nonetheless, the essence of this constellation can be gradually revealed through the morsels

available. Wong (1998; in Brymer & Oades, 2009) echoed such determination and persuasively argued that by facing our own fear of death and death itself, we become fully self-aware, and life takes on a new, profound, and positive meaning (Brymer & Oades, 2009). Plateau experience has more to do with the growth of the individual, while the peak experience could serve like an LSD experience, as an opener. Plateau experience is essentially cognitive. This is witnessing reality.

A number of studies have investigated the relationship between personality traits and participation in high-risk physical sports, such as mountaineering. Sensation seeking is by far the most consistently studied personality factor in the literature (Castaneir et al., 2010; Cronin, 1991; Frixanet, 1991; Diego & Armatas, 2004; Zuckerman, 1979; Jack & Ronan, 1998; in Monasterio & Brymer, 2015). Zuckerman (1979, p.10; in Monasterio & Brymer, 2015, p.201) defined sensation seeking as 'the need for varied, novel and complex sensations and experiences and the willingness to take physical and social risks for the sake of such experience'. The sensation seeking model has to some extent dominated the traditional view that mountaineers are driven by an institute need for new or novel experiences and intense sensations, attracting the pejorative label of 'adrenaline junkies' (Monasterio & Brymer, 2015).

There comes another important sociological theory which is known as edgework propounded by Lyng in 1990. Theoretical perspective on risk-taking in extreme sports has been focused on psychological and sociological explanation. The main sociological theory that has been put forward to explain participation is 'edgework' (Laurendeau, 2008; Lyng, 1990). Edgework explains extreme sport participation from a sociological perspective by proposing that participants voluntarily navigate the edges of control to escape the routine and monotony of modern life (Lois, 2001; in Clough et al., 2016). The model attempts to account for voluntary risk-taking within a sociological framework is termed edgework (Lois, 2001; Lyng, 2004; in Brymer & Schweitzer, 2017). The notion of edgework refers to an individual's desire to explore the edge or limits of her/his own control in specific risk contexts. The theory suggests that all 'risk-takers' share the same characteristics and as such participating in extreme sports is motivated by the same underlying factors as found in stock-traders, vandals and those involved in unprotected sex, and sadomasochism (Lyng, 2004; in Brymer & Schweitzer, 2012).

Proponents of edgework suggest that participants move through four stages. The first is the preparation stage where individuals might be a little nervous and anxious. The second is the performing stage which is characterized by thoughtless action. The third is the aftermath stage where participants feel omnipotent, and the last stage is where participants defuse feelings to prepare for the next event (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2017). An example of edgework in the extreme sport of BASE jumping found support for this notion in that BASE jumpers were deemed to those participants often reported motivations that include fun, being alive, and deep personal transformations and

positive aspects of their chosen activity (Allman, Mittlestaedt, Martin & Goldenberg, 2009; in Brymer & Schweitzer, 2017, pp.61-62). Similar findings have been previously reported where participants relate that they do not push the boundary of their control and prefer to stay well within their comfort zones (Celsi, Rose & Leigh, 1993).

Personality is an important predictor of various risk-taking behaviors (Selosse, 1998; Vollrath, Knoch, & Cassano, 1999; in Castanier, Scanff, & Woodman, 2010), and neuroticism, extraversion, and conscientiousness are the most studied personality factors in this area (e.g., Bermúdez, 1999; Clarke & Robertson, 2005; Vollrath & Torgersen, 2002). Frixanet (1991; in Monasterio & Brymer, 2015, p.201) investigated the personality traits of high physical risk sports participants, including 97 alpine climbers and mountaineers, and found that extraversion was positively correlated, while neuroticism was negatively correlated to high-risk climbing. They found that there were no differences in personality traits between alpine climbers and mountaineers (who climbed the Himalayas above 8000m). They determined that alpine and mountain climbers are generally presented with a personality profile characterized by extraversion, emotional stability, conformity to social norms and seeking thrill, and experience by socialized means. More recently, Castanier et al., (2010) found individuals with personality types demonstrating a combination of low conscientiousness, high extraversion, and or high neuroticism were greater risk-takers in a population of 302 men involved in high-risk sports (e.g., downhill skiing, mountaineering, rock climbing, paragliding, and skydiving), of which 50 percent were mountaineers.

However, of these three personality traits, neuroticism and extraversion yield equivocal findings. For example, although a number of researchers reported a positive relationship between extraversion and high-risk health behaviors (Vollrath et al., 1999; in Castanier et al., 2010, p. 478) or traffic and job accident involvement (e.g., Arthur & Graziano, 1996; Clarke & Robertson, 2005; in Castanier et al., 2010), others reported the opposite relationship in the same domains (e.g., Iverson & Erwin, 1997; Judge, 1993; in Castanier et al., 2010). Similar inconsistencies surround neuroticism findings: many studies demonstrated that individuals high in neuroticism are more prone to taking high-risk health behaviors (Vollrath et al., 1999; Castanier et al. 2010; Scanff & Woodman, 2010, p. 479) and are more accident-involved (e.g., Clarke & Robertson, 2005; Sutherland & Cooper, 1991; in Castanier et al. 2010).

### **Methodology**

“Method” is to be understood here not as a technique of research but in the etymological sense, as a means of access to a field of research, that is, these considerations belong to the theory of science... (Giorgi, 1997, p. 252) according to Rosenau (1992; in Repko, 2012), (research) “method concerns how one conduct research, analyses

the data or evidence, test theories and creates new knowledge” (Repko, 2012, p.128). Basically, this study is based on interdisciplinary approach. According to Vinsentine (2011, xiii), “... interdisciplinary is a means to identify and study new themes that single discipline would not be able to put into focus, described interpret by themselves”. Newell (2007, p.240; in Repko, 2012) writes, “interdisciplinary study is a two part process: it draws critically on disciplinary perspectives and it integrates into a more comprehensive understanding... of an existing complex, phenomenon [or into] the creation of new phenomenon” (Repko, 2012, p.15). Both as an applied and social field of study, it is inevitable that academic should be involved in supplying research to the academia, industry and government. Methodologically extreme sport studies have been analyzed by two different approaches which are known as phenomenology and autoethnography guided by qualitative approach.

