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# Journal of **Tourism & Adventure**

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Vol. 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 journals which are published from Nepal, the audiences generally go through [www.nepjol.info](http://www.nepjol.info). This will be confirmed after the first issue is published and approached to the concerned organization.

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 assess 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  
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**Sustainable Management of Trekking Trails for the  
Adventure Tourism in Mountains: A Study of Nepal's  
Great Himalaya Trails**

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**Abstract**

*The existing body of knowledge in tourism reveals that the trekking trails have global appeal and vast potentials to be established and developed as adventure tourism products cum destinations in world mountain regions. The adventure tourism is as one of the fastest growing sub-sectors of tourism. Today the world's trail systems play a significant role in adventure tourism for its rapid growth. Such a trend inevitably necessitates a clear guideline (the formulation and application of sustainable trail management approach) not only for establishing trails heritage as safe, quality accredited (audited) and branded products but also for meeting trail development and maintenance international standards and best practices. Through the review of the literatures on trails and trails management for adventure tourism, participation in the Trail Standards Guidelines (TSG) formulation process for the Great Himalaya Trails (GHT) of Nepal and assessment of Nepal's trail sites as GHT certified trail auditor by the author; this paper argues that sustainable trail management is trail destination specific innovative approach. It should be understood and applied through the interaction of local practices with global knowledge and best practices. There is pressing need of clear guidelines at trail destinations. Such guidelines can be easy reference for shared engagements and benefits of trail communities and enlightening experience of trails users. The discussion concludes with the case study of*

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*GHT as an emerging brand for adventure tourism identity of Nepal. GHT strives for sustained and beneficial tourism management system through effective implementation of the TSG by the means of integrated approach.*

## Introduction

The research evidences for adventure tourism reveals that it has accelerated a discernible move towards the commodification of mountains and their trekking trails. With numerous trekking options and the significant proportions of new tourism attractions with access to the direct and authentic experience of nature and culture, the many of the global mountain trails are integrated with tourism on the forms a distinct trekking and adventure destinations. These trails attract millions of explorers, trekkers, mountaineers, and general-purpose visitors for the purpose of adventure tourism. As such there has been exponential growth in adventure tourism with tourists also visiting destinations previously undiscovered between 2010 and 2014; the adventure tourism industry grew by 195%. Adventure travel is rapidly becoming mainstream. The international adventure tourism market is likely to grow the compound annual growth rate of 45.99% during the period 2016-2020. These trends highly necessitates the proper management of these trails backstopped by a clear standard guidelines for safe, qualitative, standard and also branded trekking trails in order for making adventure tourism sustainable (ATTA, 2018; Williams & Soutar, 2005).

Interest in sustainable management of trekking, hiking and backpacking trails based adventure in the tourism industry and among researchers is relatively new, emerging only recently as a distinct subfield of tourism research. Several studies (Ballantyne & Pickering, 2015; Council of Europe, 2010; Hayes & MacLeod 2007; Hugo, 2010a; MacLeod, 2016; Marschall, 2012; Mu & Nepal, 2015; Pickering & Norman, 2017; Rogerson, 2007; Sato, Kim, Buning & Harada, 2018; Timothy & Boyd, 2015; UNWTO, 2014; Zabbini, 2012) through their diverse focuses on trails and tourism emphasize for managing growth through sustainable management. The sustainable management of trekking trails matters for a number of crucial issues at the trail destinations:

- (a) The explosive growth of tourists for established trekking trail destinations is a challenge for the quality of experience of trail users due to the deficiency on proper management that has lacked minimum parameter of safety, quality and standards. As overtourism without sustainable management will continue to be a serious issue felt by adventure tourism, the destruction of the world's most pristine and special trail destinations is irreversible.
- (b) The newer destinations (with under visited tourist number and under competitiveness) need to offer them with differential brand identity consisting sustainable management. Such a trend should also coincide with

the interest of trail users who are not only growingly conscious for their authentic (unique) experiences but also for their well being and fulfillment of their expectations (standards, safety and quality) and the betterment of destinations.

- (c) Developing and enhancing trails to international standards that offer safe and quality trail experiences, requires that trails are monitored and assessed following a robust system of auditing. This is especially necessary to meet the expectations of the global hiking, walking and trekking tourist.
- (d) The meaningful participations of trail destinations' wide-ranging trail stakeholders (service offering workers and business and value chain creating enterprises as host communities) is vital.

The right management aspects for addressing aforementioned issues are key strengths for the global trail destinations' unique and differential branding/marketing (Hayes & MacLeod 2007; Marschall, 2012; Rogerson, 2007; Sato, Kim, Buning & Harada, 2018; Zabbini, 2012) that is undeniably right and indispensable in case of Nepal's Great Himalaya Trails (Bezemer, 2014; Boustead, 2015; Choegyal, 2011; MoCTCA, 2017; SAMARTH-NMDP, 2018a; GHTNA, 2018; Upadhayaya, 2018) too. As its consequences, there has been growing attention and debate as how the trekking trails be managed sustainably by integrating trail management strategies and be branded which will result with the multiple benefits for the diverse stakeholders like trail hosts (trail owners, trail managers, trail developers, business communities, local communities, local government, trail workers as guides, porters, etc.) and guests (trail users/trekkers).

The 'current academic conversation' on trails and their relevance for adventure tourism emphasizes that the sustainable management of trails be possible by integrating trail management strategies and branding and marketing of trails. However, a knowledge gap remains on the empirical evidence base. This calls for standard guidelines (the knowledge as an easy reference or model) for the management (planning, construction, best practices, internationally accepted standards, maintenance, conservation, sustainability, accreditation/certification and branding) of trails through integrated approach and the procedures.

In this contextual background, this paper intends to address following questions:

- a) What does it mean by the sustainable management of trekking trails that result with its brand identity and value of mountain adventure destination?
- b) What and how systematically it works for the management of trekking trails for the sustainable adventure tourism in mountains?

- c) How Nepal's GHT is evolving for its standardization, sustainable management and branding that as a case study could be copied in and scaled up?

### **Methodological note**

Methodologically, this paper is based on both interdisciplinary (including trekking tourism and mountain development) and transdisciplinary (including universal trail standards and tourism) research approach. The author has applied eclectic technique for accumulating information from his work experience as the GHT certified trail auditor and Nepal government approved trek guide. The methodology included the collection of the qualitative information through primary source of information from the research based GHT trails auditing in the years 2016 and 2017. The secondary source of information included a comprehensive review of relevant published and unpublished literatures, reports and data through desk studies. Theoretically, this paper is conceptualized on sustainability criteria based integrated approach of tourism planning and management.

### **Positioning mountain trekking trails as the global adventure tourism products cum destinations**

A trail is usually a path, track or unpaved lane or road or highway. The trekking trails on foot have played significant roles in the human story for their accessibility, migration and civilization since the pre historic time. Trails around the world are an immeasurable asset to local communities as pathways of connection and avenues for development and livelihood. These products have a global appeal and are becoming more prolific (Alves, 2008).

The trail or route provides a themed and interpreted journey through the rural or urban landscape, creating links between sites, attractions and other tourism businesses by providing information and storytelling along the way. Trails range in scale from the site-specific to the international and can be followed on foot, by bicycle, on horseback, by car, by boat or even by diving along underwater trails. In many cases, these trails have been developed to promote access and recreation, to explore a conservation theme and to give a clear identity to places not already well-known by visitors.

In context of trekking which is the one of the integral activities of adventure oriented mountain tourism, a trail can be considered as a rough path across open country or through forests. The earth's land surface area caters one-fifth (nearly 24 per cent) of it as Mountains of all kinds (e.g. Alps, Hindu Kush-Himalayas, Andes and Rocky mountains) in a great variety of topography, geography, shapes, ecosystems, climatic conditions, and diversity of cultures. The table 1 below offers the major mountain types of the world as popular for trekking based adventure tourism.

**Table 1: Global major Mountains types offered with adventurous trekking trails**

Mountains types	Continent/ Countries covered	Few existing popular trekking trails for adventure tourism	Key features /pull factors	Key mountain ranges	Ranges in altitude of trekking trails
<b>Alps</b>	Europe (Austria, Italy and Slovenia)	Alps-Adriatic regional trail	Home to the most beautiful mountains of the World with high access and facilities	Mont Blanc (4810 m) Monte Rosa (4634 m) Matterhorn (4478 m)	600 - 3163 m
	France	Tour du Vieux Chaillol in France	Offering larch forests, stunning green pastures and hamlets	Awe-inspiring mountains (3163m)	
<b>Rockies</b>	North America (Canada and USA)	Appalachian trail Bruce trail	One of the longest (over 4830 km) mountain ranges	Mt. Elbert (4401 m) Mt. Massive (4398 m)	1153 m average
<b>Andes</b>	South America (Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile and Argentina)	Inca and Machu Picchu trail	The longest(7242 km) mountain ranges in the World	Aconcagua (6962 m) Ojos del Salado (6893 m) Huascarán (6768 m)	Up to 4215m
<b>Himalayas</b>	South and East Asia (Pakistan, India, Bhutan, Tibet and Nepal)	Great Himalaya Trails -GHT (Ladakh – Markha Valley trek, Margalla Hills trek, Chomolhari trek, Kanchenjunga Basecamp Trail, Makalu Base Camp Trail, Annapurna Base camp Trail, Rara Khaptad Trekking Trail)	Home to world's highest peaks including Mount Everest and K2	Over 4500 km of Great Himalaya ranges including Mt Everest, K2, Mt Kanchenjunga, Mt. Makalu, Mt Cho you, Mt. Annapurna, Manaslu, Mt Dhaulagiri, etc.	Up to 6000m

Mountains types	Continent/ Countries covered	Few existing popular trekking trails for adventure tourism	Key features /pull factors	Key mountain ranges	Ranges in altitude of trekking trails
<b>African Rift</b>	Africa (East and West)	Mt Kilimanjaro summit trek Mt Kenya summit trek Fish river canyon trek	With altitudinal, climatic, land use, ecological (forest and moorland) differentiations	Mt. Kilimanjaro (5895 m) Mount Kenya (5199m) Atlas Mountains (Toubkal)(4,167 m) The Simien Mountains ( Ras Dashen) (4620m) The Drakensberg (Thabana Ntlenyana) (3,482 m)	Up to 5895 m

*Source: Author*

These Mountains are a valuable natural asset of which the tourism industry very often makes extensive use. The mountains as in table above are the flourishing ground for adventure tourism products cum destinations as these mountains with several lower and higher peaks of the globe posses enormous trekking trails. Such trails pass through lush green valleys, arid high plateaus and incredible landscapes. In this sense, Mountain tourism as an integral part of global tourism has developed as higher recreation and adventure for tourists who are fond of trekking. The last three decades have seen the deliberate creation of new trails for recreation and adventure tourism purposes (Hayes & MacLeod, 2008).

Based on the altitude and types of activities, mountain trails can be broadly categorized as (a) easy walking/trekking trails, (b) nature/culture trekking trails and (c) high Mountain trekking trails and (d) pilgrimage trekking routes. The trekking trails generally meet the needs of outdoor, nature and adventure enthusiasts through offering pristine untouched nature and changing landscapes (MoCTCA, 2017). Furthermore, these trails provide breath-taking views of the towering and short peaks and give tourists the chance to visit communities and villages and learn about the culture and traditions of various ethnic groups. The world as trails connects people on intercultural level in a relaxed environment and a host of other values.

Such trails attract tourists from varied tourist market segments like holidays, pilgrimage, adventurous and special interest from all over the world for the ranges of activities in terrestrial, aerial and also aquatic forms. It is indicative that 10 per cent of tourist hotspots worldwide are developing mountain tourism (Paunovic & Jovanovic, 2017). As per UNWTO 2014 Global Report on Adventure Tourism, the global trail industry is multibillion dollar contribution to the economy. Most of these mountains in the lower altitude with cultural routes also bring tourists to some of the most remote communities on earth. Trekking in the mountains is adventurous, rewarding and unforgettable experience with these trails (Bezemer, 2014; Shrestha, 2000). Highlighting the adventure and challenging context of trail just prior to the establishment of the World Trails Network (WTN) in 2015, Saintz (2015, p.61) reveals that 'trails can test our resolve on day and be celebration of the outdoors and friendships the next'.

Amidst aforementioned various mountain regions, some popular trekking trails are confined in particular country (e.g. Appalachian trail in USA and Bruce trail in Canada, historical cultural routes in Switzerland, etc.) while others are also spread in two or more than two countries (e.g. Alps-Adriatic trail in Alps and Great Himalaya Trails in Himalayas). The cross-border trails among nations of the world and people act as inter-cultural bridges and promote peace-building through common understanding and bring mutual prosperity. Nepal as the home of the GHT is one of the potential beneficiaries of this industry.

The Himalayas in Nepal and her neighboring countries in the global South collectively offer Great Himalaya Trails. GHT in the Himalayas are one of the World's longest and highest walking and trekking trails in the World. It covers the full distance of the Himalayan mountain range in Nepal and continues through Tibet, Bhutan, India and Myanmar to the East of Nepal and continues through China (Tibet Autonomous Region), India and Pakistan to the West. The GHTs are the prime attractions for tourists for adventure tourism from all over the world.

### **Sustainable management of trekking trails: A conceptual foundation**

A sustainable trail is not merely a "path only in the field" joining two or more paces but it should form an integral part of the local tourism industry. The sustainable trails management concept coincides with the concept of sustainable tourism development. Sustainable tourism development follows the basic principles of sustainable development. Kunwar (2010) reveals the guiding principle for sustainable tourism development as the management of natural and human resources so as to maximize visitor enjoyment and local benefit while minimizing negative impacts upon the destination site, community and local population. The sustainable development endeavors unveil that sustainability implies for permanence through the planning

and management of resources in such a way that economic, social, cultural and aesthetic needs of the societies are met while maintaining the essential ecological processes, biological diversity and naturally occurring life support systems (United Nations General Assembly, 1987).

Respecting the objectives of the sustainable development, sustainable trails development stresses for the design, construction and maintenance of trails in such a way to ensure that the bio-physical character of the environment will not deteriorate due to the use of the trail. Ecological conservation of the resource base is most important (MoCTCA, 2017). Sustainable trails have many facets, including social and economic sustainability. A trail must be designed so as to enhance the social as well as environmental expectations of hikers. Along with the conceptualization of trail as quality assured product, great care in the probable environmental risk is must for sustainability of trail atmosphere and tourism market. A trail that is truly sustainable should also be designed so as to enhance the experience of the hiker so that they would enjoy the hike; manifested in the fact that they return for frequent re-visits to the trail. An ideal sustainable trail should also provide enough scope for outdoor education that is able to differentiate between learning and enlightening experience for the trail users. A sustainable trail provides a high quality recreational experience in a landscape and community that is capable of supporting the activity and is economically sustainable through appropriate management model (David, 2012 as in WTN, 2017).

There are a number of publications on management practices on trails and their implications for sustainability. The existing body of knowledge (American Trails, 2007; Beeton, 2007; Beirman, Upadhayaya, Pradhananga & Darcy, 2018; Council of Europe, 2010; Hayes & MacLeod 2007; Hugo, 2010b; Hughes & Morrison-Saunders, 2002; Kling, Fredman, & Wall-Reinius, 2017; MacLeod, 2016; Marion & Wimpey, 2017; Marschall, 2012; Mu & Nepal, 2015; Nyaupane, Lew, & Tatsugawa, 2014; Pickering & Norman, 2017; Rogerson, 2007; Santarém, Silva & Santos, 2015; Sato, Kim, Buning and Harada, 2018; Slabbert & Preez, 2017; TAOC, 2006; Timothy & Boyd, 2015; Weston & Mota, 2012; Williams, & Soutar, 2005; Zabbini, 2012; Zurich, 2010) on trails and tourism has diverse focuses.

Such focuses ranges on the need of the maintenance of the trail over long term (American Trails, 2007; TAOC, 2006); critical management issues of multi-use trail (Beeton, 2007); accessible tourism through auditing and development of trekking trail for differently able (physically disabled) persons (Beirman et. all, 2018); certifying routes (Council of Europe, 2010); creation of business opportunities and enhancement of the visitor experience (Hayes & MacLeod 2007; Rogerson, 2007); assessment of the influence of sustainable trail design and maintenance on soil loss (Marion & Wimpey, 2017); impact of trail-side interpretive signs on visitor knowledge

(Hughes & Morrison-Saunders, 2002); the status of international trail research and analyzes (Kling, Fredman, & Wall-Reinius, 2017); and self-guided trails as a route to more responsible tourism through planning principles (MacLeod, 2016).

Some other publications have specific focuses on the potential of trails for the improvement of the lives of host communities (Marschall, 2012; Zabbini, 2012), trekkers' perceptions of risk and death associated with high mountain adventure tourism (Mu & Nepal, 2015); trekking tourism led social and environment changes in the Himalayas (Nyaupane, Lew & Tatsugawa, 2014); trail soil erosion and maintenance (Pickering & Norman, 2017); role of decision and non-decision makers on role of adventure tourism motivation and destination loyalty and the destination marketing as the fulfillment of the expectation of the adventure tourists (Sato et. all, 2018); ecotourism potential of hiking trails (Santarém, Silva & Santos, 2015); an accreditation system for hiking trails (Slabbert & Preez, 2017); development of trails and routes to promote regional development agenda while focusing on trail management (stakeholders and visitors'), cultural, and ecological issues and integrated efforts on trail development and management (Timothy & Boyd, 2015); low carbon tourism trail (Weston & Mota, 2012); responsible management of responsible tourism operation (Williams, & Soutar, 2005); cultural routes and intangible heritage (Zabbini, 2012); potential of adventure tourism for national and local development in the frontier areas (Zurich, 2010); and recreation value of a new long-distance walking track (Cook, 2008).