Qualitative methodologies commonly refer to the compilation and analysis of material that seeks to discover meaning and promote a complete and diverse understanding of the experiences of the research subjects (Yin,2011; Denning & Licoln,2018; in Figueroa-Domecq, & Segovia-Perez, 2020).It focuses language and observation. It consists of descriptions of situations, events, people, interactions ad observed behavior, direct accounts of personal experiences, attitudes, beliefs and thoughts complete passages of documents, correspondence, reports and historical cases (Babbie,2011; Cea Azcona,1997; Valles,1997; in Figueroa-Domecq & Segovia-Perez, 2020).

All qualitative methods have to go through a minimum of five basic steps:(1) collection of verbal data, (2) reading of the data, (3) breaking of the data into some kind of parts, (4) organization and expression of the data from a disciplinary perspective, and (5) synthesis or summary of the data for purpose of communication to the scholarly community (Giorgi, 1997, p.245).

The descriptive statement has been structured around a series of themes. Four of them were invoked by all participants. These were Context, Challenge, Suffering, and Other People. A further five themes were shared that are known as Mastery and Skill, Contrast, Being in the Present, Compulsion, and Pleasure (Willig, 2008).

The scholars who carried out research on extreme sports they have followed phenomenological approaches as their research methodologies (Willig, 2008; Brymer, 2005; Brymer, 2009; Brymer, 2009; Brymer, 2010; Brymer & Oades, 2008; Brymer et. al., 2009; Brymer & Schweitzer, 2012; Brymer & Schweitzer, 2017; Schweitzer & Brymer, 2018).Therefore, it is important to know how this approach became instrument for this kind of outdoor adventure sport studies.

There are several different ways in which researchers have used a phenomenological orientation to carry out empirical research (e.g., Giorgi, 1970; Moustakas, 1994; Giorgi,

Fscher & Murray, 1975; Smith, 1996; Jorman & Osborn, 1999; in Willig, 2008). Willig's (2008) research is based on Collaizzi's (1978) account of phenomenological approach which is influenced by Giorgi's (1970, 1984; Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003) descriptive pre-transcendental Husserlian phenomenology (Giorgi, 2000; in Willig, 2008). This means that its aim is the identification of the basic structure of a phenomenon based upon the convergence of accounts (Willig, 2008, p. 693).

While writing about the importance of phenomenological approach, Brotherton (2010) mentions that "phenomenologists reject the epistemological, ontological and methodological foundations of the positivist approach and advocate essentially opposing views on each of these". They are generally interested to understanding and explaining how people make sense of the world they inhabit. By implication, context is an important element in developing this understanding because people exist and interact with context (Brotherton, 2010, pp. 36-37).

For Giorgi, phenomenological psychology refers to a human-scientific project whereby one conducts concrete analysis of the psychological meanings of specific experiences by using steps consistent with Edmund Husserl's philosophical phenomenological vision (Giorgi, 1981, 1986c; in Giorgi, 1997, p. 252). Phenomenological research seeks to illuminate the essence of an experience, as understood by participants (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2012, p. 479).

Hermeneutic phenomenology is a research method used in qualitative research in the fields of education and other human science. Out of four types of phenomenological approaches (experiential phenomenology, transcendental phenomenology, transpersonal phenomenology, and hermeneutic phenomenology), most of the researchers of extreme sports studies have adopted hermeneutic phenomenology.

Hermeneutic phenomenology is both descriptive and interpretive. Apart from hermeneutic phenomenology, Van Manen (1996; in Kakkori, 2009) is well known for his hermeneutic phenomenological method. Hermeneutic is oriented to historical and relative meanings. Phenomenology in Husserlian (1913, 1983; in Giorgi, 1997) sense is oriented to universal and absolute essences. For Heidegger (1927/1962), hermeneutic phenomenology is the research of the meaning of the Being as a fundamental ontology (Kakkori, 2009). The hermeneutic phenomenological approach used in this research project aims to investigate an experience as it is lived and demands the use of a multitude of data sources for exploring a phenomenon such as extreme sports (Van Manen, 1997; in Brymer, et al., 2009, p. 140). The researchers examined a wide range of materials in addition to interviews in an effort to understand the nature of a particular experience and to assure that some accounts are originating outside the interview setting. Phenomenological research achieves rigor, in part, by 'bracketing' or setting aside pre-existing understandings and by comparing among a variety of

accounts to see if dimensions of the experience recur across multiple subjects (Giorgi, 1997; Brymer et. al., 2009, p. 140).

The hermeneutic phenomenological approach opens up a multitude of data sources such as interviews, biographies, autobiography, and video or any source that might help explain the experience in question. This study selects minimum 10 to maximum 20 respondents in one project. The phenomenological perspective aims to return to the experience as lived and provide a detailed description of a phenomenon based on the structure and meaning of an experience (Laverty, 2003; Van Manen, 1997; in Brymer, 2010).

Brymer et. al. (2009) have followed interpretive phenomenology as a methodological tool. Interpretive phenomenology accepts that lived experiences are made sense through language and therefore participant accounts will reflect this process (Willis, 2001; in Brymer & Schweitzer, 2012). Interpretive phenomenology aims to penetrate beyond the reflective interpretation of an event in-order to reveal the essence of an experience (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2012).

Autoethnography, according to Buckley (2018), is a form of qualitative research in which an author uses self-reflection and writing to explore anecdotal and personal experience and connect this autobiographical story to wider cultural, political, and social meanings and understands (Adams, Holland, & Ellis, 2015; Buckley, 2018). Autoethnography is an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (*graphy*) personal experience (*auto*) to understand cultural experience (*ethno*) (Ellis, 2004; Holman, Jones, 2005; in Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011; Singh, 2015). As an approach it acknowledges and accommodates subjectivity, emotionality, and the researcher's influence on research, rather than hiding from these matters or assuming they do not exist (Ellis et al., 2011). A central distinction between autoethnography and traditional methodologies is that the researcher's biases and reflexivity are openly acknowledged and discussed in autoethnography. In contrast to ethnography, in which the researcher attempts to become an insider, the researcher autoethnographic inquiry is the insider who provides unique insights into personal and emotional lifeworld (Ateljevic et al., 2007; in Houge Mackenzie, 2015). Anderson (2006 in Houge Mackenzie, 2016) presents five key autoethnographic features: complete member status of the researcher; analytic reflexivity; narrative visibility; of the researcher's self; dialogue with informants beyond the self; and commitment to theoretical analysis (Houge Mackenzie, 2015). A researcher uses tenets of autobiography and ethnography, when marriage occurred between grounded theory and ethnography (Pettigrew, 2000; Singh, 2015), to do and write autoethnography. Autoethnography, according to Pettigrew (2000; Singh, 2015) as a concept came out of marriage between grounded theory and ethnography. Thus, as a method, autoethnography is both process and product.