The work of few scholars like Pickering & Norman (2017) and Ballantyne & Pickering (2015) have discussed the impacts of formal and informal recreational trails on urban forest loss and tree structure and highlighted the importance of careful consideration towards management options when dealing with trail networks especially in areas of high conservation value. The results of the work of Mutana & Mukwada (2018) indicate that most research on mountain-route tourism emphasize the nature and marketing of mountain tourism and impacts of tourism on mountains.

The wide ranging diverse focuses on trail management have contrasting and fragmented focuses and these do not offer a common understanding or a common easy reference. It is also due to some different standpoints of the sustainable tourism from one mountain community to another. In this context, the sustainable management of trekking trails calls for a comprehensive guidelines for planning, auditing, development, accreditation and branding (marketing) trails in an integrated approach with in a context where there are wide-ranging trail stakeholders (hosts and guests) with diverse perspectives (Hugo, 2010b; Timothy & Boyd, 2015). This paper offers following four measures for standards, safety, and quality of trails which are foundations for trails' sustainable management.

- a) Trail path area safety quality
- b) Comprehensive information management on trail
- c) Trail’s natural environment and its grading
- d) Enterprises’ (lodges, hotels, tea house, homestay, etc.) and/or camping facilities on trails and its status

The tables below offer the list the elements for each of the measures mentioned above.

**Table 2: Trail path area safety quality for sustainable trails**

	Key elements	Actors influencing or influenced by such elements
Trail path area safety quality	Natural disasters, Dangerous elements (animals, mugging, etc.), Path surface conditions [Trail width for walking (1.2 m minimum), trekking (1.2 m minimum) and high mountain trekking trail (1.2 m typical), rockiness, stoniness, slippery, sandy, unstable surface, trail sagging, erosion, drainage, trail deviation, lack of proper steps or high steps, water barriers, lack of alignment of path, stream crossable, gradient (normally less than 10% is ideal), handrails, stile with hand railings, cambered pathway, pruning, fallen tree or grown vegetation blocking normal passage, deepness of the trail path than surrounding landscape, trail path surface strength (solid/loose/muddy) any obstacles (e.g. large rock, landslides, loose stones) stepping stones, bridges (secure/insecure), communication provision (cell phone coverage) availability of drinking water, health post, emergency evacuation provisions, path marking and warning signage , etc.]	Trail auditors Trail workers/builders Trail users (tourist and local communities) Trail authorities (if a trail falls in the national park areas and national park authority is responsible to govern it)

Source: MoCTCA, 2017

**Table 3: information management provisions on trekking trails**

Indicators of information management on trekking trails	Grading/Types	Actors influencing or influenced by such elements
Difficulty levels based on trail altitudes	Easy (generally up to 2000m) Moderate (between 2000 m to 3000m) Moderate (between 3000 m to 4000m) Very hard (between 3500 m to 5000m) Extreme (between 5000 m to 6500m)	Trail auditors Trail workers/builders Trail users (tourist and local communities) Trail authorities (if a trail falls in the national park areas and national park authority is responsible to govern it)
Potential standard signage for trail routes (See Annex 2: Standard signage designs for trekking trails)	Trail head signage at the start of trail Welcome signage for trail destinations Warning signage at danger prevailing pints or at points prior to risk prevailing Directional signage at trail intersections Interpretative signage for point of interests Management maintenance signage at necessary points where works are in progress Trail markers at regular intervals	Trail auditors Trail workers/builders Trail users (tourist and local communities) Trail authorities (if a trail falls in the national park areas and national park authority is responsible to govern it)

*Source: MoCTCA, 2017*

**Table 4: Trail’s natural environment and its grading**

Trail’s natural environment and its grading	Key elements as associated with trails natural environment	Actors associated
	Application/non application of ‘Leave No Trace’ principle with/ without warning signage Uncared sources creating unpleasant odors Unnatural noises Graffiti	Trail auditors Trail workers/builders Trail users (tourist and local communities) Trail authorities (if a trail falls in the national park areas and national park authority is responsible to govern it)
	Key environmental characters	Actors associated
	Pristine Natural-rural Semi-urban	Trail auditors Trail workers/builders Trail users (tourist and local communities) Trail authorities (if a trail falls in the national park areas and national park authority is responsible to govern it)

Source: MoCTCA, 2017

**Table 5: Enterprises’ and/or camping facilities on trails and its status**

Enterprises’ facilities on trails and its status	Key elements as associated with Enterprises’ facilities on trails	Actors associated
	Food and refreshments (with or without menu) Accommodation (lodges, hotels, tea house, homestay, etc) with beds (single, double, twin, dormitory) and beddings (luxury or standards) availability or not Supplies of facilities/services (lighting, heating, washing, etc.)	Trail auditors Trail workers/builders Trail users (tourist and local communities) Trail authorities (if a trail falls in the national park areas and national park authority is responsible to govern it)
Camping facilities on trails and its status	Key elements as associated with tented camp facilities on trails	Actors associated
	Suitable camping space with or without scenic views Water availability	Trail auditors Trail workers/builders Trail users (tourist and local communities) Trail authorities (if a trail falls in the national park areas and national park authority is responsible to govern it)

Source: MoCTCA, 2017

The sustainable trail management necessitates the auditing of all above measures by the certified trail auditors for further recommendations for actions (design, redesign, trail building, construction, reconstruction and maintenance) and finally accreditation of trails. Accreditation has a significant role to play in the upholding of quality and sustainability standards in the supply of trail products. The work of Slabbert & Preez (2017) finds consumers response towards an accreditation system for hiking trails. This study reveals that there are very few systems addressing the needs of adventure and nature-based tourism. The study demonstrates a link between accreditation and consumer decision making leading to perceptions of quality and credibility amongst consumers. Amidst those systems, European Ramblers' Association (ERA) has set a European standard measures through 'Leading Quality Trails – Best of Europe'.

**Photo 1: Image of Leading Quality Trails – Best of Europe**

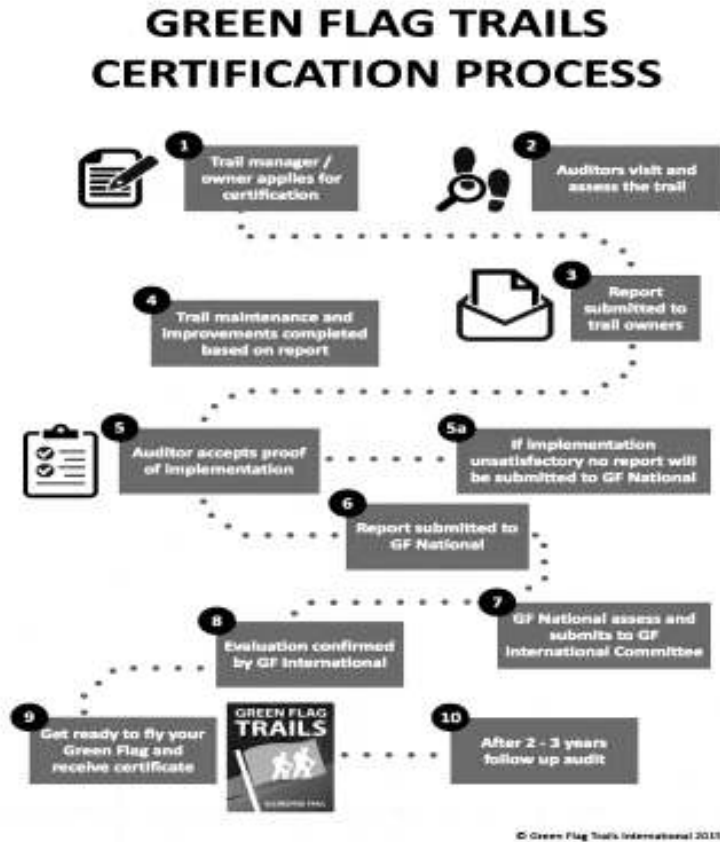


*Source: European Ramblers' Association*

This special quality certification for walking trails offers a transparent system of multi-dimensional assessment of walking route using 23 criteria for the improvement of trail quality throughout Europe. It is required to achieve full accreditation as each 4-km section must achieve 11 points for the choice criteria. ERA's this provision guarantees a high quality walking experience for trail users.

Green Flag Trails (GFT) is a voluntary quality and sustainability eco-label for trails. A Green Flag trail is well directed, user-specific and honestly marketed trail that has been well-designed and responsibly managed from the perspective of the trail users as well as from an environmentally responsible perspective. GFT has its own website as <http://greenflagtrails.org> for more information on its sustainability model of trekking trail. Under GFT, the trail auditing and certification process have to pass through a number of steps as per diagram 1 for the sustainable management of trails (SAMARTH-NMDP, 2018b).

Diagram 1: Trail auditing and certification process



Source: Green Flag Trails

Depending on objecting and directives, the trail should be furthermore financially viable, generating enough income to sustain the trail management. This implies sound management of various sustainability issues including marketing, promotional material, construction and maintenance methods, local communities' owning of trail, and receiving benefits from their own environment, etc.

**Sustainable adventure tourism management initiative: A case study of Nepal's Great Himalaya Trails (GHT)**

**About GHT**

Nepal stands as one of the unique adventure mountainous tourism destinations in the tourism map of the world. She has outstanding natural environments coinciding with the age-old rich cultural traditions and attractions on the foothills of Himalayas.

Nepal Himalaya has 28 distinct Himal ranges and only 14 of such ranges have peaks higher than 7,000 meters including 8 of the 14 highest peaks of the world. Nepal's landscapes offer an extensive network of trails as the Great Himalaya Trails (GHT) in the hills and mountains that present her as a fascinating tourism destination (Shrestha, 2000). There is high significance of trails for the adventure tourism in Nepal as trekking on these trails offer a fantastic way to explore Nepal's magnificent mountain landscapes, unique culture and natural beauty.

GHT is a new phenomenon. Initially GHT was developed as the single long distance trail (figure 2) when the concept for a 'Great Himalayan Trail' was first outlined in the Asian Development Bank/South Asia Sub-regional Economic Cooperation Tourism in 2006.

**Figure 1: GHT conceptualized as the single longest trail at the beginning**



*Source: Author*

Later, the Netherlands Development Organization (SNV) in association with United Nations World Tourism Organization's Sustainable Tourism Eliminating Poverty led GHT project through pilot projects development in Humla and Dolpa districts in the far west Nepal in 2008-2010.

The promotional buzz concept of GHT was lead by SNV and International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development for developing this programme under the umbrella of Sustainable Mountain Tourism in the Himalayas and in collaboration with the Nepal Tourism Board and the Sustainable Tourism Network. It was for the exploitation of the significant potential for product and marketing synergies that exists within and between mountain districts in Nepal, as well as between Nepal and other Himalayan countries (Stevens & Banskota, 2006).

The vision behind this intervention was that the proposed trail could help to attract more trekking tourists to mountain areas of Nepal, as well as encourage them to make repeat visits to the region and to explore different products and destinations. The then aim was also to help spread the benefits of tourism to the more remote and least developed parts of the Himalayas, where poverty is often the most acute.

In Nepal, the proposed trail starts in the Api Saipal and continues through Karnali, Humla, Dolpo, Mustang, Manang, Manaslu, Ganesh Himal, Rolwaling, Everest, and Kangchenjunga. To date, trails based tourism demand in the mountain regions of Nepal has been concentrated primarily in Annapurna, Everest and Langtang, which are the three most frequented trekking regions. Apart from these trail regions, which are highly visited, there are other more secluded walking tracks in Nepal which are equally splashed with natural and cultural riches but are less visited due to the perceived low improvements on trails and its management, lack of required infrastructure, sub-standard tourist facilities, poor destination area management and inferior service quality. The lower standards, safety and quality level of trails product requires substantial interventions for improvements and high-quality promotion of such products under GHT brand value.

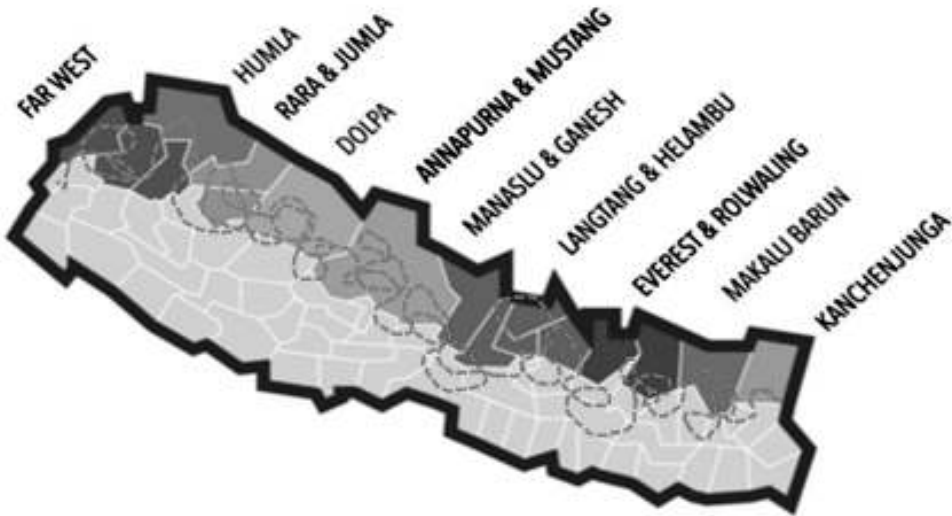
As a single longest trail, it was in fact difficult to package GHT for the trekking tourists due to passing through rough terrain without having proper amenities for accommodations, fooding, information provisions and other safety arrangements. The integration between product and marketing remained very poor and it could not take advantage in the form of business identity. As such, there were very few departures of tourists for GHT.

Nevertheless, the enthusiasm to develop, promote and distribute benefits from GHT had not stopped in the backdrop where GHT is an important tourism product offering from Nepal. It was Department for International Development (DFID) which continued the intervention in GHT through another pilot project in five more districts in the year 2010 – 2012, which was further extended till 2013. The DFID funded SAMARTH- Nepal Market Development Programme continued the intervention on GHT through product and infrastructures' development, destination area management, strategic marketing and promotion, and industry standards improvements related interventions in the years 2013 - 2017. From 2017 onwards, the GHT Management Unit of the Nepal Tourism Board is the custodian of GHT for all interventions and standardizations.

### **Change of the identity of GHT: From single long distance trail to the network of trails**

In post SNV, the concept of GHT has also changed from the single longest trail to the network of trails with 10 sections, each with different bright colour pallets and their own entry and exit access routes (GHTNA, 2018).

**Figure 2: GHT transformed from single longest trail to the network of trails**



*Source: GHTNA (2018) & SAMARTH-NMDP (2016)*

Today the GHT is a diversified network of trails for varied personal and unique trekking experience in Nepal. Within Nepal, the GHT is roughly divided into two main routes: the 1700 Km long High Route, which winds through high mountain ranges with an average altitude of 3000 - 5000 m and the Low Route (also referred to as the Cultural Route), which wends its way 1500 Km through mid-hills between 1500 and 2500 m. The two routes of the GHT in Nepal are interlinked and also have a number of side-treks.

GHT is randomly split into 10 different sections (see figure 3 above) making it possible for trekkers to complete the entire stretch of 1700 km in 5 months or in parts at their convenience (Boustead 2015 & 2018). The GHT in Nepal connects both upper and lower (also known as cultural route) routes while expanding from Kanchenjunga in the East and Api-Saipal in the West including popular trekking destinations of Everest, Annapurna and Langtang.

Overall, the GHT passes through all five development regions of Nepal, many of the country's 77 districts and numerous towns and villages, large and small. Most of these trekking trails also pass through nationally protected areas (e.g. national parks, conservation areas, hunting reserves, etc.) which account for about 23 per cent of the total landscape. Hence, Nepal is identified as a hotspot of nature based trekking tourism. There is obviously a huge potential for the outdoor tourism in the

Himalayan part of the country. The enormous trails spread all over Nepal in mid hills, higher mountain regions and Himalayan regions from East to West can provide opportunities for each visitor to experience the classics as well as many other off-the-beaten trekking options and the natural and cultural diversities that Nepal inherently possesses. These network of trails provide not only an opportunity for each visitor, whether local or foreign, to experience the natural and cultural diversity that Nepal offers, but also vital transport routes for rural Himalayan villages.

The trekking paved its way in Nepalese tourism trails after the introduction of mountaineering expeditions and opening of Nepal for international visitors in the decade of 1950s. The country was opened in the backdrop of the greatest concentration of high mountains in the world. The exotic rural areas and hospitable people have attracted the waves of international adventure seekers to be on Nepal's pristine and rural trail environments since 1950s. It was during 1960s, that foreign travelers were allowed to make multi-days' trekking tours to explore the country. Since then, hiking and trekking tourism is gaining its annual increasing trends in Nepal. Furthermore, restricted areas in Nepal opened up in 2002, creating a possibility of trekking through the entire GHTs in Mountains and Himalayas for the first time.