A small number of sociologists, sport, have opted to produce what has been defined as autoethnographies or narratives of self. In this regard, Krizek (1998; in Sparks, 2000) wrote, “Many of us “do” ethnography but “write” in the conservative voice of science.... In short, we often render our research reports devoid of human emotion and self-reflection. As ethnographers we experience life, but we write science (p.93; in Sparks, 2000).

The practical methodology for retrospective analytical autoethnography of intense human emotional experiences is the same as for conventional ethnography (Hammersly & Atkinson, 2007; in Buckley, 2015). Analytical autoethnography is the logical continuation, narrowest but deepest (Buckley, 2015). This is a systematic study of a researcher’s own experience.

### **Lifeworld approach**

Lifeworld approach has become an important theoretical concept that has captured the phenomenological experiences of the particular group in the society. Therefore, it is noteworthy to mention the importance of lifeworld approach as adopted by Brymer and Schweitzer (2017). This concept was founded by Edmund Husserl (1970) who used the term as *Lebenswelt* or lifeforms (Husserl, 1970). The notion of *Lebenswelt* referred to the world as encountered and lived in everyday life, given in direct and immediate experience independent of scientific interpretations. This theory is directly relevant to the understanding of phenomena, such as the extreme sport experience. Husserl distinguished between the world as known to science and the world in which we live, i.e., the *Lebenswelt*. The study of the lived world and our experience of it now became the primary task of phenomenology. Husserl drew attention to three features of the lifeworld (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2017):

1. The world of everyday experience is extended in space and time. Space and time constitute a comprehensive frame in which all the existence of our experience can be related in spatial and temporal terms with one another. Furthermore, things exhibit spatial forms as physiognomy, which is a phenomenon that has characteristics.
2. The lifeworld exhibits various regularities, as evidenced, for example, by the cycle of day and night altering with the change of the seasons. Things, according to Husserl, have their habits of behavior. It is not from science that we learn, for instance, that stones, when lifted and released, fall to the ground, but it is a matter of everyday experience in the lifeworld.
3. And thirdly, things in the lifeworld present themselves in certain relativity with respect to the experiencing subjects, e.g., a number of persons in a room perceive the same objects, but each person may perceive the objects from their own point of observation. It is through intersubjective agreement, brought

about several ways, that we find ourselves living the same lifeworld, with respect to the social group, however small or large (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2017).

### **Noema and noesis**

This is another theory that has influenced the scholars of extreme sports. They are Schweitzer and Brymer (2017) who have connected this theory with phenomenology. In *Ideas*, Husserl (1967, 2003; in Shahabi & Rassi, 2015) uses this pair of terms, “Noema” and “Noesis” to refer to correlated elements of the structure of any intentional act. Husserl says that every intentional act has noetic content. This noetic content is that mental act-process that becomes directed towards the intentionally held object. In other words, every intentional act has an “I-pole and an “object-pole. According to Husserl, noesis is the real content and real character, the part of the act that gives the character to a thing. Noema is the ideal essence of the character (Rassi & Shahabi, 2015, p. 29).

At its core, phenomenology considers that consciousness has to be conscious of something. The noema is the ‘what’ of consciousness, that is, the ‘thing’ of intentionality. The noesis is the ‘how’ or process through which there comes the experience and the intentional acts. The importance of this consideration is that both the noema and noesis describe the ‘what’ and ‘how’ as considered through the phenomenological attitude, as distinct from the natural attitude, where the natural attitude reflects everyday life in which people, objects and even ideas are ‘just there.’ There will be no question of existence rather this could be experienced as facts. From Husserl’s perspective, this attitude is neither good nor bad, it simply reflects the ordinary or familiar way of being- in-the- world.

### **Theoretical constructs of nature human relationship**

Are you getting enough Vitamin N? Richard Louv (2008; in Van Heezik & Brymer, 2018) coined this term in his book “*Last Child in the Woods*,” in response to growing evidence that suggests humans are increasingly disinterested with, and disconnected from the natural world. Concurrent with the literature on the extent of disconnection (Miller, 2005; Soga et al., 2016; Van Heezik & Hight, 2017; in Van Heezik & Brymer, 2018) is an ever-expanding body of literature documenting the many psychological, physical, and spiritual health benefits derived from nature contact (Keniger et al., 2013; Bratman et al., 2015; Martyn & Brymer, 2016; Frumkin et al., 2017; in Van Heezik & Brymer, 2018). In fact, human survival is inextricably linked with nature: the species and their inter-relationships that make up the fabric of ecosystems function to sustain all life on Earth.

While analyzing nature human relationship, Brymer et. al. (2009) express “Our experience-based analysis has found that extreme sports aficionados do not simply

view the natural world as a commodity, a stage for risk taking, or vehicle for self-gratification. On the contrary, for veteran adventure athletes the natural world acts as a facilitator to a deeper, more positive understanding of self and its place in the environment” (Brymer et. al., 2009, p. 135). In their study, Brymer et. al. (2009) further highlight on ecocentric relationship between extreme sports participation and nature by asking the question, ‘How does the extreme sports participant relate to the natural world?’. The authors find that participants’ descriptions of a relationship they characterized as a harmonious and rhythmical interaction between partners, an engagement some likened to a ‘dance’. Through ‘dancing’ with the natural world, an extreme sports participant generally undergoes a transformation in self-understanding at the same time his or her view of nature also changes (Brymer et. al., 2009, p. 138-139).