The trails have been won from the steep slopes of the Himalaya Mountains, all built by hand and maintained over many centuries in some places. These are potential not only to attract and increase the number of tourist arrivals but also to offer local communities as pathways of connection, avenues for development, basis for serving the daily livelihood and increment of income of medium and small size entrepreneurs, workers and other disadvantaged groups located on these trails (Dhakal, Khadka, Sharma & Choegyal, 2007).

This heritage can be capitalized in current global era of adventure tourism only if it can be developed and marketed as quality, safe and standard assured product to the global tourism market. This finally can add to the economic benefit of rural communities enhancing sustainable tourism apart from livelihood connectivity. Once the network of trails becomes commercially sound, the GHT is expected to mitigate economic challenge of rural villages as well as facilitating their commuting and transportation needs.

The minimum standards, quality and safety on the development and management of such trail products can assure to fulfill the widespread involvement of local people in mountain tourism, fulfillment of their livelihoods related inevitable needs and thus help the comprehensive development of mountain tourism while meeting international best practice of the global market of tourism. A major objective of the GHT concept is to bring tourism benefits and improve livelihoods in remote mountain communities (Choegyal, 2011; Upadhayaya & Upreti, 2011).

A total of 75,217 tourists visited Nepal in 2017 in GHT regions for trekking and mountaineering. Out of it, 29,993 trekkers visited in protected areas through which most of the trails of Nepal have passed through. The arrivals of tourists for trekking and mountaineering occupy 8 per cent of the total arrivals of 940,218 tourists in 2017 (MoCTCA, 2018).

In order to enhance the accessibility of rural tourism products in destinations, it is necessary to upgrade and maintain trails, roads, bridges and other essential infrastructures. These improvements not only help tourists, but also greatly ease the livelihoods of local people. Improving the standards of service and infrastructure on trekking trails is at the core of GHT (Boers & Cottrell, 2007).

### **Sustainable trails management in context of establishing GHT as an appealing destination**

Nepal's trail heritage is rich, reaching from lowlands to the highest peaks of the world. This heritage is worthy of protection through sustainable management and future development. The sustainable trail management concept for GHT reveals that Nepal's Great Himalaya Trails should not only provide vital transport routes for rural Himalayan villages but also improve standards of services and infrastructures on trekking trails. Such trails should generate sustainable business for trek entrepreneurs and workers with attracting higher paying more number of tourists from diverse source markets. Such trails should also be more marketable products to different market segments due to its diversifications.

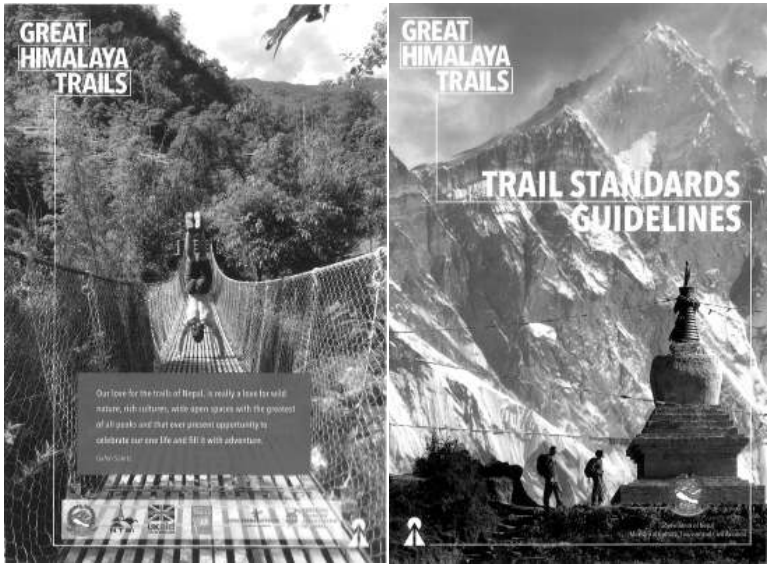
The sustainable trail management concept is guided by Nepal's National Tourism Strategic Plan (NTSP) (2016-25). NTSP aims to develop Nepal as 'a leading tourism destination in the region and to diversify current tourism offerings as well as to provide a range of experience and interests' and also stresses on the quality improvements of products and services' (MoCTCA, 2016). In meeting this strategic plan, the joint effort of the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, private sectors, Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), Trekking Agencies' Association of Nepal led by Trail Standards Committee in association with the World Trail Network and Green Flags Trails (GFT) has resulted in a comprehensive document "Trail Standards Guidelines (TSG)" which attempts to addresses the core of sustainable trail management issues. The Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil aviation launched the TSG on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2017 with the aim of standardizing and grading trails across the country.

Photo 2: Unveiling of Trail Standards Guidelines



Source: Author

Photo 3: Trail Standards Guidelines as the sustainable development guiding framework for GHT of Nepal



Source: Author

The TSG is designed as a summary for easy reference for the planning, construction, management and maintenance to the basic trail types and trail standards to be found in Nepal. It is a guideline of best practices and internationally accepted standards for trails as applied to Nepal's unique geography and terrain challenges in relation to trail design.

The guidelines also serves as a basis for the implementation of Great Himalaya Trails brand through auditing, post auditing, infrastructure building, accreditation and certification of such trails from Green Flag Trails. Apart of detail focuses on trail planning model, standards and accepted changes, trail quality, trail classification and attributes, trail standards specifications, extra construction guidelines and maintenance notes and standards of assessment and monitoring; the TSG has covered following four key areas for ensuring the benefits to guests (trail users), hosts (product and service providers in trail areas) and the local environment in GHT (MoCTCA, 2017; SAMARTH-NMDP, 2018a).

- (a) the provision of information to trekkers through installation of signage designed by GHT certified trail auditors
- (b) trail path safety assessment and post assessment maintenance for trail certification
- (c) environmental grading and its sustainability consideration
- (d) responsible management and operation of standards of enterprises and tourism products along the trekking trail routes

Any trail that meets the core principles of above mentioned guidelines on safety, quality and better experience for visitors can be accredited to as a Green flag/Great Himalaya Trails. For the implementation of the TSG in the real ground, Nepal also developed eleven internationally certified trail auditors in association with Green Flag Trails and World Trails Network for the first time in its trail history. Following the unveiling of TGS, the auditors' training was facilitated by Samarth-Nepal Market Development Programme [funded by financial assistance of British people (UK aid)] under the technical guidance of Green Flag Trails and World Trails Network. The ten day training programme kicked off with two days of intense theory and presentations indoors. This was then followed by 8 days of trekking on the Annapurna Panorama Trekking Trail following a route from Dhampus via Ghandruk and other smaller villages to Tadapani and ending at Birethanti. The trainees selected to attend the training, were from a diverse cross-section of trail industry representatives, which included trekking professionals, guides, trek operators, conservation officers, tourism specialists and development programme managers, engineers, and related experts. The trail auditors represent officials from Department of Tourism, Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, Nepal Tourism Board, Annapurna and Manaslu Conservation area as well as Trekking Agencies Association of Nepal and Village Tourism Promotion Forum - Nepal. These auditors are licensed to audit trails and grade them as per the trail standards set in the guidelines.

By conforming Nepali trail grading to international standards, GHT allows trekkers to compare factors such as safety and comfort levels both between different

trails in Nepal, and with other destinations around the World. By defining a set of simple yet clear standards for Nepal's trails and having a committed team of certified trail auditors now available to oversee the implementation of such standards, from signage to safety, is an important step for Nepal in ensuring that the trail experiences offered to the world's trekking community are both within the bounds of safety and are accurately graded and described.

#### **5.4. Trail branding through accreditation/certification as the integral part of sustainable management**

Accreditation and certifications are often viewed as a way to communicate quality to consumers, signaling that the service provider is reputable brand and professional. These have significant role to play in the upholding of quality and sustainability standards in the supply of tourism and leisure products. At a national level, different strands in a country's 'brand' can be articulated through a trail, for example Scotland's Whisky and Castles Trails and the Alsace Wine Route in France emphasize national identity through heritage and industry (Slabbert & Preez, 2017).

In attempt for being strongly established as a brand, GHT of Nepal joined hands with Green Flag Trails and World Trails Network to develop the TSG in order to ensure that the guidelines for quality standards on trail maintenance and development meet international best practice (Upadhayaya, 2018). GHT is envisioned today as a mountain tourism brand that assures safety, quality and enhanced experience to visitors while providing a meaningful opportunity for a local resident to participate in trail activities. It aims to provide a comprehensive guideline for trail infrastructure and local businesses focusing on information management (trail signage), safety, quality standards, environmental sustainability, fair working conditions, etc. It emphasizes working on the principle that better standards in trails and enterprises will lead to products that are more marketable and more sustainable (both environmentally and from a business perspective). A study titled 'Assessment of the impact & effectiveness of Nepal's destination marketing efforts' states that GHT brand is generally the fourth most promotional theme in Nepal after Everest, Nepal Himalaya, and Annapurna. However, it is the most liked brand among Western European and North American tourists (ASI, 2014). Thus any trail that meets the core principles of GHT (safety, quality and better experience) should be accredited to as a GHT brand. While staying true to their diversity and their authentic appeal, GHT intends to represent a shift towards higher quality in Nepal's tourism offerings, which will make it possible to attract more visitors from more diverse source markets. As the brand becomes more recognized, it is believed that other enterprises will aim to meet these standards, building a network of quality trails (SAMARTH-NMDP, 2018a).

A tabular format and figure 1 below offers information on the brand vision and some brand successes of GHT at a glance.

**Table 6: GHT brand values for sustained trail management for adventure tourism**

GHT as a unique, challenging, and extraordinary network of Himalayan trails for hiking and	Identity of brand	Image of brand	Utility of brand	Core values of brand	Promises (few are on progress) of brand	Meaningfulness of brand	Communication of brand	Unique selling point (marketing and promotional perspectives) of brand
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network of trails</li> <li>• Established with brand logo (See figure 3)</li> <li>• Safe trekking system</li> <li>• Integrated amidst varied enterprises</li> <li>• Geographically fascinating</li> <li>• Culturally rich</li> <li>• Entity with authenticity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging and inspiring to existing and potential tourists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy to package and sell</li> <li>• Trails marked with standard signage designs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diverse (Hiking, trekking, yoga, meditation, etc.)</li> <li>• Meaningful experiences to trail users</li> <li>• Safe and quality trails</li> <li>• A widely used promotional website (www.greathimalayatrails.com )</li> <li>• Another widely used website (http://greathimalayatrail.com/index.php )</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audited, certified and accredited trail products</li> <li>• TSG for planning, building, managing, maintaining and accreditation of trails</li> <li>• GHT certified enterprises on trails</li> <li>• Collection of GHT accredited TOs/TAs for responsible business practices (See note 3 for more information)</li> <li>• Destination Management Organization managed trails</li> <li>• International associations (ATTA, WTN, GFT)</li> <li>• Integrated with NTB</li> <li>• Uplifting Nepal's brand image towards a premium tourist destination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meaningful to trekkers</li> <li>• Positive economic impact to hosting communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GHT promotional video (<a href="http://samarth-nepal.com/resource/great-himalaya-trails">http://samarth-nepal.com/resource/great-himalaya-trails</a>)</li> <li>• GHT collaboration with Yeti Airlines</li> <li>• GHT Instagrammers trip</li> <li>• GHT Face book</li> <li>• My GHT capturing individual tourist's experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing and booking through www.greathimalayatrails.com</li> <li>• Find a trek option for tailored trips with 50 trek itineraries for trail users</li> <li>• Offering of extraordinary journey with meaningful experience to trail users</li> <li>• B2C option for international inbound tour operators</li> <li>• B2B option for tour operators (inbound and outbound)</li> <li>• NTB leveraging the brand on its regular marketing platforms and campaigns</li> </ul>

Source: MoCTCA, 2017 and Author

Figure 3: GHT brand visual identity and logo



*Source: GHT brand guidelines*

The GHT in Nepal's mountains and Himalayas can have strong brand appeal through developing and marketing trails as quality assured "GHT" branded products.

### **Discussions and conclusion**

The growth of tourists and tourism is usually the main aim for all trail destinations in the world. Growth brings with it a host of benefits and important challenges as pressure on trail communities and natural resources will also increase. The sustainable management of trekking trails through standard guidelines is vital in this tendency.

Developing and enhancing trekking trails to international standards that offer quality trail experiences, requires that trails are standardized, monitored and assessed following a robust system of auditing. This is especially necessary to meet the expectations of the global hiking, walking and trekking tourists. By defining a set of simple yet clear standards for such trails and having a committed team of certified trail auditors should be available to oversee the implementation of such standards, from signage to safety, is an important step for trails regions should ensure that the trail experiences offered to the world's trekking community are both within the bounds of safety and are accurately graded and described. Nepal GHT demonstrates its strong example in this regard.

The GHT stays true to the authentic appeal of Nepal's tourism attractions. It has the potential of network of extra ordinary journeys (natural and cultural diversified and religiously and spiritually unique that Nepal offers). Amidst a number of apparatuses for establishing GHT as the quality brand, the formulation of TSG is a timely step. GHT thus aims to provide a comprehensive guideline for trail infrastructure and local businesses focusing on information management (trail signage), safety, quality standards, environmental sustainability, and fair working conditions. The GHT adopts that better standards in trails and enterprises which will lead to products more marketable and more sustainable (both environmentally and from a business perspective). The guidelines also serves as a basis for the implementation of Great

Himalaya Trails brand in the country: any trail that meets the core principles of the guideline on safety, quality and better experience for visitors will be accredited to as a Great Himalaya Trails. Backed by the newly formulated TSG (standard policy and operational guidelines) and GHT/Green Flag Trails trained and certified trail auditors, Nepal's Great Himalaya Trails are thus moving from great to good and sustainable trails in terms of trail development planning, management, construction and maintenance.

Thus, having clear guidelines for trail development, monitoring, upkeep and accreditation, allows for the sector as a whole to work more effectively together to enhance those attributes that make elsewhere's trail offering unique and sought after. The uniqueness factor needs to be retained and kept in mind when it comes to trail standards and the trail experience. Nonetheless, the key of success rests further in the implementation of it and this will require close collaboration and partnership from all stakeholders including public, private sector, trail communities and development partners.

This paper recommends for future research in the areas of poverty reduction through entrepreneurial activities related to tourism in mountains, guide needs and training and impact of trail based adventure tourism on host communities.

#### **Note 1: European Ramblers' Association**

The European Ramblers' Association was founded in Germany in 1969 and by 1971 consisted of 14 ramblers' organizations from 6 countries. Today, this umbrella organization comprises 61 ramblers' organizations from 34 European states (+2 ramblers' organizations from Morocco and Canada/USA as observers)

#### **Note 2: World Trails Network**

The World Trails Network (<http://worldtrailsnetwork.org>) is an internationally representative body of the world's leading trails and trail destinations. It is based in Geneva, Switzerland and works to further the interests of the trails industry for the benefit of all.

#### **Note 3: Collection of GHT accredited Tour Operators (TOs)/Trekking Agencies (TAs) for responsible business practices**

##### **GHT Standards and quality goals for TOs/TAs**

The goal of the Great Himalaya Trails (GHT) partner tour operators in Nepal is that there is a mechanism to assure safety and quality of products and services offered by Nepalese tourism industry for international and domestic travelers that it contributes to their increased demand and value thereby benefiting the hosts and visitors in a sustainable, equitable manner.

### **Objectives of GHT accredited TOs/TAs for**

- To develop a mechanism to standardize tour operators as per global potential and accepted national and international standards and practices.
- To facilitate standardization process in line with global sustainable practices and standards
- To enhance awareness and commitment of TOs on delivery of quality tourism products in line with these standards
- Provide a forum for tour operators to incentivize their sustainable tourism products and services

To contribute to increased income and employment in the Great Himalaya Trails through implementation of such standards.

### **Major themes and criteria for TOs/TAs**

1. Commitment to quality and quantity
2. Professionalization of human resources (workforce) and their welfare
3. Respect of human and animal rights
4. Responsibility towards environment and community
5. Sustainable and responsible business operations
6. Responsibility towards local economy and community benefits
7. Sustainable and Responsible Excursions
8. Proper selection of destinations
9. Responsibility towards clients (*Atithi devo bhava*)

GHT Alliance is a network of TOs and TAs handing GHT packages. These agencies, while using the Great Himalaya Trail logo, practice fair trade trekking codes of conduct and Corporate Social Responsibility (Boustead, 2018).