Van Heezik and Brymer (2018) are of opinion that a culture of stewardship should be developed instead of exploitation of nature as pill and as commodity. Lifting biodiversity baselines through ecological restoration is necessary. From a psychological health perspective, what is urgently needed is a principled theoretical framework, combining ecological, and psychological related knowledge that can guide a more enlightened program of research and practice (Van Heezik & Brymer, 2018, p. 3). It is noteworthy to mention about the Norwegian environmentalist Aerne Naess (1973; in Holden, 2008, p. 59) who identified two broad philosophical approaches. ‘Shallow ecology’ is based upon an ‘anthropocentric’ view of nature, meaning that nature is viewed as being separate from humans, and its value rests purely in terms of the use it has in meeting human needs and desires. Consequently, the anthropocentric view of why the environment should be conserved or treated in a responsible way, rests solely with the benefits this would bring for humans. By contrast ‘deep ecology’ rejects any separation of nature and humanity, stressing their interconnectivity, and that all beings are of equal value. A value is given to nature, which emphasizes its right to existence, rather than its instrumental value. Thus, rather than assuming that society should utilize natural resources for its own benefit, deep ecologists would question the purpose of the use of those resources and whether they were really necessary or not (Holden, 2008, pp. 59-60).

The above mentioned issues of humanity and nature are captured by Schweitzer, Glab and Brymer (2018) who analyzed the various theories propounded by different scholars at different times that has put forward to understand the relationship between nature-man nexus. Schweitzer et al. (2018) found a positive relationship between experiences of nature and psychological health and wellbeing (e.g., Ulrich et al., 1991; Kaplan, 1995; Korpela et al., 2001, 2014; in Schweitzer et al., 2018, p. 2). The major theoretical frameworks drawn upon to explain the observed link include Biophilia (Wilson, 1984), Attention restoration theory (ART) (Kaplan, 1993), Stress

reduction theory (SRT) (Ulrich et al., 1991), and Place attachment theory (Giuliani and Feldman, 1993; Giuliani, 2003; in Schweitzer et al., 2018, p. 2). Biophilia proposes that human beings have an innate affiliation with the natural world which is in turn fundamental to psychological and other domains of wellbeing (Kellert, 1997; in Schweitzer et al., 2018). From an SRT perspective interactions in natural environments reduce stress built up as a result of time spent in urban and everyday environments. Specifically, SRT claims that human beings have an evolutionary connection with nature and that specific characteristics of nature (complexity, depth, absence of threat) provide solace and the observed restorative benefits. While the SRT and Biophilic frameworks have made a considerable contribution to our understanding of the relationship between human beings and nature, critics point out that for a number of reasons these evolutionary notions do not stand up to scrutiny (Joye and van den Berg, 2011; Brymer et al., 2014; in Schweitzer et al., 2018). Attention restoration theory suggests that some environments are more conducive to restoring mental fatigue resulting from everyday urban lifestyles. The natural world on the other hand restores cognitive resources and the subsequent ability to focus because attention is held with the reduced requirement of effort. ART, though popular, might not be able to fully explain the genesis of wellbeing benefits arising out of the human-nature relationship (Hartig & Jahncke, 2017; in Schweitzer et al., 2018). Alternatively, an evolutionary perspective may be conceptualized in terms of cognitive processes, referred to as motivation and valuation (Mercado-Doménech et al., 2017; in Schweitzer et al., 2018). Motivation is thus a complex process involving both cognitive and implicit processes which play a part in the potential survival value of the human-nature process (Schweitzer et al., 2018, p. 2).

Place attachment theory is a multifaceted framework that proposes human beings develop emotional bonds with a real or imagined place. While not directly developed to explore the human-nature relationship from a wellbeing perspective the framework suggests that wellbeing can be enhanced through the effective interactions of individual characteristics and characteristics of particular places. Place attachment theory suggests that when compared to urban environments the natural world is rich in characteristics that facilitate positive emotional bonds and therefore wellbeing (Schweitzer et al., 2018).

Sofar as psychoanalytic theory is concerned, it is an overarching term encompassing a range of perspectives with contemporary theory being influenced by object relations and relational theorists, who adopt a two persons analytic perspective, and recognized the significance of inter subjectivity. The relational perspective proposes that human experience can be understood in terms of projective identification, which intern values counter transference as a key component of understanding “the other”. This notion is consistence with Husserl’s original emphasis upon the *Lebenswelt* or

lifeworld in which the direct experience of all players in human experience is valued (Schweitzer et al., 2018).

### **Wellbeing and wellness approach**

Wellbeing is a complex concept with no single definition or interpretation (Richardson et al., 2019; Shakespeare et al., 2020; in Scheyvens, Movono, Auckram, 2021). In recent years, a growing body of literature supports the idea that participation can promote psychological and physical well-being and health (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2013; Brymer et. al., 2009).

Positive psychology is concerned with understanding and fostering wellbeing by studying optimal experiences and functioning across individuals, communities, organizations, and societies (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014; in Houge Mackenzie & Brymer, 2018). Prior to the establishment of positive psychology as an official branch of psychology, Ryff (1989; in Houge Mackenzie, 2018) proposed a model of psychological well-being that included personal growth, self-acceptance, life purpose, mastery, autonomy, and positive relationships.

In positive psychology literature, wellbeing has generally been approached from two distinct perspectives: hedonism and *eudaimonia*. Hedonic well-being consists of pleasure, positive emotions, and avoidance of pain (e.g., Waterman, Schwartz & Conti, 2008; in Houge Mackenzie & Brymer, 2018). Conversely, Eudaimonic wellbeing encompasses meaning, purpose, optimal functioning, self-realization, and flourishing (Huppert & So, 2013; Ryan & Deci, 2011; in Houge Mackenzie & Brymer, 2018). While connecting these approaches, Huta and Ryan (2010; in Houge Mackenzie & Brymer, 2018) argued that the pursuit of eudaimonic well-being results in a more complete and meaningful life and fosters a more stable and enduring hedonism happiness. Eudaimonic benefits have been shown to stem directly from the immediate satisfaction of basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan, Huta, & Deci, 2013; in Houge Mackenzie & Brymer, 2018).

Christopher and Hickinbottom's (2008; in Filep et al., 2013) review shows that there are two dominant conceptions of well-being in psychology: the subjective well-being (SWB) theory, which suggests well-being is mostly pleasure, and second, the authentic happiness theory (Seligman, 2002; in Filep et al., 2013, p.35) and its extension PERMA (positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning and achievement) (Seligman, 2011; in Filep et al., 2013). Seligman's conceptions integrate the hedonic aspects (positive emotions) with the eudemonic aspects (meaning and sense of achievement).