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## Tourism and Security in Nepal

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### Keywords

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### Abstract

*This paper discusses the concept of Tourism and Security in Nepal and focuses on the association in between tourism and security aspects. Tourism is important for leisure, business, education, culture and recreation. Tourism industry is a fast developing sector for the economy worldwide and becoming a popular global leisure activity. As a fast growing industry in the today's world, tourism industry events are getting more attraction for study and appropriate intervention. The key question this paper raises is whether there is association between tourism and security in Nepal. It answers rationally to its prime research questions like; what are the dimensions of tourism and security in Nepal? what is the association in between tourism and security in Nepal? In order to look for the answers of these questions, Thamel area was chosen for study site as it is popular among people and the major tourism hub in Nepal.*

*The findings of the study show varied association in between tourism sector and tourism security sector on the specifics such as tourism, hospitality, events and security in Nepal. Although tourism enterprises increasingly realize the aspects of tourism, hospitality, events management and relevant security parameters, but the extent to which they are strategically used varies. The assessment revealed the impacts of tourism on security aspects and vice versa. So, the impacts of security situation on tourism sector have a certain and intermingled association. Even the findings aligned with above said statement which reflects the limitations and gap in between the tourism sector and tourism*

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*security sector in term of setups, coordination and execution. That is why, it roves and looking for the rational, empirical and cognitive improvement and development on those identified aspects which are keenly observed during the research process.*

## **Introduction**

Nepal, a small country with an area of 147,181 square kilometers, has a population of 28.98 million (WB, 2016). Nepal is one of the richest countries in the world in terms of bio-diversity due to its geographical position (NTB, 2003). The elevation of the country ranges from 70 m above sea level to the highest point on the earth, Mt. Everest at 8,848 m, all within a breadth of 150 km with climatic conditions ranging from subtropical to arctic. The wild variation fosters an incredible variety of ecosystems, the greatest mountain range on the earth, thick tropical jungles teeming with a wealth of wildlife, thundering rivers, forested hills and frozen valleys. Nepal's natural attractions are ranging from physical, historical, cultural monuments, temples, art treasures and festivals (DOT, 1972).

Nepal's diversity attracts tourists. Its physical uniqueness offers a wide scope of activities that range from jungle safaris to trekking in snow-capped mountains. Tourism is important to Nepal as a source of foreign exchange and a major employment generator. For a country like Nepal, which lacks abundant resources, the tourism sector is expected to continue to play an important role in the country's development, but not without negative consequences (Kunwar & Pandey, 1995).

Himalayas and their scenic beauty are also the prominent attraction to the visitors. Nepal is the country of Mount Everest, the land of Yeti, and the land of Buddha. Its various snow peaked mountains, lakes and river, conducive climate and mysterious 3 charms are inviting the visitors of the world. Cultural, religious and natural resource are the three major attractions of Nepal, which have cultural, and natural World Heritage Sites. It offers nature based tourism activities like trekking, mountaineering, rafting, rock climbing, jungle safari and wildlife sanctuaries as well as man-made attractions (Dev, 2010).

Etymologically, the word tour is derived from the Latin 'tornare' and the Greek 'tornos', meaning a lathe or circle; the movement around a central point or axis. This meaning changed in Modern English to represent one's turn. The suffix 'ism' is defined as 'an action or process; typical behavior or quality', while the suffix 'ist' denotes 'one that performs a given action'. When the word tour and the suffixes 'ism' and 'ist' are combined, they suggest the action of movement around a circle. One can argue that circle represents a starting point, which ultimately returns to its beginning. Therefore, like a circle tour represents a journey that is a round- trip, i.e., the act of leaving and then returning to the original starting point, and therefore, one who takes such a journey can be called a tourist (Theobald, 1997).

Generally, tourism denotes the movement or journey of human beings from one place to another, whether it is within own country or other countries, for various purposes. The popular word 'tourism' of the present day is derived from the French word *tourisme* is related to travel or travel related activities. Later, this word was popularized in the 1930s, but its significance was not fully realized until recent times when tourism has a wider meaning and significance (Satyal, 1988).

Hospitality has been one of the most pervasive metaphors within tourism, referring in one sense to the commercial projects of the tourist industry such as hotels, catering, and tour operation, and in another sense, to the social interactions between local people and tourists, i.e., hosts and guests (Germann & Gibson, 2007).

Social hospitality can be defined as the social setting in which hospitality and acts of hospitableness takes place together with the impacts of social forces on the production and consumption of food, drink and accommodation (Thio, 2005).

Event is an important motivator of tourism, and figure prominently in the development and marketing plans of most destinations. The roles and impacts of planned events within tourism have been well documented, and are of increasing importance for destination competitiveness. Yet it was only a few decades ago that 'event tourism' became established in both the tourism industry and in the research community, so that subsequent growth of this sector can only be described as spectacular (Getz, 2007).

Event management is the applied field of study and area of professional practice devoted to the design, production and management of planned events, encompassing festivals and other celebrations, entertainment, recreation, political and state, scientific, sport and arts events, those in the domain of business and corporate affairs (including meetings, conventions, fairs, and exhibitions), and those in the private domain (including rites of passage such as weddings and parties, and social events for affinity groups). Event tourism is both a sub-field within established academic streams, in realty at the nexus of tourism and event studies, and an area of destination management application. Therefore, we need to draw implications for event and destination managers, and for the academic and research community interested in tourism and event studies (Getz, 2007).

Security is taken to be about the pursuit of freedom from threat and the ability of states and societies to maintain their independent identity and their functional integrity against the forces of change, which they see as hostile. The bottom line of security is survival, but it also reasonably includes a substantial range of concerns about the conditions of existence. Quite where this range of concerns ceases to merit the urgency of the "security" label and becomes part of everyday uncertainties of life is one of the difficulties of the concept (Buzan, 1991).

Security implies a stable, relatively predictable environment in which an individual or group may pursue its ends without disruption or harm and without fear of such disturbance or injury (Fisher, 2004).

Since tourism essentially thrives under peaceful and secure environment, Nepal requires strengthening its coping strategies to prevent, reduce, manage and mitigate tourism crisis those emerge in the wake of various types of security incidences. Such strategies include formulating standardized tourism industry disaster response contingency plan, preparing nature and man-made hazards responsive (sensitive) Nepal type indigenous tourism strategies, applying safe trekking and mountaineering guidelines, developing early risk warning system for tourists in extreme weather conditions, reinforcing aviation and airport safety and security measures, effectuating tourist tracking and rescue system, excelling food and water safety and hygiene practices, applying tourist accommodation safe building code of conducts, and developing crisis communication skills, etc. The proper planning and management of these strategies are imperative for mitigating both effects and perceptions for a politically toppled tourist destination like Nepal (Upadhaya, 2016).

The interrelationships between tourism and security have been interpreted largely negatively. This is because as a universal phenomenon falling under the integral part of globalization, tourism seeks peace, stability and tranquility in guest, host and also transit destinations for its operations, managements, and growths (Hall & Sullivan, 1996; Tarlow, 2006).

As the home to world's highest mountains in a multi-ethnic federal democratic republic setup, Nepal is a popular tourist destination for adventure, recreation and ecotourism. Tourism is one of the most cherished inspirations for peace and prosperity in Nepal. Nevertheless, a number of security related factors. The sporadic political conflicts, instabilities, strikes, social unrest, and the disputes between Nepal-India at the border area at present are ongoing man-made security challenges appearing from wider external environments (Upadhaya, 2016).

To formulate and construct the basis for a theory of tourism security it is necessary, first, to define the major concepts that are derived from the relationship between tourism and security incidents. Once these concepts and their respective variables are defined they will lay the foundations for the theoretical development of empirical generalizations. This challenging task involved the creation of the first two fundamental building blocks of the theory. The chapter started with a construction of tourism and security concepts and their corresponding variables as the first building block. Subsequently, as the second block, it assembled a wide array of empirical generalizations that represent the current best practices in the field of tourism security (Mansfeld, 1996).

Occasional intra-organizational conflicts between management and labor in corporate tourism establishments (e.g. big hotels, casino, airlines) resulting in some kind of mild violence are the intra-tourism security challenges. Thus, tourism security appears as an integral part of social security system in Nepal. On the other side, sporadically occurring disastrous events like earthquakes, avalanches, landslides, floods, extreme snowfalls, etc. are nature borne security challenges for tourism in Nepal. However, such natural disasters are observed differently than man-made challenges as these (natural) incidents have evoked greater public, industry and outgoing tourists' understanding, tolerance, sympathy and supports. As a matter of fact for tourism security, Nepal is also victim of unsecured destination image with the "generalization" of the perceived risk and "spill over" effects of security incidents largely exaggerated by unrealistic media publicity and negative travel advisories even though there is no real security threats to tourists. Nepal's tourism sector experienced the impacts of such media behavior during the decade (1996-2006) long socio-political armed conflict and even experiencing today after the 25th April 2015 earthquake (Upadhyaya, 2016).

### **Tourism and security: world and Nepal**

Tourism and security are the associated aspects which are moving together in order to intensify the economic development of any country especially like Nepal, which is full of tourism potentiality. Many scholars are involving in study, research and investigation in the tourism and its relevancy with security. After gone through the various literature copious information were found regarding this pertinent issue. Most of the scholars have wrote varied point of view on tourism along with hospitality, events, etc. from the relevant perspectives with security aspects.

Satyel (1988) expounded that, "generally, tourism denotes the movement or journey of Human beings from one place to another, whether it is within own country or other countries, for various purposes. The popular word Tourism of the present day is derived from the French word *tourisme* is related to travel and travel related activities. Later, this word was popularized in the 1930s, but its significance was not fully realized until recent times when Tourism has a wider meaning and significance".

According to Negi (1990), "Tourism is the movement of the people from one place to another or one country to another at leisure for the purpose of pleasure, business, religion, health treatment or visiting friends and relatives. Tourism is also mentioned in Sanskrit, in ancient times. In Sanskrit literature, there are three terms for tourism, derived from the root 'atna', which means going or leaving home for some other place".

Buzan (1991) illustrated that, 'Security is taken to be about the pursuit of freedom from threat and the ability of states and societies to maintain their independent

identity and their functional integrity against forces of change, which they see as hostile. The bottom line of security is survival, but it also reasonably includes a substantial range of concerns about the conditions of existence. Quite where this range of concerns ceases to merit the urgency of the “security” label and becomes part of everyday uncertainties of life is one of the difficulties of the concept’.

Mansfeld (1996) stated that, “to formulate and construct the basis for a theory of tourism security it is necessary, first, to define the major concepts that are derived from the relationship between tourism and security incidents. Once these concepts and their respective variables are defined they will lay the foundations for the theoretical development of empirical generalizations. This challenging task involved the creation of the first two fundamental building blocks of the theory. The chapter started with a construction of tourism and security concepts and their corresponding variables as the first building block. Subsequently, as the second block, it assembled a wide array of empirical generalizations that represent the current best practices in the field of tourism security”.

According to Pizam (1996), “tourism security theory is a research agenda that develops scientific knowledge in two distinctive directions. The first research direction is to conduct a set of studies examining the relationship between tourism and security on a destination-specific basis. The aim of this direction is to further deepen the understanding of causes and effects in tourism and security relations. The second research direction is to encourage the conduct of comparative (i.e., local, regional, national, international) studies to test the level of universalism of the proposed tourism security theory”.

Paudyal (1999) in his doctoral studies entitled “Factors Affecting Demand for Tourism in SAARC Region” has pointed out that there are many factors negatively affecting the tourism development in Nepal e.g. pollution problems, transport bottlenecks, skilled guide and low quality tourist products.

Shrestha (1998) in his doctoral studies on “Tourism Marketing in Nepal” has precisely highlighted the challenges of tourism marketing in Nepal. His main findings were that Nepal is extremely rich in tourism products and it exists all over the country. Natural wealth, cultural and monumental heritage bequeathed history are the principal tourism products of Nepal. Further he analyzed that tourism is a major source of foreign exchange of Nepal and it is playing an important role in the national economy. Tourism helps to promote balance of payment and balance regional development of the country as well.

Shrestha (1999) in his doctoral studies on “Tourism in Nepal: Problems and Prospects” has analyzed various problems and prospects of Tourism in Nepal. The main aim of her study is concerned with the problems and prospects of tourism in

Nepal. Her study identify the basic problems of tourism on the basis of its contribution to national economy, status of tourism infrastructure, review of the planning and policies of the government and as visualized by both tourist and the experts in the sample. She pointed out Nepal has not been able to introduce and diversity new tourism products.

Shrestha (2000) in his book “Tourism in Nepal Marketing Challenges” outlines the need to set up marketing efforts for the development of tourism in the country. As marketing is the prime motivator for attracting greater number of tourists, the writer has taken painstaking efforts in identifying the marketing requirement, the present status, problems and suggestions for the development to tourism in Nepal.

Aryal (2002) in his thesis on the topics “The problems and Prospects of Tourism Development in Nepal”, he found from his study the total tourist arrival is in increasing trend. Mainly tourists arrived in Nepal for six purposes such as: pleasure, Trekking and mountaineering, Business, official, Pilgrimage meeting and Seminar and others. And he further found that the young tourists are very much interested to visit Nepal.

George (2003) described that, if a tourist feels unsafe or threatened at a holiday destination; he or she can develop a negative impression of the destination. This can be damaging to the destination’s tourism industry and can result in the decline of tourism to the area.

Aryal (2005) made a study on the topic of “Economic Impact to Tourism in Nepal”. His focus of study is as to study the trend of tourist arrivals in the country, contribution of tourism sector to the GDP, foreign currency earning through tourism and to review the tourism policy in Nepal. Aryal’s study is completely based on the secondary information and uses regression analysis. This provided guidelines for development methodology for the present study.

According to Iswani (2006), Safety and security in tourism can be considered as safety in a destination either in urban area or rural area. In urban area, the case like crime, pick pocketing, kidnapping, rape and others always happen to people especially foreigner. While the safety in rural or natural area always exposed to natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, and landslides.

Bentley (2006) illustrated that, ‘in mountain based adventure tourism activity, tourist injuries are the major problems occur in this activity. For instance, New Zealand recorded the high number of death cases involving foreigners taking part in adventure and recreational tourism activities such as major incidents in scenic flights, white water rafting, jet boating and tramping and mountaineering’.

Gibson (2007) stated that, Hospitality has been one of the most pervasive metaphors within tourism studies, referring in one sense to the commercial project of the tourist industry such as hotels, catering, and tour operation, and in another sense, to the social interactions between local people and tourists, that is, hosts and guests.

Dahal (2007) described that, 'apart of attractions, proper accommodations, accessibility (convenient and easy access), and attractive tourism packages considering cost comparisons; safety and security are dominantly non-compromise-able elements for the tourists' visitation decisions. Tourism which is also called as a peace and development industry cannot thrive in insecure environment'.

According to Getz (2007), Events are an important motivator of tourism, and figure prominently in the development and marketing plans of most destinations. The roles and impacts of planned events within tourism have been well documented, and are of increasing importance for destination competitiveness. Yet it was only a few decades ago that 'event tourism' became established in both the tourism industry and in the research community, so that subsequent growth of this sector can only be described as spectacular.

Upadhayaya (2008) explained in his article "Rural Tourism to create equitable and growing Economy in Nepal" defines, "Rural tourism is a complex multifaceted activity. It is not just farm based tourism. It concludes farm based holidays, eco-tourism, walking, climbing, adventure, sports, health tourism, hunting, fishing, educational art and heritage tourism like, to achieve maximum human welfare and happiness, through sustainable socioeconomic development of rural area, to reduce regional inequality and economic disparities and to contribute in poverty alleviation.

According to Upadhayaya (2013), 'the collection of efforts of all stakeholders like the political decision makers, planner, investors, government, tourism entrepreneurs, local people and the researchers are vital at this stage to develop Nepal as a prime tourism country, maximize the benefits and make tourism activities inclusion for all people and places'.

Tarlow (2014) truly brought out that, "the interrelationships between tourism and security have been interpret-rated largely negatively. This is because as a universal phenomenon falling under the integral part of globalization, tourism seeks peace, stability and tranquility in guest, host and also transit destinations for its operations, managements, and growths".

Upadhayay (2016) pleaded that, "as the home to World's highest mountains in a multi-ethnic federal democratic republic setup, Nepal is a popular tourist destination for adventure, recreation and ecotourism. Tourism is one of the most cherished inspirations for peace and prosperity in Nepal. Nevertheless, a number of security

related factors (natural hazards, human-induced incidences, and health related weaknesses) also confronts this nation. The sporadic political conflicts, instabilities, strikes and social unrest are ongoing man-made security challenges appearing from wider external environments”.

Upadhyay (2016) stated that, the Tourism and security are conceptually and practically interwoven phenomenon. Tourism security in general means a state of safety and security dominantly non-compromise-able for the tourists' visitations. A condition where local tourism industries, host communities, and tourist destinations directly and indirectly dependent on tourism business feel safe and protected for their income, employments and livelihoods.

Kunwar (2017) rationally reflected that, while theorizing hospitality, Lynch et al. (2011) write, “rather than assuming that hospitality entails a particular context (such as the home or hotel) or particular objects (such as food and beds) or particular actors (such as host and guests), we see hospitality as both a condition and an effect of social relations, spatial configurations and power structures”.

### **Objectives and methods**

The primary objective of this paper is to clarify the concept of tourism and security and to explore the association between tourism and security. The key question this paper raises is whether there is association between tourism and security in Nepal. So, the objectives of this paper is to seek the answers rationally to its prime research questions like; what are the dimensions of tourism and security in Nepal? what is the association in between tourism and security in Nepal?