Both SWB and PERMA models have been applied to the investigation of tourist wellbeing (Nawijin, 2011; in Filep et al., 2013). However, Seligman's (2002, 2011)

conceptions of wellbeing have received less attention in adventure tourism contexts (Kler & Tribe, 2012; in Filep et al., 2013). But there is room for Seligman's authentic happiness theory and PERMA model to receive more attention in adventure tourism research. It can be argued that the authentic happiness or PERMA conceptualization includes more relevant theoretical constructs (positive emotions, engagement, and a sense of meaning) that better explain wellbeing in relation to adventure tourist experiences than SWB.

Extreme sport participants directly relate their experience to positive personal changes. For Ogilvie (1974), participants are "extremely autonomous people who march to their own beat" (p 93; in Brymer & Oades, 2009). Participation in extreme sports, as Brymer (2009) strongly believed that the notion of 'no fear' and 'extreme Dude' are reframed as courage and humility.

Another typical response is that participation at such an extreme level teaches humility (Ahluwalia, 2003; Muir, 2003; Breathers, 1999; in Brymer & Oades, 2009). Humility is "characterized by an accurate assessment of one's characteristics, an ability to acknowledge limitations, and a 'forgetting of the self' (Tangay, 2005, p. 411; in Brymer & Oades, 2009, p. 2; Brymer, 2009, p.48). For Gonzales (2003; in Brymer & Oades, 2009) humility is an essential element for successful participation in extreme environments. Gerber (2002; in Brymer & Oades, 2009; Brymer, 2009, p.48) argued that to be truly humble, we must be in contact with something greater and perhaps more powerful, not just larger, than self.

Courage, in physical terms, is considered to be "the ability to overcome the overwhelming fear of harm or death" (Lopez, Koetting O'Byrne, & Petersen, 2003, p. 186; in Brymer & Oades, 2009, p. 3; Brymer, 2009, p.48). Those who modeled high sensation-seeking behavior and who demonstrated mastery, positive feelings and little fear in high-risk situations are regarded as fearless. Overconfident people feel little worry before a high-risk situation but have greater feelings of fear preceding further similarly risky situations. Courage, then, is about facing fears and taking risks (Lopez et al., 2003; in Brymer & Oades, 2009; Brymer, 2009, p.48).

Emerging research (Clough, Houge Mackenzie, Mallabon, & Brymer, 2016) suggests that adventurous physical health and wellbeing in a variety of ways. The literature suggests that adventurous physical activities generally provide the following benefits:

1. Increase positive psychological outcomes such as positive affect, self-efficacy, and resilience.
2. Provide opportunities to overcome challenges and have optimal experiences.
3. Provide opportunities to fulfill basic psychological needs of anatomy, competence, and relatedness.

4. Facilitate feelings connections to nature (as they normally occur in natural settings).
5. Increase physical activity levels.
6. Provide opportunities for participants to experience intense emotions.

Each of these elements has been shown to promote wellbeing or health. Based on the literature reviewed, Clough et al. (2016) conclude that adventurous physical activities may be viable wellness promotion tools that should be included in large-scale preventive health strategies (Clough et al., 2016).

Exposure to nature has been shown to improve emotional wellbeing and relieve stress (Leather, et al., 1998; in Brymer, Cuddihy & Sharma-Brymer, 2010), increase positive mood (Maller, Townsend, Pryor, Brown & St. Leger, 2006; in Brymer, Cuddihy & Sharma-Brymer, 2010), enhance life skills (Mayer & Frantz, 2005; in Brymer et al., 2010), reduce mental fatigue and increase concentration (Maller et al., 2008; in Brymer et al., 2010). The desire to seek out brief nature-based experiences is increasing (2001; in Brymer et al., 2010). While this trend has been in practice in the Western countries for some time now mostly for leisure (Scherl, 1989; in Brymer et al., 2010), developing countries are catching up. This is especially true for young adults coming from a fast-paced city lifestyle. Researchers have found that wilderness experiences improve self-perception (Young & Crandall, 1984; in Brymer et al., 2010), self-concept (1984; in Brymer et al., 2010), and improved occupational, emotional, physical and intellectual wellness (Moore, 1990; Priest, 1990; in Brymer et al., 2010).

Human wellness is defined as the positive component of optimal health (Corbin, Welk, Corbin, & Welk, 2009, p.4; in Brymer et al., 2010). Good health will be freedom from illness and disease. Human wellness is generally considered to be the integration of various dimensions. The most common of these dimensions are emotional wellness, physical wellness, social wellness, intellectual wellness, occupational wellness, and spiritual wellness (National Wellness Institute, 2009; in Brymer et al., 2010). Emotional wellness is conceptualized as “an awareness and acceptance of feelings, as well as a positive about life, oneself and the future” (Roscoe, 2009, p.218; in Brymer et al., 2010). Physical wellness is also about physical states and a focus on the journey towards realizing personal potential (Roscoe, 2009; Suckley, Noonan, & Miller, 2000; in Brymer et al., 2010). Social wellness emphasizes the quality of interactions with others. A socially well person cultivates effective relationships that enhance the quality of life for all people involved and is willing to both receive and give support (Corbin et al, 2009; Horton & Snyder, 2009; in Brymer et al, 2010). Intellectual wellness concerns learning for learning’s sake. A person who is intellectually well searching for mental stimulation for its own sake ((Horton & Snyder, 2009). Occupational wellness describes the fit between the workplace and the worker. Spiritual wellness

is the realization of a shared connection to greater power and the search for purpose and meaning. To be fully healthy beings we must establish an intimate relationship with the natural world (Glendinning, 1994; in Brymer et. al., 2009).

### **Body and extreme sport**

The body is very important in extreme sport. The body is the source, medium, and outcome for the thrill and pleasure. The body is often put at considerable risk in extreme sport. The body is powerfully socialized. Indeed, without an appreciation of the body in extreme sports one cannot understand these activities more generally. Therefore, it is quintessential to understand what human's body is? In the humanities and social sciences, "the body" is a complicated interaction between biology and society. The body helps to shape the mind as well as the mind shapes the body so that it is called the "lived body". In the past two decades, the body has become an important subject of study in the field of anthropology, psychology, sociology, literary criticism, history, and cultural geography, and others, i.e., sports and physical culture-extreme sports. Booth & Thorpe (2007) have explored the body in extreme sports through social theory and condensed it into three dimensions of human activity: that of practical bodies, interacting bodies, and storied bodies. Participants in extreme sports immerse their bodies in specific practical engagements with the world. Perhaps the most refined perspective of the practical body is that developed by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1990; in Booth & Thorpe, 2007) which he called "logic of practice" (Bourdieu, 1990; in Booth & Thorpe, 2007). The second fundamental observation of the extreme sporting body is that it constantly and significantly interacts with other bodies, selves, objects, and its environment. In this regard, the bodily behavior in relation to a specific sport reflects the ritualized idiom in their particular domain called "body idiom" that refers to the way in which these meanings are shared by both performer and the valued observer of the behavior (Booth & Thorpe, 2007). The third fundamental of the body in extreme sports is that it becomes storied. Cobley reflects the widely held view that "wherever there are humans there appear to be stories" (Cobkey, 2001, p.2; in Booth & Thorpe, 2007).