The study was mainly based on both primary and secondary data. Much of the data were based on different documents, books, online portal and other internet sites. Due to its universality and common interest, number of study materials are available about it. For data collection some relevant books, reports, publications etc. were taken as tools. Persons working in the field of tourism and security who provided the information about their relevant discipline were consulted. Authentic offices were requested to provide reliable data. For primary data collection, field visit has been conducted in Thamel, Kathmandu.

For data collection, interview has been carried out with altogether 50 respondents among them 25/25 from tourism stakeholders and tourism security sector, respectively. Tourism stakeholders consist of officials from Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), Thamel Tourism Development Council (TTDC), businessmen, hotel entrepreneurs (e.g., Vaishali hotel, etc.), tourists (internal & external), etc. Whereas security sector officials are consists of Tourist Police, Nepal Police (local level), Armed Police Force (local level), hotel security personnel, etc.

While interviewing, qualitative data also has been taken in note from respondents. Random sampling has been adopted for interview and the respondents were selected as per the availability and their enthusiasm and view. For finding out the result, all data were analysed in mixed method at appropriate point with the application of the Chi-square test in order to receive justified and logical findings.

### Security and tourism in Nepal

Tourism and security are conceptually and practically interwoven phenomenon. Tourism security in general means a state of safety and security dominantly non-compromise-able for the tourists' visitations. This also states a condition where local tourism industries, host communities, and tourist destinations directly and indirectly dependent on tourism businesses feel safe and protected for their income, employments, and livelihood.

Relationship in between tourism and security in Nepal could be observe from the analysis of the data collected from respondents of Tourism stakeholders and Tourism security personnel as to revealed the association in between them. Data were analyzed in order to address and justify the objectives of the study paper. Descriptive statistics namely Chi-square test based on cross tabulation were used to describe the both variables (independent and dependent) such as tourism and security aspects. Data are presented and interpreted through different tables and text as reflected below:

### Security and tourism status

**Table 1: Security personnel and tourism stakeholders on tourism status**

Response counts		What tourism stakeholders respond on			
		Tourism status?			
What security personnel respond on tourism status?		Satisfied	Unsatisfied	Neutral	Total
	Good	19	11	02	32
	Bad	12	05	01	18
	Total	31	16	03	50
<b>Chi Sq (<math>\chi^2</math>)= 3.71, <math>\alpha</math> (level of significance)= 0.05, df= 2 table/critical value=5.991</b>					

Source: Field Survey 2017-18

The distribution of views of respondents on the status of security and tourism stakeholders differ from respondent to respondent. Majority of the respondents (19) have reported that the good security status on the one hand and satisfied status of tourism. Similar, very few respondents (5) have reported that bad status of security with unsatisfied status of tourism stakeholders.

This evidence simply reflects there is closer association between the security status and tourism stakeholders. However, Chi-square test of independence does not support this idea. Since  $\chi^2$  value (3.71) is insignificant ( $\chi^2=3.71<CV=5.991$ ) at 0.05 level of significance it is enough evidence to accept null hypothesis that there is no association between security status and tourism stakeholders. Therefore, the security status and tourism stakeholders are not associated regarding tourism.

**Security and tourism status in hospitality**

**Table 2: Tourism stakeholders and security personnel on hospitality status**

Response counts		What tourism stakeholders respond on			
		Hospitality status?			
What security personnel respond on hospitality status?		Satisfied	Unsatisfied	Neutral	Total
	Good	17	10	02	29
	Bad	14	06	01	21
	Total	31	16	03	50
Chi Sq ( $\chi^2$ )= 1.624, $\alpha$ (level of significance)= 0.05, df= 2 table/critical value=5.991					

*Source: Field Survey 2017-18*

The distribution of views of respondents on the status of security and tourism stakeholders differ from respondent to respondent. Some of the respondents (17) have reported that the good security status on the one hand and satisfied status of hospitality. Similar, very few respondents (6) have reported that bad status of security with unsatisfied status of tourism stakeholders.

This evidence simply reflects there is a very nominal amount of association between the security status and tourism stakeholders. However, Chi-square test of independence does not support this idea. Since  $\chi^2$  value (1.624) is insignificant ( $\chi^2=1.624<CV=5.991$ ) at 0.05 level of significance it is enough evidence to accept null hypothesis that there is no association between security status and tourism stakeholders. Therefore, the security status and tourism stakeholders are not associated regarding hospitality status.

### Security and tourism status in events

**Table 3: Security personnel and tourism stakeholders on events status**

Response counts		What tourism stakeholders respond on events status?			
What security personnel respond on events status?		Satisfied	Unsatisfied	Neutral	Total
	Good	22	10	02	34
	Bad	10	05	01	16
	Total	32	15	03	50
<b>Chi Sq (<math>\chi^2</math>)= 6.5, <math>\alpha</math> (level of significance)= 0.05, df= 2 table/critical value=5.991</b>					

*Source: Field Survey 2017-18*

The distribution of views of respondents on the status of security and tourism stakeholders differ from respondent to respondent. Majority of the respondents (22) have reported that the good security status on the one hand and satisfied status of events. Similar, very few respondents (5) have reported that bad status of security with unsatisfied status of tourism stakeholders.

This evidence simply reflects there is good association between the security status and tourism stakeholders regarding events status. The Chi-square test of independence also supports this idea. Since  $\chi^2$  value (6.5) is significant ( $\chi^2=6.5$  CV=5.991) at 0.05 level of significance it is enough evidence to reject null hypothesis that there is no association between security status and tourism stakeholders on events status. The profit from the events to the tourism stakeholders and the duty obligation of the security personnel during events are prime factor behind it. Therefore, the security status and tourism stakeholders are associated regarding events status.

**Security and tourism status in security**

**Table 4: Security personnel and tourism stakeholders on security status**

Response counts		What tourism stakeholders respond on security status?			
What security personnel respond on security status?		Satisfied	Unsatisfied	Neutral	Total
	Good	15	11	03	29
	Bad	10	09	02	21
	Total	25	20	05	50
<b>Chi Sq (<math>\chi^2</math>)= 1.534, <math>\alpha</math> (level of significance)= 0.05, df= 2 table/critical value=5.991</b>					

*Source: Field Survey 2017-18*

The distribution of views of respondents on the status of security and tourism stakeholders differ from respondent to respondent. Some of the respondents (15) have reported that the good and satisfied status of security. Similar, some respondents (9) have reported that bad and unsatisfied status of security.

This evidence reflects there is nominal association between the tourism stakeholders and security personnel on security status. However, Chi-square test of independence does not support this idea. Since  $\chi^2$  value (1.534) is insignificant ( $\chi^2=1.534 < CV=5.991$ ) at 0.05 level of significance it is enough evidence to accept null hypothesis that there is no association between security personnel and tourism stakeholders. Therefore, the security personnel and tourism stakeholders are not associated regarding security status.

**Conclusion**

Nepal is a small country with diverse socio-economic and physical features, drawing a wide spectrum of visitors worldwide to its preserved culture, variegated landscapes, snow-capped mountains and architectural wonders. These exquisite attractions of the country provide visitors a memorable experience

Tourism is a catalyst for stimulating economic, social and cultural activities and adds momentum to economic development. Tourism is an important catalyst in the socio-economic development in the modern times, contributing in multiple ways and strengthen the inter-connected processes. It is cited as a panacea for so many social evils such as underdevelopment, unemployment etc. in all the countries, especially in developing economies.

The Findings of this study truly based on the association in between tourism stakeholders and tourism security sector which is formulated on the specific variables such as Tourism, Hospitality, Events and Security. As mentioned earlier, the primary objective of this paper was to explore the relationship between Tourism sector and Security sector in order to know the existing relationship and situation between them for the concrete conclusion and suggestions.

As we conclude that, the aim of this paper is to investigate the relationship between security and tourism status. The system of survey technique is applied in panels of tourism stakeholders and security personnel over the period of field survey 2017-2018. Employing tourism and security variables, the results show that the relationship among all the sub-indexes of security and tourism is somehow negative and insignificant in Nepalese context, which strive for the further rational implementation in the days to come.

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# Assessment of Ecotourism Potential of Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve, Eastern Nepal

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### **Keywords**

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wild water buffalo*

### **Abstract**

*Tourism is forefront of many economy but come with negative externalities resulting in diminished environmental quality. In place of these mass tourism practices, different alternative forms of tourism are practiced with aim of enhancing positive externalities while keeping check and balance to negative externalities. Ecotourism is one such approach which is often highlighted as one of the most effective tool to reconcile the conservation and development aspiration. Ecotourism in its different localized version and their impacts on environment are studied in Nepal. Despite this, ecotourism potential of protected areas is less explored dimension in ecotourism studies. This holds true for the eastern region of the lowland Nepal. Location of destination, features of that destination along with the facilities and uniqueness offered by the place is different which are vital in defining the ecotourism potential of different locations. The study forms the basis for promotion of ecotourism in an area. This paper aims to explore the ecotourism potential of Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve. There are different tools and approach used to assess the ecotourism potential. This paper contains information collected from field observation, scheduled interview and key informant*

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*interview. Wild Water Buffalo, migratory birds along with the presence of other wildlife species make a place attractive destination for ecotourism. Satisfaction shown by the respondents for food, accommodation and hospitality offered adds value to the ecotourism potential. Areas with high scenic and cultural attraction in the vicinity of the park can be considered as positive additionally to attract tourist with diverse interest. As it is considered mandatory to include the component of education and interpretation to qualify as ecotourism, development and execution of the curriculum are essential. Beside this, exploration and marketing of other potential destination and enabling the local communities are equally vital.*

### **Introduction**

Nepal is in the forefront in the world in conservation of biodiversity through delineation of protected, with more than 23% of the land the allocated as protected area (Bhattarai et al., 2017). The coverage of the protected area has increased with the recent extension of the protected areas in the Terai region (Chitwan National Park and Parsa National Park). Compared to the early period of modern conservation history, started in the early 1970s, the approach in conservation is also on the verge of transformation (Bhattarai et al., 2017). Conservation movement is moving from the fence and fine approach to participatory approach (Bajracharya and Lama 2008; Bhattarai et al. 2017). A Participatory approach to conservation recognize local people as an important stakeholder of conservation. Conservation intervention can be successful if the intervention made for biodiversity conservation can simultaneously improve the living standard of the local people (Birdlife International Partnership, 2007). This issue becomes more relevant to protected areas located in low land Nepal, where relocation of human settlement has been carried out to establish a park ( Dhakal et al. 2011). Even in other protected areas where resettlement was not carried out, the establishment of the park has altered the lifestyle of the local resident. People living near the protected area are mainly poor directly depending on the protected area to fulfill their daily requirement such as firewood, fodder, water and other ecosystem services (DeFries, et al., 2010). Conservation objectives can be fulfilled only when proper harmony can be maintained between the conservation need and people's requirement through different conservation measures, especially aiming to improve the living standard of the people (DeFries et al., 2010; Nepal, 1997). Tourism can be one of the effective tool to reconcile conservation and developmental issues (Banskota, 2012).

### **Tourism and environment**

World tourism organization defined tourism as “the activities of persons identified as visitors”. “ A visitor is someone who is making a visit to a main destination outside his/her usual environment for less than a year for any main purpose [including]

holidays, leisure and recreation, business, health, education or other purposes” (UNWTO, 2010). Tourism is one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world, which contribute to job and wealth creation, environmental protection, cultural preservation along with poverty alleviation (World Tourism Organization & United Nations Development Programme, 2018). Travel and tourism account for 10.4% of global GDP and 9.9% of total employment created in 2017 globally (WTTC, 2018b). In case of Nepal, the sector contributed altogether 4% of total GDP, while accounting 3.9% of all jobs provided (WTTC, 2018a). Besides their direct role in the development, they also act as a catalyst of development as they are the important mechanism of effectively transferring the wealth from rich to poorer countries and people (Sharpley, 2009). Besides the economic incentives provided by the tourism sector they also contribute to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage and empower the host communities (World Tourism Organization & United Nations Development Programme, 2018). Tourism can foster peace and intercultural understandings besides generating trade opportunities. Besides these, tourism also enhances the ability of local communities to use alternative forms of energy which contribute to forest conservation (Nyaupane & Thapa, 2006). Despite these potential benefits, tourism come up with negative externalities. These externalities are seen in physical, social and economic aspects of the environment (Ceballos-Lascuráin, 1996). Increase in number of tourist rises fuelwood demand, which ultimately upsurges pressure on natural resources (Pandey, et al., 1995). Mass tourism is also accused for the proliferation of the amount of waste. Besides these tourism results in degradation of biological, socio-cultural and economic diversity (Šimková & Kasal, 2012). It also brings a change in the loci of authority, land use pattern and in local and regional economy (Kunwar, 2017a). To minimize these negative consequences of tourism, different form of responsible tourism is practiced which are collectively known as a sustainable form of tourism (Kunwar, 2017b) among them ecotourism is one .

### **Ecotourism**

Ecotourism is the new paradigm of tourism carried out with either cultural, educational, scientific, or adventure purpose (Weaver, 2002). It is the responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education to staff and guest (TIES, 2015). Eco-tourists seek an alternative of mass tourism thus they travel to new areas in a relatively undisturbed place with some cultural or environmental attraction. Thus, new and relatively unexplored protected areas can be the destination for Eco tourist. Ecotourism can be in achieving the sustainable development. Ecotourism, as they reinforce three pillars of sustainable development, can be a viable option for creating the win-win situation for the park and people ( Bajracharya & Lama, 2008; Shrestha, 2015).

In the protected areas, where park people relations are not harmonious, ecotourism can result in improved relations. Tourism activity results in reduction in local peoples' dependency with forest and grassland through the diversification of income sources (Adams et al. 2004; Barrett et al., 2011; Chan et al. 2007). In Nepal, major fraction of local people getting benefits from ecotourism practices get paybacks from tourist by offering hospitality through homestay. Well managed Homestay as an ecotourism product can be alternative to the mass tourism and can play crucial role in involving the remote population and contribute to conservation of wilderness and traditional cultures (Acharya & Halpenny, 2013). The benefits that can be achieved from ecotourism depends upon the potentiality of that site to attract and host tourist without affecting physical, social and economic aspects of environment in adverse manner and without deteriorating the experience of visitors (Navarro Jurado et al., 2012; Reilly, 1986).

### **Ecotourism in Nepal**

Recently, quantitative increment has occurred in the study of aspects of ecotourism in Nepal. Studies have made attempts to cover various aspects of ecotourism. Model of ecotourism practiced in Nepal (K.C., 2017), role of ecotourism in environmental conservation (K.C., Rijal, & Sapkota, 2015) and overall role in sustainable development (Nepal, 2002) have been explored. Besides that, the impact of climate change in ecotourism have been studied (K C & Thapa Parajuli, 2015).

Based on subjective judgement, different forms of ecotourism practiced in Nepal are classified as ecosystem ecotourism, rural ecotourism, sustainable ecotourism and cultural ecotourism (K.C., 2017). All these forms, though show some similarities with ecotourism, many fail to meet the principles of ecotourism (Blamey, 2001; Gaymans & Hikes, 1996; TIES, 2015). Ecotourism practiced within the conservation areas and buffer zones of protected areas of Nepal can be better fitted within the definition of ecotourism. Khata Biological Corridor Homestay commonly known as Dallagaon Homestay corridor of Bardiya National Park and Tharu Homestay of Amaltari within the Buffer zone of Chitwan Park, including other can be taken as the model homestay as they are found to be effective in luring tourists to that place, while enhancing the living standard of local people (Malla Thakuri & Nepal, 2018; NRB, 2015). Properly executed ecotourism are found to be effective to enhance the standard of living of local people through income generation which have ultimately contributed to other aspects of quality of life, such as education (Acharya & Halpenny, 2013; Baral & Stern, 2011; K. C & Thapa Parajuli, 2014; Nepal, 2002). Despite the role of ecotourism in sustainable development of buffer zones of protected area, tourism is more centered to a few destinations namely the Annapurna Conservation area, Chitwan National Park, Manasalu Conservation area and in some cases Bardiya National Park (K.C. et al., 2015; Nepal, 2002), so does the benefits of tourism activities. New areas can be

explored and expanded by studying the potential of other areas. But, study about the ecotourism potential are limited in case of Nepal.

### **Ecotourism potential**

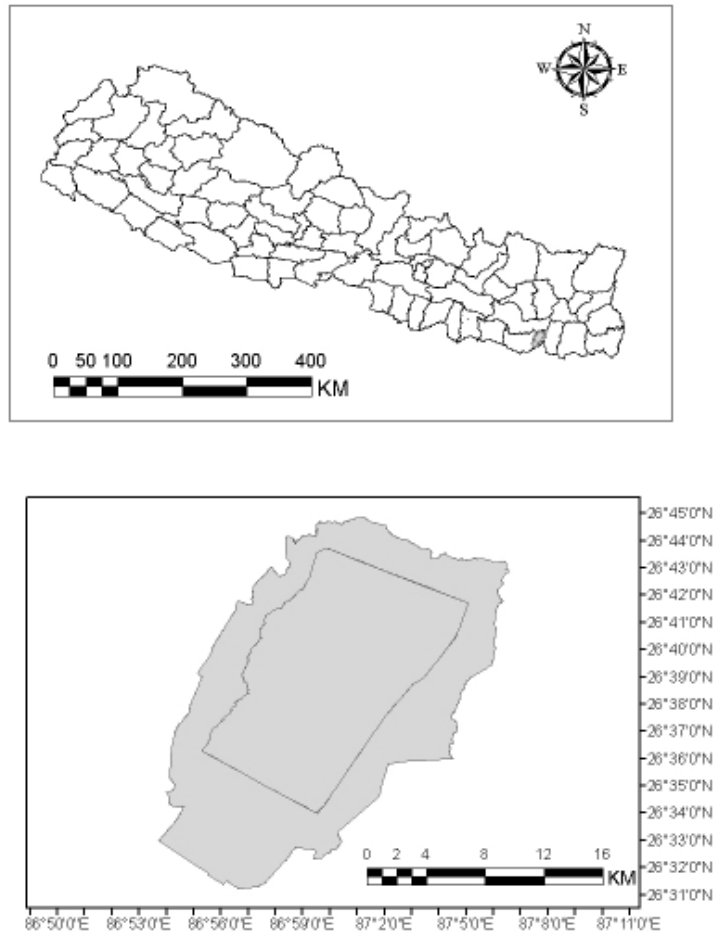
Nature based attraction, and cultural features differ according to the geographical setting. This implies that, all places do not have equal potentials in regard of ecotourism (Wearing & Neil, 2009). The sites must contain unique, appealing features for ecotourist. Specific attraction, site and infrastructure, market demand, available capacity and socioeconomic linkages to biodiversity are determining factors for ecotourism potential (Carroll & Groom, 2006; Ceballos-Lascurain, 1996).

Researches regarding the assessment of ecotourism potential are limited in Nepal. Who-are-you Ban, a US-AID funded project, have made a comparative analysis of the ecotourism potential of 37 locations on Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) and Chitwan Annapurna Landscape (CHAL) with the motive of promoting community based ecotourism in Nepal (Shakya et al., 2013). In another study, road condition and lack of promotional activities were assessed as the hindrance for ecotourism development in Dhorpatan Hunting reserve (Aryal & Maharjan, 2017). Researchers have failed to acknowledge the ecotourism potential in the eastern Nepal. In this paper, we aim to explore the ecotourism potential of Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve, so that tailored plan can be devised and implemented in the area for reconciling conservation and development in the area.

### **Materials and Methods**

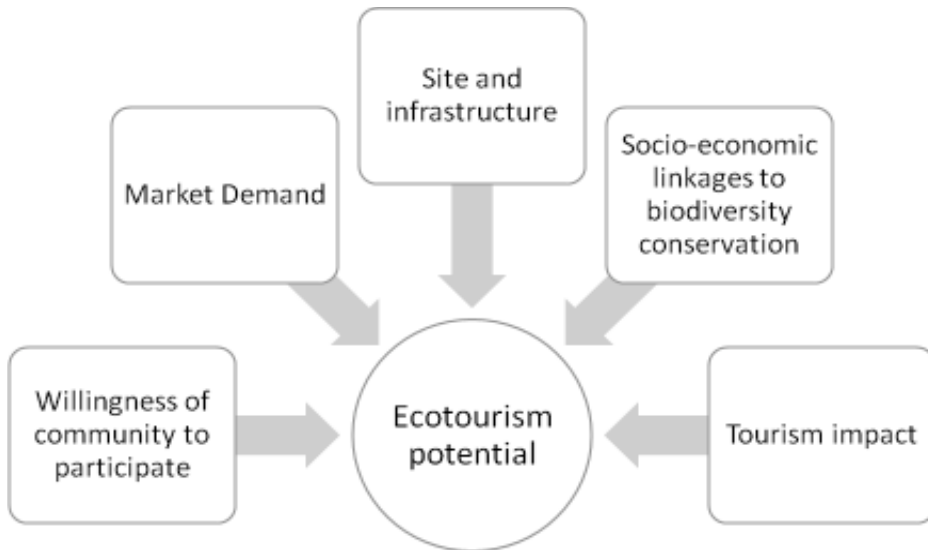
#### **Study Area**

The Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve is the only wildlife reserve of Nepal which lies at 26°38' N 87°00' E on the Bank of Sapta Koshi River in Sunsari, Saptari and Udayapur district of Eastern Nepal. The reserve is characterized by sandy and silty soils with patches of scrub and mixed deciduous riverine forest scattered on the high ground. The vegetation consists primarily of *Acacia catechu* and *Dalbergia sisoo* trees, with tall elephant grass *Saccharum spontaneum*, *S. arundinacea* and cattail *Typha elephantina*. The reserve was gazetted in 1976 mainly to conserve habitat for the remaining population of Wild Water Buffalo (*Bubalus arnee*). A total of 490 bird species has been recorded here. Koshi Tappu has been designated as a Ramsar site and an Important Bird Area (Shrestha & Pantha, 2018). Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve and its Buffer Zone is shown in figure 1.

**Figure 1: Map showing KTWR and its Buffer Zone****Methods:****Conceptual framework:**

Ecotourism potential is the function of market demand, community's willingness to participate in ecotourism activities, socioeconomic linkages of tourism to biodiversity conservation, the ability of the area to attract and host the visitors and environmental impacts of the tourism activities (Carroll & Groom, 2006). The conceptual framework used to evaluate the ecotourism potential is shown in figure 2. Qualitative and semi-quantitative approach was used to collect and interpret the results.

**Figure 2: Conceptual Framework for ecotourism Potential of Protected Area  
(Based on Groom et al., 2006)**



### **Sample design**

The sample was purposefully taken. All together 400 respondents, of whom have been to Koshi Tappu Wildlife reserve were contacted. Mail sent to them inviting them to fill the online schedule relating their perception about the different aspects relevant to the ecotourism potential of the site.

### **Data collection**

Data were generated using observational records, published literatures, scheduled interview and key informant interview. The annual flow of visitors was used to analyze market trends. Perception of visitors was collected to assess the site and infrastructure. Key informants were interviewed was used to know about the socioeconomic linkage of tourism activities to biodiversity conservation and community's willingness to participate. Besides, other potential locations to be included in tourist circuit were also analyzed. Field visits were carried out in April 2017 and May 2018. During the visit, beside field observation, key informant interview was also taken.

Perceptions of visitor were collected through an online survey. For the purpose, schedule of semi structured questions was prepared using the google form. Altogether 400 Undergraduate and graduate level students and teachers of three different colleges (Tri-Chandra Multiple Campus, Goldengate International College and Kathmandu Forestry College) who have been to Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve (KTWR) recently for field excursion were requested to provide their perception about

KTWR. To ensure the number of responses to be single per person, respondents were asked to log in to the form using google account. Visitor perception about the attraction, infrastructures and hospitality along with other facilities were collected. Schedule contained questions to assess perception about transportation, food, appealing features, hospitality, among others, following the guidelines adopted by IUCN (Ceballos-Lascurain, 1996). The schedule was mailed using google groups of each cohort of respondent. After twenty four hours, follow up email was sent. Not all respondents respond after follow up email. Thus, only 55 responses which were analyzed. Beside this, key informant interview and observation was also used.

### **Data Analysis**

Market demand was assessed analyzing the annual flow of the tourist for year 2005/06 to 2016/17. Man-Kandel test and Sen's slope index were used to assess whether the fluctuation of tourist number is either a stochastic event or actual increments of tourist number. Percentages of the responses of different visitors were analyzed to evaluate the site and infrastructures.

### **Results**

#### **Market demand**

From table 1 we can observe that the number of tourists in general, excluding 2014/15 and 2015/16, are increasing each year. The data for Sukhlaphanta National park and Koshi Tappu wildlife reserve doesn't follow the national trend though. The number of tourists has been found to be maximum in the year 2016/17 followed by 2015/16.

**Table 1: Number of tourists visiting Koshi tappu Wildlife Reserve, Sukhlaphanta National Parks and All protected areas of Nepal**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Sukhlaphanta National Park</b>	<b>Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve</b>	<b>All protected areas of Nepal</b>
2005/06	57	4207	165304
2006/07	352	6145	245910
2007/08	1420	4575	291040
2008/09	250	196	349195
2009/10	491	1894	381789
2010/11	358	4660	455237
2011/12	517	5704	502092
2012/13	471	4446	510205
2013/14	984	7349	558577

Year	Sukhlaphanta National Park	Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve	All protected areas of Nepal
2014/15	824	8719	517095
2015/16	1920	9247	389223
2016/17	2640	11252	604091

The increase in the number of tourists in protected areas of Nepal was found to be increasing trend instead of being a stochastic event as shown in table 2. On average, the number of tourists in KTWR was found to be increased by 836 (249-1301) per annum. The tourist number in all protected areas of Nepal was found to be increased by 40071 (24809- 49159) while that of Sukhlaphanta was found to be 112 (55- 238) per annum as shown by the Sen's slope index.

**Table 2: Analysis of the visitors numbers in KTWR, SuNP and Tourist numbers from all protected areas of Nepal**

Protected Areas	Man Kendall's Tau	Estimate	Sen's Slope		Z	P	N
			95% confidence interval				
			Max	Min			
Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve	0.606	836.5833	1301.0	249.5	2.6743	0.007488	12
Sukhlaphanta National Park	0.636	112.1875	238.5714	55.2500	2.8115	0.0049314	12
All Protected areas of Nepal	3.6343	40071.11	49159.12	24809.00		0.0002787	12

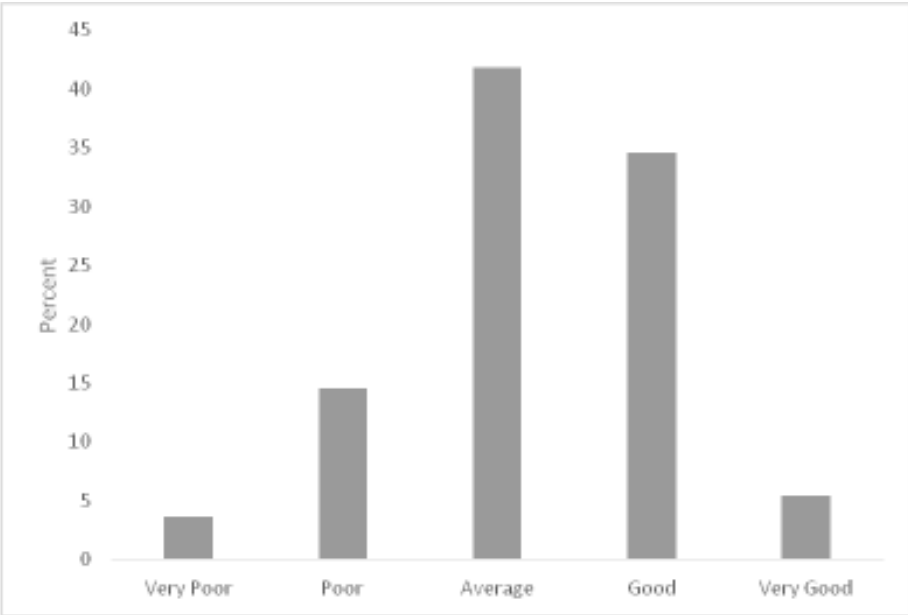
**Location**

The Koshi Tappu wildlife reserve lies at the eastern Nepal. This is only the protected area of eastern Nepal, one of the few regions with high population density in Nepal. The park is located on the flood plain of Koshi River, the largest river of Nepal. Thus, the geographic location enhances the potential of the site as an ecotourism destination.

**Physical facilities:**

The park can be accessed from flight or using road transport. Travelling through road is commonly preferred route. Road transport is mostly used. Only a few of the respondent found travelling from Kathmandu to be problematic as shown in figure 3.

**Figure 3: Response of respondents about travel from Kathmandu to Park**



A similar pattern was observed in the response about the local transportation i.e. Transportation from Lauki to park headquarters, which is shown in table 3.

**Table 3: Response of the visitors about the local transportation facility**

Response	Percentage
Very poor	1.8
Poor	5.5
Average	36.4
Good	45.5
Very good	10.9
Total	100.0

The response about the food, accommodation and hospitality offered were mostly positive as shown in table 4.

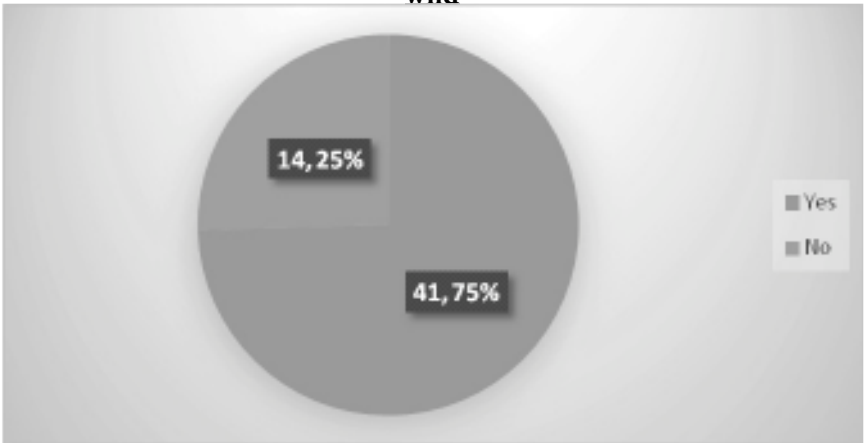
Table 4: Rating provided by visitors about the quality of food, accommodation and hospitality offered

Response	Food	Accommodations	Hospitality
Very poor	3.6	5.5	0.0
Poor	14.5	10.9	12.7
Average	43.6	54.5	36.4
Good	30.9	27.3	38.2
Very Good	7.3	1.8	12.7

**Major Attraction:**

The Koshi Tappu Wildlife reserve is famous for Wild Water Buffalo (*Bubalus arnee*) and migratory birds. The majority of the visitors who go to the park aspire to view Wild water buffalo in wild. Of total respondent, 75% of the respondent got a chance to view the species which rest quarter were quite unlucky as shown in the figure 3.

Figure 4: Proportion of respondents who were able to view wild water buffalo in wild



On 25<sup>th</sup> of March, 2018, wild water buffalo was observed at five minute walk from the park headquarter.

**Other Faunal diversity:**

Respondents report to observe various mammalian species in the Koshi tappu wildlife reserve. Wild Elephant (*Elephas maximus*), Ganges River Dolphin (*Platanista gangatica*), Wild boar (*Sus scrofa*), Golden Jackal (*Canis aureus*), Chital (*Axis axis*), Barking Deer (*Munticus muntjak*), Blue bull (*Bselaphus tragocamelus*), Jungle Cat (*Felis chaus*) and Bengal Fox (*Vulpes bengalensis*) are the major species observed

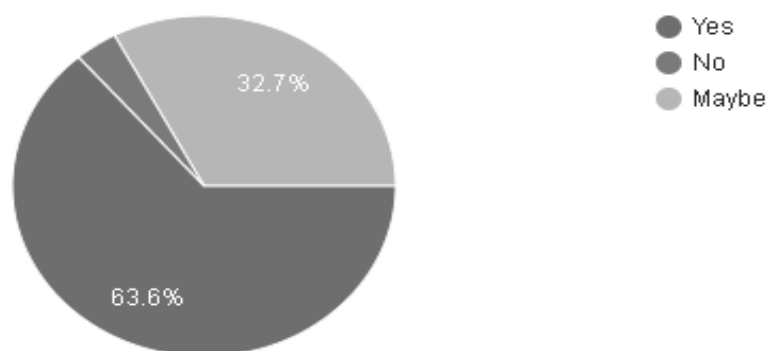
by the respondents. Beside these mammalian species, during visits, they report to observe Marsh Crocodile (*Crocodylus palustris*) and different birds in and around Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve.

Asian Pied Starling (*Gracupica contra*), gray heron (*Ardea cinerea*), Little Cormorant (*Microcarbo niger*), Plum headed parakeet (*Psittacula cyanocephala*), Green Bee Eater (*Merops orientalis*), Indian Pond Heron (*Ardeola grayii*), Purple Swamp Hen (*Porphyrio porphyrio*), Common coot (*Fulica atra*) were some of the birds reported from KTWR by respondents.

### Supply and Competitiveness (Uniqueness)

Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve appeared to be unique to 63.6% of the respondents, while 32.7% of the respondents was not sure about the uniqueness offered by KTWR. Single respondent found the park to be similar to that of Chitwan National Park while one respondent didn't visit the place properly to compare and explore the unique features of the park as shown in the figure 6.

**Figure 5: Perception of respondents about the uniqueness offered by KTWR**



### Scenic attraction

From the area, all three geographic landscape: mountains, mid-hills and Terai can be seen in single frame which makes the park one of potential ecotourism destinations. The landscape and flood plains made my Koshi River are other geographic areas with scenic attractions.

### Cultural attraction

Traditional houses can be observed in and around the park headquarter. Tharu culture can be observed in the houses. These houses with traditional Tharu culture can be one of attraction of the park. Only 56.4% of the respondents reported to be aware about the cultural attraction.

### **Available capacity**

During our field visit on March 2018, one Local NGO in partnership with the National Trust for Nature Conservation was providing nature guide training to ten youth from the buffer zone of KTWR. This was done with the aim of developing the capacity to guide the tourist and provide alternative livelihood options for local people. These were the first cohorts of nature guide in Koshi Tappu Wildlife reserve.