### **Mental toughness approach**

Extreme sports are also connected with adventurous activities. In this regard, Clough et al. (2016) have written that mental toughness offers a way of integrating many aspects of the adventure activity domain, but perhaps more importantly, it highlights the importance of individual differences in the choice of, and the potential benefits derived from, leisure pursuits. Mental toughness itself has been described as a "narrow personality trait" (Clough & Strycharczyk, 2012; in Clough et al., 2016) and has a clear genetic basis (Clough, Earle, & Sewell, 2002; in Clough et al., 2016). Individuals who score highly on mental toughness are excited by the challenge and

therefore may be drawn to Adventure. Applying the concept of mental toughness to the field of adventure provides an opportunity to integrate the extant literature regarding stress, risk, resilience wellbeing. Arguably, the most widely used model of mental toughness is the 4' C's model (Clough et al., 2002; in Clough et al., 2016). In the 4 C's model, overall mental toughness is a product of four central pillars: *challenge*: seeing challenge as an opportunity; *confidence*: having a high level of self-belief; *commitment*: having the ability to stick to tasks; and *control*: having the belief that you control your own destiny.

### **Fear and emotion**

The most commonly associated emotion with extreme sports is fear. Fear refers to a feeling state in which there is both a subject and an object. In extreme sports, this involves the potential destruction of the physical self. Adults are supposed to control their intense emotions, fear is supposed to be curtailed (Ellias & Dunning, 1986). In extreme sports, the general assumption is that participants must have either an unhealthy relationship to fear or they must be pathologically fearless (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2012, p.479). Fear is a crucial and potentially aversive part of the extreme sport experience.

Fear is not a protagonist but represents a stage which can be recognized and transcended. From an evolutionary perspective fear is related to survival (Ewert, 1986; in Brymer & Schweitzer, 2012, p. 484). Those who were 'too fearful to face the do-or-die world outside' (Marino, 2001, p. 1; in Brymer & Schweitzer, 2012, p. 484) probably starved. For Ewert (1986: 45) a 'successful' society is one which tends to 'insulate itself from both environmental (e.g., cold, dark, hunger) and societal/psychological (e.g., confrontation, alien cultures) fear'. Paradoxically, Ewert (1986; in Brymer & Schweitzer, 2012, p. 484) noted that by facing and overcoming fear a person can gain valuable self-knowledge and personal growth.

Fear has been interpreted as a positive contribution to personal growth and the development of authenticity (Arnould & Price, 1993; in Brymer & Schweitzer, 2012, p. 484). For example, Arnould and Price (1993, p. 29; in Brymer & Schweitzer, 2012, p. 484) noted that participants on a whitewater raft trip experienced fear which helped to cement a sense of self.

Their concerns carry an undercurrent of fear of rafting – that this is something they might die doing. Such fears contribute to [a] perception of the experience as extraordinary and set the stage for a rise of intensification that extends and renews the self (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2012, p. 484).

In adventure studies, risk has become the central theme that has attracted the concerned participants and researchers. Human beings are recognized as risk-takers and risk-avoiders. But, in adventurous nature sports, risk and sensation-seeking are recognized as the key motivators thus paying attention to risk-taking and risk-

seeking behavior. From an anthropological perspective, Clark (1986; in Mackenzie & Brymer, 2018) differentiated between the inevitable risk-taking that occurs in life, and risk-seeking involved that is deliberate and easily avoidable Clark (1986), and Foster (1993) identified risk-seeking through the adventure as one way of attaining high levels of emotional arousal. Risk-seeking is a deliberate way of inducing the emotional arousal that risk-taking generates...both pleasurable and unpleasurable excitement are involved in risk-seeking (Foster, 1993; in Mackenzie & Brymer, 2018). Risk-taking, danger, and control, although it is considered a traditional concept, were central to Ewert and Hollenhorst (1989).

### **High-risk sport and tragedy**

If extreme sport is a high-risk sport, high risk can refer to spatial dimensions, based on “extreme locations-wilderness, remoteness, the forbidden” (Tomlinson et al., 2005; in Cohen et al., 2018). Sport, where participants compete with the natural elements in locations with snow, hills, canyons, islands, mountains, rivers, or volcanoes would fit into the category of “high risk” sport, e.g., extreme skiing and whitewater rafting (Cohen et al., 2018, p.4). Both high-risk sport and extreme sport are defined as any sport where one has to accept a possibility of severe injury or death as an inherent part of the activity.

The most important sociological phenomena affecting perceptions of risk and hazard in mountaineering is the “risky shift” phenomena. Risk-taking is a valued form of behavior among climbers because it creates mental stress essential for promoting optimal performance. However, risk-taking also spawns several phenomena which promote the acceptance of higher levels of risk. When a group verbalizes its decision concerning a risky situation, the group’s decision tends to be riskier than the individuals would have recommended privately (Cartwright) (Helms, 1984).

High-risk sports, usually defined as those in which one has to accept the possibility of severe injury or death as an inherent factor (Breivik, 1995; in Castnier, Le Scanff, & Woodman, 2010), are demanding activities that require specialized equipment and training to manage the risks involved (Fiffe & Peter, 1997; in Castanier et al. 2010, p. 478).

In the study of extreme sport, risk has been highly focused and so many other areas are overlooked. Most theoretical explanations assume that participation reflects a desire for thrills, excitement, or adrenaline-seeking. However, emerging research indicates that these explanations are oversimplifications (Brymer & Oades, 2009; Willig, 2008) and do not reflect the lived experience of participants who refute the thrills and adrenaline notion and instead describe participation as meaningful and life-enhancing (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2013; Brymer et al., 2009).

Risk-taking behavior has been defined by the reviewers as either a socially unacceptable volition behavior with a potentially negative outcome in which

precautions are not taken (e.g., speeding, drinking, and driving) or a socially accepted behavior in which the danger is recognized (competitive sports, skydiving) (Turner, McClure, & Pirozzo, 2004)

Risk-taking research has largely focused on dis-inhibition behaviors, which are perceived as socially unacceptable volition behaviors (e.g., dangerous driving, drug-taking, gambling, promiscuous sex) in which individuals take insufficient precaution and from which the outcomes are potentially negative (Castanier et al., 2010). Risk is a culturally constructed phenomenon stemming from modern society's deep-seated aversion for, and obsessive desire to be 'liberated' from uncertainty (Davidson, 2008; Fairlie, 1989; in Brymer, 2010). Risk was initially a construct used to understand outcome probability and magnitude in gambling (Creyer, Ross, & Evers, 2003; Davidson, 2008). As modern society has become a negative descriptor synonymous with the unacceptable face of danger and society's primary preoccupation about 'rendering it measurable and controllable (Davidson, 2008, p.6). Society has become so preoccupied with risk reduction that activities not immediately accepted by the majority are instantly labeled undesirable (Brymer, 2010)

Extreme level activities involve higher skill, focus, and risk, but if the skill proves inadequate, the consequences are unlikely to prove fatal, unless the participant is unlucky. Extreme activities involve the continuous application of the highest-level skills and concentration in order to avoid any error, and any failure is likely to prove fatal unless the participant is specially lucky. In many activities any error is likely to cause an immediate and irremediable disaster. Falling on a free solo climb or hitting a cliff during proximity, wingsuit flying commonly permits no recovery or rescue. This provides a distinction that corresponds to that adopted in previous phenomenological research (Brymer, 2005; in Buckley, 2018), but is itself independent of the psychology of the participants.

Public attention in high-risk sports generally focuses on tragedies and as such are highly emotive and sensationalized. Dramatic accounts of accidents and hardships often lead to fierce debates on the merits and ethics of these sports (Monasterio, 2007).

The number of high-risk fatalities were reported in the United States from 1978 through 1980 (Societies and Actuaries, 1983; in Celsi, Rose, & Leigh, 1993). During that period an average of 49 skydivers (one per every 700 participants), 50 mountain climbers (1/1,000), 122 scuba divers (1/100,000), 41 ultralight aircraft pilots (1/ 250), and 27 hang glider pilots (1/1,250) were killed each year. Countless others were injured (Celsi et al.,1993).

In 1996, 16 people died on Mt Everest, including eight in one day (Southerland, 2006; in Brymer, 2013, p.111). In 1999, 21 people died on a canyoning trip in Switzerland (Cater, 2006; Brymer, 2013). In April 2008, six students and a teacher died

in a New Zealand canyoning disaster (Watson et al., 2008; in Brymer, 2013), and in May 2008, the Independent Newchapel, (UK) (Judd, 2008; in Brymer, 2013) reported the drowning of a young back packer while river surfing. Despite such stories, extreme sports are enjoying incredible popularity while more traditional sports are struggling to retain members (Pain & Pain, 2003).

In 1996 on the same mountain, Texan pathologist Beck Weathers walked to safety despite twice having been deemed “essentially dead”. Over time 245 mountaineers have died in their quest to climb New Zealand’s highest mountain, Aoraki/ Mt Cook, and more than one thousand in their quest for Europe’s highest peak, Mt Blanc. Australian sea kayaker Andrew McCauley tragically died attempting the first solo-crossing from Australia to New Zealand. BASE jumping is probably the most dangerous sport in the world and involves parachute jumping from either tall natural features or man-made structures. The parachute is initially closed and is opened after a (short) free fall. A comprehensive database of BASE jumping fatalities reveals that 175 jumpers have died since the sport began (approximately 30 years ago) (Monasterio, 2007).

### **Outdoor education**

For educators to maximize the learning potential of outdoor activity, we must come to better ‘understand the psychological and emotional connections between humans and the natural world’ (Stremba & Bisson, 2009, p. 345; in Brymer et. al., 2009, p. 136) and how these connections might be facilitated.

Outdoor education or adventure education follows the experiential philosophy of learning by doing. It takes place primarily, but not exclusively, through involvement with the natural environment. In outdoor education, the emphasis on learning is placed on relationships concerning people and natural resources. Four types of relationships in outdoor education have been identified: interpersonal, intrapersonal, ecosystems, and existing (Priest, 1986; in Priest & Gass, 2018). Interpersonal relationship refers to how people get along in a group or two or more. Aspects of these relationships include communication, cooperation, trust, conflict resolution, and problem-solving. Intrapersonal relationships refer to how individuals get along with themselves. Aspects of these relationships include self-concept, confidence, and self-efficacy. Eco-systemic refers to the interdependence of living organisms in an ecological system. Aspects of these relationships include basic biological concepts, such as the web of life, the food chain, and the energy pyramid. Ekistic relationships refer to the key interactions between human society and the natural resources of an environment or how people influence the quality of the environment (e.g., water pollution or strip mining) and how the environment influences the quality of their lives (e.g., clean drinking water or beauty). Historically, two branches of outdoor education have been identified; adventure and environmental (Priest & Gass, 2018).

As mentioned above, adventure education is the branch of outdoor education concerned with interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships. Adventure education uses adventurous activities that provide a group or an individual with the compelling tasks to accomplish. These tasks often involve group problem solving (requiring discussion making, judgment, cooperation, communication, and trust) and personal challenge testing competence against mental, social or physical risks). Environmental education is the branch of outdoor education concerned primarily with ecosystems and ekistic relationships. This study further explores recreation, outdoor recreation, and outdoor pursuits. Recreation refers to the activities that take place during leisure. Outdoor recreation is simply done outdoors at leisure. Outdoor pursuits are human-powered outdoor recreation.

### **Extreme sport and community development**

Recent research revealing transformational aspects of extreme sport participation has coincided with a gradual positive shift in attitudes towards extreme sports by the non-participating public. In Malaysia, BASE jumping is seen as a legitimate competitive sport and is recognized by the Malaysian tourism association as a sustainable tourist attraction. The first jump from the Kuala Lumpur Tower in 1999 was soon followed by the world's first BASE jumping competition in 2001. This innovative event catapulted Malaysia's reputation as an extreme tourism destination amongst the international BASE community. In 2006, the event expanded to include five buildings in five Malaysian states. The competition, called the Merdeka BASE Circuit, sees international BASE jumpers travel around Malaysia for nearly a month, jumping from various iconic buildings ([www.kltowerjump.com/sponsors.html](http://www.kltowerjump.com/sponsors.html)) (Brymer & Houge Mackenzie, 2015, p. 131).