### **Community participation**

In Parkashpur and Kusaha area of the buffer zone of Koshi Tappu Wildlife reserve, 15 households have started home stay facilities with support from the park. This step was done with the motive to make local people involve in conservation activities and generate income from the tourism activities. Beside Homestay activities, local communities participate in conservation activities through 9 buffer zone committee, 425 sub-committee and 269 community based organizations.

### **Potential destination to include in ecotourism circuit**

Baraha Kshetera, Dharan, Bhedetar, Koshi Barrage, Chataradham, Budashubba, Namaste Jharana of the surrounding location were picked by the respondents to include in ecotourism circuit. Other location identified by the respondents to integrate within ecotourism circuit includes the Kanyam Tea state, Fikkal and Illam bazaar of Illam district.

### **Discussion**

Koshi Tappu wildlife reserve and its periphery can be a suitable area to practice cultural and religious ecotourism, ecosystem ecotourism and sustainable ecotourism (K.C., 2016, 2017; KTWR, 2018). The Homestay program initiated by local community and promoted by the park authority can be expected to be fruitful in creating the alternative livelihood options for the local people and ultimately contribute in creating harmonious relation between park and people (Acharya & Halpenny, 2013; Shrestha, 2015). Geographic location, transportation facilities and all other aspects make KTWR an alternative destination to the Chitwan National Park which now host the signification majority of the tourist visiting protected areas of Nepal (DNPWC/MoFSC/GoN, 2018).

The market demand of the KTWR can be said to be significantly higher to that of the parks with similar travelling distance from the capital city Kathmandu, which has privilege of only international airport, the major gateway to the majority of tourists to Nepal. In terms of distance from Kathmandu, both KTWR and SuNP lies at an around equal distance from Kathmandu. But the tourist reaching to KTWR is much higher and the rate of increase is also higher at Koshi (DNPWC/MoFSC/GoN, 2018). This indicates that market of Koshi Tappu wildlife reserve is growing faster enhancing the potentiality to develop as an ecotourism destination.

Although efforts have been made to establish the new population of Wild Water Buffalo at Chitwan national park (DNPWC/MoFSC/GoN, 2018), till date, Koshi Tappu is remembered for wild water buffalo. Recent census of Wild water buffalo has counted 416 individuals of the wild buffalo in the park. If the population of wild water buffalo gets established at CNP and park continue to face threats from herds of domestic buffalo, which graze in large number within the park (Khatri, Shah, Tachamo Shah, & Mishra, 2010; KTWR, 2018), KTWR will remain with no identity.

KTWR is the first wetland area to be listed as a Ramsar site. Beside wild water buffalo, parks is considered as the paradise for the winter migratory birds of Nepal (Baral, 2005; Khatri et al., 2010; Shakya et al., 2013). Along with being the home of 416 individuals of Wild water buffalo the area host 490 species of Birds within a small area. The area also provides habitat for four other protected species, namely Indian Pangolin (*Manis crassicaudata*), Striped Hyaena (*Hyaena hyaena*), Asian Elephant (*Elephas maximus*) and Ganges River Dolphin (*Platanista gangetica*). Along with Wild Water Buffalo, the park is home to five of 27 protected mammals of Nepal (Shrestha & Pantha, 2018). Beside these, four of the nine protected bird species (Black stork, White stork, Bengal Florican and Lesser florican) and all three protected reptiles of Nepal are found within the boundary of KTWR (Shrestha & Pantha, 2018). These protected mammals, birds and reptile add value of KTWR as an ecotourism destination. For development of ecotourism, cultural features are equally important as compared to environmental features (Wearing & Neil, 2009). But, nearly half of the respondents didn't become aware about the cultural attraction. Thus, proper marketing might be necessary (Sangpikul, 2010; Wearing & Neil, 1988).

Satisfaction shown by the respondent towards the food, accommodation and hospitality shown by the KTWR can be beneficial in attracting more tourist to the areas (Ceballos-Lascurain, 1996). The aspiration shown by the local communities to participate in the ecotourism and ultimately in biodiversity conservation can be taken as the positive sign. To grab this aspiration to fulfill the conservation goal, concerned government authority should facilitate the ecotourism development through policy intervention (Carroll & Groom, 2006). Though, 15 Homestay were initiated with the support from the park, in the vast region that number won't be sufficient to hold the tourist and to make meaningful contribution to improve the park people conflict, reported in the park (Limbu & Karki, 2003). The number of Homestay can be enhanced and location of Homestay and services provided by them can be diversified. These Homestay can serve as turning point in luring tourist to a remote destination within the buffer zone of the park and address the livelihood requirement of the park (Acharya & Halpenny, 2013). They can also help in formation of collaborative network with other potential ecotourism destination of the locality. Beside the location identified by the respondents, some other location such as Indra

canal (first irrigation canal of eastern Nepal), Pandabas area (Phattepur) of Saptari district and other unexplored areas of Saptari, Udayapur, Jhapa, Morang and Sunsari District can be explored and kept in the ecotourism circuit to hold the tourist for more than a single day. Beside this, development of the curriculum to enhance the education and interpretation experience of visitors are equally crucial (TIES, 2015; Walter & Reimer, 2012). If properly planned and executed, ecotourism can reinforce all three pillars viz. Physical, social and economic aspects of sustainable development in the periphery of KTWR as indicated by different parks of Nepal and throughout the world (Cater, 1993; Mcalpin, 2008; Nepal, 2002; Place, 1995).

### **Conclusion**

The accessibility of location, the uniqueness in appeal and high diversity of birds, mammals and reptiles within a small location makes Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve as the potential ecotourism destination. Beside these, aspiration shown by park authority and the local community towards ecotourism and the presence of cultural heritage makes this place a potential location for all forms of ecotourism commonly practiced in Nepal viz. Ecosystem, cultural, rural, and sustainable ecotourism. This statement is backed by exponentially increasing number of tourists in the area. Still, to make the perfect destination for ecotourism, further research on the aspects of seasonality of the tourist flow and the impact of tourism in environment are to be explored in depth. Planning of the ecotourism circuit and proper marketing of that circuit are highly essential. Beside this, the number of visitors in the park can be enhanced through the development of curriculum and execution of ecotourism curriculum both for visitors and local to enhance the interpretation experience. For this, local people, park authority and other private sector should carry out their activities in a coordinated manner.

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## Potentialities and Promotion of Tourism in Dailekh District, Nepal

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### Abstract

*The hospitality has been discussed only in the model of social, private and commercial domain. It has been argued that there are two school of thoughts: one sees the host-guest relationship entirely based on the commercial transaction between them and another sees hospitality as a social phenomenon. This paper highlights the correlation between hospitality, peace and tourism with context to the behaviors of nation-states as political actors towards migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in terms of ethics, human rights and citizenship with special focus on the difference in approach of hospitality between the rich and poor countries. However, it is also evident that peace can only be achieved through the acceptance of the outsiders without prejudices, although this has been rejected by the thinkers who believe that it is impossible for any nation to fully welcome the guests which will require them to compromise their national sovereignty. Attention has been given to the concept of hospitality with special reference to Kant's thought of universal hospitality, Levinas's concept of the ethics and politics of hospitality, and Derrida's notion of absolute or unconditional and conditional hospitality. The issues thus discussed are the various forms of discrimination in terms of the hospitable behaviors by the*

### Keywords

*Ecotourism,  
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*hosts (nations) towards the guests (migrants) by analyzing the host-guest relationship and further reflecting it upon the current global political scenario.*

## **Introduction**

The concept of hospitality has been defined and explained by many scholars of different disciplines. While studying about the verbatim meaning and origin of the word hospitality, Beveniste in Friese (2004, p. 68) has presented that the Latin notion of guests, *hostis* and *hospis* refer to two different semantic field of one being the “master of the house” and the other referring to a “compensatory relationship” based upon both equality and reciprocity. In addition to these meanings, *hostis/hospes* also came to signify the “enemy” originally used to designate neither stranger nor the enemy with the drawing borders, when the guest becomes the (public) enemy and the stranger. So, the meanings of the words “guest” and “stranger” are connected with the political and legal institutions of the community or the state and a specific “politics of hospitality”. In its double meaning the notion refers to both the guest, i.e. the stranger and to the enemy and thus already works on the equation of “being foreign and “hostile” (Friese, 2002, pp. 68-69; see in detail Kunwar, 2017). These literal meaning of hospitality further provide us with the indication of studying more about the relationship between the host and the guest and their relationships.

Hospitality has been considered as the major player of service economy as it contributes significantly to the world economy and this sector is the largest employer in the world next only to the armed forces (Ottenbacher, Harrington & Parsa, 2009, p. 269). Hospitality has been one of the most pervasive metaphors within tourism studies, referring in one sense to the commercial project of the tourist industry such as hotels, catering and tour operation and in another sense, to the social interactions between local people and tourists, that is hosts and guests (Germann-Molz & Gibson, 2007, p. 6). Kunwar (2017, p. 56) has further explained that most of the people everywhere in hospitality sectors refer to hospitality as the friendly and welcoming behavior towards the guests. In fact, the host-guest relationship serves as a power and control measure. Being a host means an element of power over the guest and vice versa. As Selwyn (2000; in Kunwar, 2017, p. 56) has suggested that there is an exchange of honor and the guest signals is the acceptance of the moral authority of the host. This scholar is of the opinion that basic function of hospitality is to establish new relationships or to promote already existing ones and it is achieved while making exchanges-both material and symbolic- between the guests and the hosts. Kunwar (2017; in Joshi & Kunwar, 2017, pp. 69-70) recently has also coined two very important types of hospitality namely persuasive hospitality and imposed hospitality. The persuasive hospitality refers to people (hosts) who are intrinsically oriented to welcome the strangers as a tradition. The term imposed hospitality refers

to the host compelling to provide unintentional hospitality to the gorillas with the fear of torture or death.

As the topic of this study suggest, it is also important to highlight, how hospitality results in peace. In case, in the absence of peace, hospitality, sometimes converts into hostility and 'hostipitality' (Lynch, Germann-Molz, McIntosh, Lugosi & Lashley, 2011; in Kunwar, 2017, pp. 55-115). The term 'hostipitality' reminds us that hospitality always entails its opposite: hostility. Acts of hospitality framed as welcoming to some often exclude others. Studies focusing on the way hospitality is enacted often entail act of violence and exclusion. Such critical accounts of the treatment of unwanted guests enable us to understand how a discourse of hospitality is often marshalled in support of what are, in reality, failures of hospitality, 'hostipitality' (Lynch, et al., 2011, n.p.; in Kunwar, 2017, pp. 55-115).

So far as peace is concerned, D'Amore (1994; Goeldner et al., 2000, p. 310; in Kunwar, 2017, p. 377) indicates that our current definition of peace is simply "the absence of war" and calls for a new "positive concept of peace accepting the perspective of an organic and interconnected world." He further defines that the term peace, in addition to the absence of war, also includes the absence of acts of terrorism and random violence.

According to *Webster Dictionary*, peace is defined as:

- A state of tranquility or quiet: as (a) freedom from disturbance (b) a state of security of order within a community provided for by the law and customs.
- Freedom from disquieting or oppressive thoughts or emotions.
- Harmony in personal relations.
- A pact or agreement to end hostilities between those who have been at war or in a state of enmity (Theobald, 1997, pp. 28-29; in Kunwar, 2017, p. 377).

While discussing about peace, it is also important to make distinction between negative peace and positive peace. The noted 20<sup>th</sup>-century French intellectual Raymond Aron (1966, FN.2; in Barash & Webel, 2002, p. 6) was thinking of negative peace when he defined peace as "a condition of more or less lasting suspension of rivalry between political units". An alternative view to this realist or (*realpolitik*) perspective is one that emphasizes the importance of positive peace. The concept of positive peace has been particularly forwarded by the Norwegian peace researcher Johan Galtung. Positive peace is more than the mere absence of war or even the absence of interstate violence. It refers to a social condition in which exploitation is minimized or eliminated, and in which there is neither overt violence nor the subtler phenomenon of underlying structural violence (Barash & Webel, 2002, p. 6).

Albeit it might be irrelevant describing various types of peace to the present study but it is noteworthy to mention about the Relational Order Theory (ROT) founded by Donohue & Roberto (1993), Donohue (2001) and Donohue & Hoobler (2002) suggests that there are three conditions or types of peace; (a) conditional peace, (b) unconditional peace and (c) isolationist peace (Donohue, 2006, pp. 226-229). Under conditional peace, in the condition of low interdependence and high affiliation, parties exchange messages that seek to retain their role autonomy, yet demonstrate approval and positive effect for one another. They assert few rights because they are not sufficiently interdependent to demand much. Yet, they remain friendly and polite, generally as an attempt to adhere to socially acceptable norms of interaction (Donohue, 2006, p. 228). Under unconditional peace, when parties communicate using expressions of high affiliation and interdependence, they are proposing a highly cooperative relationship. This combination challenges parties to honor their role obligations under individual rights. The focus on obligations invests parties in the needs of the relationship over the needs of the individuals (Donohue, 2006, p. 227). Further, the concept of isolationist peace suggests that when parties communicate with low levels of both affiliation and interdependence, they send isolationist messages. Parties seek to reduce their ties, push away from one another; and isolate themselves from the relationship. This is an Isolationist Peace in the sense that parties are not fighting but they are not moving forward productively with their substantive agenda. So, unconditional peace emphasizes constructive processes, while isolationist peace emphasizes withdrawal (Donohue, 2006, p. 227).

In this kind of study with no possibility of field work, review of the literature plays a very significant role. Marshall and Rossman (2006; in Creswell, 2009, p. 105) refer to the brief literature review in an introduction as a way to set the study within the context of other, related studies. Brotherton (2010, p. 65) has referred to the literature review as a 'critical review' of the existing literature.... For a review to be regarded as critical, there must be evidence of engagement with the literature. This demands more than regurgitation because it involves an element of processing in an attempt to develop a greater understanding of its relevance, validity and significance (Brotherton, 2010, p. 67). According to Mays et al. (2005; in Mair, Ritchie & Walters, 2014, p. 4), narrative reviews may include thematic analysis. However, in order to move from a simple narrative approach to more in-depth approach, a technique known as narrative synthesis is advised. Narrative synthesis allows for the synthesis of evidence drawn from a number of studies.... This review does not set out to assess all literatures written on politics, human rights, ethics and peace, but rather to document the state of the researchers' knowledge in the specific field of hospitality based on ethics and politics in relation to peace. Therefore, a narrative approach has been taken.

Hospitality has been studied by Lashley and Morrison (2000), Lashley, Lynch and Morrison (2007), Germann-Molz and Gibson (2007), O’Gorman (2010), Brotherton (1999), Lugosi (2009, 2008), Lugosi et. al. (2009) amongst others. None of these scholars except Gibson (2007) have critically analyzed on the politics of hospitality which came into existence since the time of Immanuel Kant, Emmanuel Levinas and Jacques Derrida. Since the time of Brotherton (1999) to Lugosi (2014), the hospitality studies were confined only in the context of social, private, commercial and industrial domain. Many scholars have recognized that the academia in management offers a utilitarian conception of hospitality which has been widely criticized for its failure to address the social, political, cultural and emotional dimensions of such transactions (Lashley et. al, 2007; Lugosi, 2008, 2009; in Kunwar, 2017, p. 58).

In course of identifying the new areas of hospitality, Lynch, Germann-Molz, McIntosh, Lugosi and Lashley (2011) have suggested that the ethics and politics of hospitality need further attention, exploration and scholarly development. As they elaborate in the context of ethics and politics of hospitality, the writings of Kant, Levinas and Derrida have used hospitality to reflect critically on broader questions about citizenship, human rights and the ethical treatment of strangers. The philosophical and ethical implications of hospitality, and in particular Derrida’s challenging concept of ‘absolute hospitality’, may shed light on social relations and encounters. This has also been highlighted by Kunwar (2017, pp. 55-115).

So far as the host-guest relationship is concerned, majority of the scholars have focused on this relationship. But they are divided into two camps. One sees the host-guest relationship entirely based on commercial transaction between them (e.g. Wood, 1994; Aramberri, 2001; Slattery, 2002; in Causevic & Lynch 2009, p. 122). Another sees hospitality as a social phenomenon (e.g. Smith, 1989; Smith & Brent, 2001; Lashley & Morrison, 2000; Lashley et al., 2000; in Causevic & Lynch, 2009, p. 122). Citing the examples of diaspora and their visit to their native country, Causevic & Lynch (2009, pp. 123-124) in their study of the host-guest relationships in a post-conflict setting have argued that the value of hospitality goes beyond the general commercial notion and highlighted a need of researching the relationship as a social phenomenon in its naturalistic setting. They have further argued that in a critical theory perspective (as a theory of communication, i.e. communicative competence and communicative rationality on the one hand, distorted communication on the other) derived by Habermas in 1978, society can be understood through the hospitality lens, through the host-guest relationship observed as a social phenomenon which has been inferior, marginalized and less heard.