The Malaysian government has used BASE jumping events to actively improve tourist–host interactions and host attitudes towards extreme sports and international tourists. These interactions have resulted in hosts developing a deeper understanding of BASE jumping participant motivations, and a realization that participants are ordinary people (Tengku Adlin, Chairman of the Sabah Tourism Board, personal communication, November 2008; in Brymer & Houge Mackenzie, 2015, p. 131). Due to local community benefits, the Malaysian government now considers extreme tourism an integral part of their adventure tourism offerings (ranging from soft, medium, hard, to extreme) (Tengku Adlin, Chairman of the Sabah Tourism Board, personal communication, November 2008; in Brymer & Houge Mackenzie, 2015). According to Gary Cunningham, the Merdeka event organizer, host–tourist interactions are promoted to instigate new ways of thinking in local communities (personal communication, July 2013; in Brymer & Houge Mackenzie, 2015). Based on Malaysia's success, other countries in Asia, the USA, Europe, and the Middle East have developed similar BASE jumping tourism initiatives.

Mountaineering tourism has also positively impacted remote communities that are normally inaccessible for mainstream tourists. These benefits include improvements in infrastructure, education, health and economic growth, as well as the increased exchange of ideas, and worldviews. Mountaineering in Nepal is directly responsible for social and community enhancement programs that transform hosts socially, economically, and psychologically (Sharma, 2009; in Brymer & Houge Mackenzie, 2015, p. 132). Hence, extreme sports, such as mountaineering, offer transformation opportunities for host communities beyond standard economic indicators (Brymer & Houge Mackenzie, 2015, p. 132).

### **Conclusion**

Extreme sport or high-risk sport is one of the fastest-growing areas of sporting activities in this century, and because of its nature, it has piqued the interest of the media all over the world. The different reports also show that extreme sports participants have been considerably exceeded over the past two decades. However, in the context of sports science, its definition must be completely clear and linguistically accurate, and free of media-suggested terminology (Cohen et al., 2018).

Sports differ in terms of activity duration and intensity leading to different interaction effects on behavior. For example, a mountaineering trip might take weeks, exposing the individual to prolonged periods of environmental uncertainty, whereas other sports such as BASE jumping, might only take seconds. Another finding, questioning the idea that action and adventure sports (AAS) are synonymous with youth sports or subcultures, is that participants represent a broad demographic, including males and females of various age ranges and education and income levels (Creyer, Ross, & Evers, 2003; in Immonen et al., 2017). Each sport has its unique history and development patterns (Wheaton, 2008; in Immonen et al., 2017). One potential difficulty in categorizing a specific sport, or a group of sports as a single entity (i.e., as 'extreme'), could be that distinguishing characteristic of participation styles and the role of the interactions between individual characteristics of participants and varying performance environments are overlooked (Immonen et al., 2017).

Motivation is thus a complex process involving both cognitive and implicit processes which play a part in the potential survival value of the human-nature process (Schweitzer, Glab & Brymer, 2018, p. 2). The body is the source, medium, and outcome for the thrill and pleasure. The body is often put at considerable risk in extreme sport. Extreme level activities involve higher skill, focus, and risk. References to the importance of mastery and skills suggest that the experience of taking part in extreme sport requires discipline and structured learning. It demands commitment and it calls for considerable investment of resources such as time and energy as well as money on the part of the participant (Willig, 2008, p. 696).

While studying extreme sport, scholars have shed light on various theories such as lifeworld approach, noema and noesis (Schweitzer & Brymer 2017). In the context of nature human relationship, Schweitzer, Glab & Brymer (2018) have discussed on several theories such as Biophilia, Attention restoration theory (ATR), Stress reduction theory (SRT), Place attachment theory and Psychoanalytic theory developed by various scholars. Apart from these theories, Hungenberg et al. (2014) with Brymer (2010) have discussed on various motivational concepts such as sensation seeking, edgework, big 'T' and small 't' and plateau experiences. Eudaimonia and hedonism, humility and courage, wellbeing and wellness, forgetting of the self and overcoming fear of death including four C's model (Challenge, Confidence, Commitment and Control) are also part of the study carried out by Houge Mackenzie and Brymer (2018), Brymer (2009), Brymer and Grey (2009), Brymer and Oades (2009), Booth and Thorp (2007), Clough et al. (2016).

Extreme sports are also more exposed to natural and extraordinary physical and mental difficulties such as speed, depth, or natural forces. Furthermore, a poor outcome is more likely to result in the participant's injury or death than a successful one in a popular sport. As a result, it is proposed that incidences are the distinguishing elements that distinguish extreme sports from other activities such as adventure sport, alternative sport, and so on. The extreme sport participants directly relate their experiences to positive personal changes.

In the positive psychology literature, wellbeing has generally been approached from two distinct perspectives: hedonism and eudaimonia. Hedonic well-being consists of pleasure, positive emotions, and avoidance of pain (e.g., Waterman, Schwartz & Conti, 2008; in Houge Mackenzie & Brymer, 2018). Conversely, Eudaimonic wellbeing encompasses meaning, purpose, optimal functioning, self-realization, and flourishing (Huppert & So, 2013; Ryan & Deci, 2011; in Houge Mackenzie, 2018). While connecting these approaches, Huta and Ryan (2010; in Houge Mackenzie & Brymer, 2018) argued that the pursuit of eudaimonic wellbeing results in more complete and meaningful life and fosters a more stable and enduring hedonism happiness. Eudaimonic benefits have been shown to stem directly from the immediate satisfaction of basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan, Huta, & Deci, 2013; in Houge Mackenzie & Brymer, 2018). As a result, the study found that extreme sports had a considerable positive influence on all aspects of an individual's life. Overall, this study has refocused attention on the parts of extreme sport comprising the larger field, recognizing the elements extreme sport scholarship remain nuanced and worthy of research. Extreme sport as motivation leads to travel, to be in place, to meet people, to be participant of an activity, to interact with nature and expecting the outcome of risk and uncertainty with plateau experience. This is niche market and niche tourism.

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