Methodologically, this paper has been prepared by reviewing the secondary sources where the purpose of reviewing studies in an introduction is to justify the importance of the study and to create distinctions between past studies and the

proposed one (Creswell, 2009, p. 105). This study has been confined mostly to the notions of Kant, Levinas and Derrida. Through their approaches, the researchers have been able to analyze not only the past philosophy of hospitality in relation with ethics, politics and human rights but also their influences on the present political hospitality scenario.

It will therefore, now be noteworthy to mention about ethics and politics including human rights in relation with hospitality as suggested by the above mentioned scholars. As this study is concerned with the politics of hospitality, peace and tourism, the researchers have made an attempt to understand peace, ethics and politics including human rights in today's context of globalism of the world. In this regards, very few scholars have studied the politics of hospitality which has already been realized as also imperative for the study of tourism, hospitality and peace. Therefore, the present researchers aim at highlighting the major theoretical debates forwarded by various scholars in terms of hospitality and peace and its impact on the global politics and tourism towards the asylum seekers, refugees, migrants and immigrants. Asylum seeker has been defined as a person who enters or remains in a country either legally, as a visitor or tourist or student, or illegally, with no or with fraudulent documentation, and then claims refugee status under the terms of the 1951 United Nations convention relating to the Status of refugees (Department of the Parliament Library, 2000). A refugee has been defined as any individual who: "owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his (her) nationality and is unable or owing to such fear is unwilling to avail himself (or herself) of the protection of that country..." (Convention relating to status of refugees 1951) (Department of the Parliament Library, 2000). According the International Organization of Migration (IOM, 2018), a migrant is defined as any person who is moving or has moved across an international border within a State away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of (1) the person's legal status; (2) whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary; (3) what the causes for the movement are; or (4) what the length of the stay is. Similarly, an immigrant is a person who moves to another country, having met work or business or family reunion criteria, and having being issued with a visa or residence permit which entitles them to reside in that country (Department of Parliament Library, 2000). In this study, the terms migrant and immigrant are used interchangeably as it they both refer to the same sense of leaving one's own country to the other. Though it is a preliminary study, it is believed that this study will help the academics, hospitality and tourism scholars, entrepreneurs, contemporary scholars of conflict, peace, international relations and political science, media personnel, researchers, research think tanks, and students in general to understand hospitality, tourism and peace through the political lens.

Gibson (2007, pp. 159-176) and Laachir (2007, pp. 177-192) has given a new path for analyzing both negative and positive aspects of politics of hospitality which will be very useful for understanding tourism and hospitality at large. Also, the literature review in the light of peace and hospitality is significant as because the recent years have witnessed growing enthusiasm about the concept of hospitality in an attempt to understand the status of immigrants, exiles, foreigners, refugees, and other displaced populations who are in transit and/or without a home and their hosts or the “new” socio-cultural and political “homes they are situated in. The portrayal of these groups as guests’ entails discussing the meaning of a series of other concepts and issues such as the host, what does welcome and receive mean, subjectivity, ipesity, and interruption of the self, conditional and unconditional hospitality, hostility, home ownership, and expropriation (or dispossession) giving ample scope to also have a discussion on the politics of hospitality.

This has been reflected in his study by Friese in 2004. The generalization of the other into the stranger have recently been questioned by concepts such as “hybridity”, “diasporas”, “transnationalism”, “dislocation” and “travelling cultures” that emphasize blurred borders, intersections and “contact zones”, uncertain identities and the increasing mobility of people and cultural traits. In the context of transnational communities, blurred borders and uncertain identities, it is obvious that such perspectives open up to questions about what concept such as “integration”, “belonging”, ultimately: “a politics of hospitality” can possibly mean, a politics that would not be immediately intertwined with a politics of identity which- with sorrow- either mourns the irretrievable loss of “difference” and “otherness” or as the new nationalisms, fanatic communitarianism and/or ethnicity movements, fervidly proclaims and attempts to save one’s own and distinct authenticity by mystifying “absolute otherness” and “difference” (Friese, 2004, pp. 74-74). So, this description about the politics of hospitality specifies dilemma of the states as political entities while offering hospitality to others. Most important of all, these debates have also highlighted the problematic and convoluted nature of the relation between the ethics and politics of hospitality (Yegenoglu, 2011, p. 450). This study further aims to penetrate this theme of discussion provided by the scholars while examining different circumstances at different stretches. To take this discussion forward, it is now apt to go through the ideas and opinions of Kant, Derrida and Levinas about hospitality.

### **Kant’s concept of hospitality**

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), the German philosopher is known to be one of the giants among the pantheon of Western philosophers as well as the one with most powerful and broad influence on contemporary philosophy. Born in 1724, he attended the Collegium Fridericianum since 1732. He wrote his first book named *Thoughts on the True Estimation of the Living Forces* in 1749. His most significant and ground

breaking writing titled *Perpetual Peace: A philosophical Essay* by Immanuel Kant was published in 1795 where Kant has developed the global right to hospitality (Wintersteiner & Wohlnuther, 2013), which reads: “The Law of World Citizenship Shall Be Limited to Conditions of Universal Hospitality”, where hospitality means the right of a stranger not to be treated with hostility when he arrives on someone else’s territory. He can indeed be turned away, if this can be done without causing his death, but he must not be treated with hostility, so long as he behaves in a peaceable manner in the place he happens to be in. The stranger cannot claim the right of a guest to be entertained, for this would require a special friendly agreement but he may only claim a right of resort. But this natural right of hospitality does not extend beyond those conditions which make it possible for the strangers to attempt to enter into relations with the native inhabitants. In this way, continents distant from each other can enter into peaceful mutual relations which may eventually be regulated by public laws, thus bringing the human race nearer and nearer to a cosmopolitan constitution (Kant, 2003, pp. 34-35). In what follows, Kant distinguishes between what the foreigner has a right to from what he doesn’t have a right to. So, he is distinguishing between being peacefully allowed to set foot on the territory and to ask to be accepted into that society from being accepted into that society. So, that means it is all right to refuse him this acceptance into the society if the refusal doesn’t have fatal consequences for him but as long as he conducts himself peacefully and doesn’t push forward, he is not to be treated with hostility. Such host nation’s hospitable response to this temporary visit is something to be transmitted as a legislatively universal right through laws such as laws of citizenship, laws of commerce and laws of exchange. Hence, Kant’s understanding removes hospitality from the status of an obligation (Yengenoglu, 2011, p. 452).

The concept of perpetual peace is then considered to be the starting point of the contemporary liberal thought and a normative basis for international law and international relations theory as well which stands out as the contentious and rivalrous idea against the law of nations as proposed by the theorists such as Hugo Grotious, Pufendorf and Vattel among others. Kant has also not backed out from accusing them of being the ‘miserable comforters’ of the law of nations in his 1795 essay ‘Toward Perpetual Peace’. Kant has indicted these scholars of using a concept of right(jus) in relation to war that not only lacked all legal force in restraining the belligerence of nations, but also actually encouraged this belligerence. It did not end war as such by eradicating the warlike disposition of mankind or nations, thereby bringing perpetual peace in the form of a world republican federation governed by global justice or ‘cosmopolitan right’. (Hunter, 2010, pp. 165-188). So, according to Walrdron (2000, p. 164), Kant thought that the distress produced by the constant wars in which states try to subjugate or engulf each other must finally lead them, even against their will, to enter into a *cosmopolitan* constitution.

Kant has claimed that the idea of a cosmopolitan right is not fantastic and overstrained; it is a necessary complement to the unwritten code of political and international right, transforming it into a universal right of humanity. Only under this condition can we flatter ourselves that we are continually advancing towards a perpetual peace (Kant, 2003, pp.35-36).

In the modern times however from cosmopolitanism and perpetual peace of Kant, with regards to ethics and human rights in order to maintain peace, Robinson (2002, n.p.) has referred to two important international declarations, one by the world's governments and the other by the world's religious leaders. These documents were in many ways ahead of their time in addressing what world leaders at the UN Millennium Summit identified as the central challenge we face today: ensuring that globalization becomes a positive force for all the world's people. The two referred to texts are Declaration and Program of Action from the World Conference on Human Rights, adopted in Vienna in June 1993, and the Declaration of the Religions for a Global Ethic adopted in Chicago in 2001 which reflects that the values, morality, ethics, law and human rights are all linked in a complex normative cluster. The events of 11 September and their aftermath underlined the urgency of that thinking. So, there is a need of making globalization a positive force for all the world's people, to make it inclusive and equitable. Again, building an ethical and sustainable form of globalization is not exclusively a human rights matter, but it must include the recognition of shared responsibility for the universal protection of human rights. Over 50 years ago, the drafters of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stressed the link between respect for human rights and freedom, justice and peace in the world, and called for a just international and social order (Robinson, 2002, n.p.). Therefore, the modern concept of human rights and globalization had been strongly influenced by and based upon the concept of universal hospitality and cosmopolitan rights of all the human beings that has been provided by Kant in the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

From this, it is also clear that, Robinson (2002) has glorified the legitimacy of the Kant's philosophy that still in many facets holds a lot of relevance in the contemporary world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century as the concept of hospitality in Kantian articulation, has been revived to address human rights and cosmopolitan formulations of a universal law of hospitality. Therefore, the concept of hospitality possesses practical and theoretical questions that span disciplinary boundaries (Germann-Molz & Gibson, 2007, p.2). Gibson (2007, p.4) have also maintained that the intersection between mobility and hospitality as written by Kant is just as relevant today, in framing the ethical, political and ethical parameters of social interactions, moral duties and state obligations in a world of strange encounters.

Fascinatingly commenting on the concept of hospitality by Kant, Zlomislic (2004) has mentioned that the notion that human race can gradually be brought

closer to a constitution establishing world citizenship is admirable, yet Kant ends his essay with the words, 'one cannot flatter oneself into believing one can approach this peace except under the conditions outlined here', stepping on which Zlomislic has argued that it further calls to conflict because it does not treat hospitality in a radical manner. As such his notion of hospitality is limited as it is based on the modern virtue of tolerance even after recognizing the postmodern value of dispersion and dissemination, he immediately reduces its effects through the phrase, 'they cannot infinitely disperse'.

Also, with reference to the conflicts happening around the world and a particular mention about the event of 9/11, Onkal has described the new situation as the philosophical and political positions that has only widened the gap between the civilizations that cross cuts the concept of universal rights and cosmopolitanism of Kant. Onkal has further proposed that to replace identity by humanity, there are some possibilities in 2 steps: Firstly, the conflict has been defined between two main cultures, i.e. West and East. Secondly he has tried to analyze the concept of universal hospitality considering Kant's essay on Perpetual Peace. Through this evaluation he has thus tried to identify the maxims of universally acceptable and equal politics which must be in accordance with the rights of this world's all citizens for the sake of humanity (Onkal, 2013, p. 27). As the term "civilization: has been replaced by "globalization: and standardization, globalization has become a means of increasing dominance of some languages, nations and business-classes. He has also posited a prominent question that we globe technologies, inventions; but do we globe rights? (Onkal, 2013, p.28). Further Appiah; in Onkal (2013, p.28) has mentioned that while we globe interconnectedness, we are not able to globe mutual-recognition of identities, as a primary condition of eternal peace. As pragmatism and individualism are becoming the dominant social principal day by day, it may be an unexpected and unwelcome consequence of Kant's Enlightenment. Further, the cross cultural debate over what rights are to be considered as human rights is prevalent, Onkal has mentioned that traditions should not be allowed to become absolutisms (radicals). So, an ethical and juridical agreement of cultures is the ground of peace (Onkal, 2013, p.28).

According to Onkal (2013, p.30), Kant is standing on a static point as his ideas on "cosmopolitan rights" are kept in transcendental for of duty. Until today the world has been approaching towards new forms of human rights, the concept of which has been strongly changed after the 9/11 attack by the fundamentalist. Much more common however, are racial, national and ethnic prejudices that result in oppression of minority populations. Thus, human rights as a Western concept ignores the differences, cosmopolitanism and local cultures of "the Other" and is based on a Eurocentric world-view. So, we need the umbrella of tolerance which Onkal has described in his paper, cannot be constructed with the transcendental ideas but

practical and understandable principles since cosmopolitan recognition is the main pre-condition of cosmopolitan rights and hospitality (Onkal, 2013, pp. 30-31). So, from Onkal's point of view, until we respect and accept the existence and cultures of the others, the achievement of the cosmopolitan rights and establishment of long term and sustaining peace is far-flung. Now, again if we connect the dots to the refugees and the asylum seekers, then their existence and values should not be denied by the nation or the land to which they migrate to seek shelter. Only if they are welcomed with the value that they have been cultivated with can the path towards peace be directed. Therefore, the concept of cosmopolitanism as per Kant has the prospects of being redefined in the present setting as per this writer.

### **Levinas's concept of hospitality**

Considered as a political theologian, Emmanuel Levinas (1906-1995) attempts to draw a strict separation between his philosophical and religious writings. From Levinas's point of view, the problem inherent to a politics of hospitality become visible. Therefore, Levinas's concept of hospitality has been analyzed with an eye to its ethico-political implications (Gauthier, 2007, p.159). Levinas has clearly depicted the concept of hospitality by placing it at the stances of ethics and politics as mentioned in Gauthier (2007, pp. 158-180), hospitality operates in the two distinct realms: the ethical and the political. In the ethical realm, the self is morally obligated to welcome the stranger into the private space of the home; in the political realm, the self is politically compelled to welcome the alien into the public space of the homeland.

However, Levinas's powerful critique of politics renders the practice of political hospitality decidedly difficult since politics is violent and totalizing. From this vantage point, what is required is an ethical transformation of the public realm in order to render it more conducive to hospitable action. More specifically, the practice of hospitality necessitates an embrace of a fraternalistic, monotheistic and messianic political vision. While such a political vision has much to recommend it, this ultimately weakens the commitment to pluralism, tolerance and respect for cultural otherness that underlies Levinas's hospitality ethos (Gauthier, 2007, pp.159-160).

More specifically, what Levinas's analysis suggests is that our status as moral beings stand or fall with our treatment of the strangers who presents themselves on our doorstep. Levinas provides a welcome dose of ethical sensitivity, indeed a challenge, to a post- modern genre. As notable as this achievement is, however, the question of politics remains open; Levinas makes no mention of politics in his discussion of the home. The notable lack of political themes in this respect is a reflection of the fact that the self's relationship to the Other originally occurs in an ethical, rather than political realm. Even so, this fact does not preclude the possibility of a politics of hospitality. As it turns out, the self does not confront the Other in isolation, but also faces a third

party that renders it to be a political animal (Gauthier, 2007, p. 165). From this it can be further understood that, even if a host, especially the state prioritizes ethics while welcoming the guest of some sort, but the dilemma lies in the fact that there is a greater world lying beyond the other/guest who then are to be treated equally. As such, it then pounces back to the capacity of the limits to which any state or the host can be flexible towards the guest. Hence, starts the politics of hospitality. So, while defining the status of the political realm of hospitality and the status of state, Levinas has introduced the concept of the Third that refers to not only an Other to the self but also the Other to the Other. As such, the appearance of the Third significantly complicates the self-Other relationship as faced with two parties who simultaneously vie for its attention and concern, the self is compelled to weigh competing ethical obligations. Besides being a distinctive mental activity, such an act is necessary because it forces the self to consider the welfare of those who fall outside the parameters of the self-Other relationship. In compelling the self to enlarge its sphere of moral concern, the third party ensures that its attempt to satisfy its asymmetrical obligations to the other person will not be pursued at the excessive expense of the mass of humanity. In this sense, the Third serves as a corrective to the danger of ethical myopia. On Levinas's account, these changes are engendered by the self's new-found consciousness of an aspect of the human condition that the face of the Third brings home to it: fraternity. Hence, the link that binds the human community together is the shared ethical responsibility of everyone for everyone else. As it stands, there are two principal aspects of human fraternity: irreducible singularity and monotheism. Each member of the Levinasian fraternal order is unique by virtue of the fact that each is singularly responsible for the well-being of fellow members. Monotheism, of course, is the belief that there is but one God. For Levinas, the human fraternity is monotheistic in the sense that its members are inextricably linked by the fact of divine paternity. Thus, God's reign over the human fraternity is manifested in the self's connection to the Other. As the ultimate source of community, divine paternity also makes possible the practice of politics. Therefore, politics is prefigured in the face of the Third because its presence demands the creation of politico-juridical institutions to govern the human brotherhood. Since the Third inspires the creation of 'State, institutions, laws', one can say that its presence projects the self into the realm of politics. It is not difficult to anticipate the core features of a Levinasian politics. Obviously, the state and its accompanying institutions should respect irreducible human dignity and rest on an ethical foundation. Politically, the self is called to welcome the Third into its public space by creating a political community where individual human dignity is respected and ethical conduct encouraged. However, extending such a welcome turns out to be a highly problematic endeavor because the sphere where political action occurs is radically dissimilar from the anarchical realm where the hospitable gesture is privately performed (Gauthier, 2007, pp.165-167).

Regarding the politics of hospitality from the Levinas's perspective, welcoming the foreigner into the homeland represents the principal means by which attempts to possess the land are repudiated. Considered in relation to the grandiose political projects that have characterized the twentieth century, the toleration of outsiders appears to be a simple, even unremarkable, affair. Considered in relation to the nationalistic, xenophobic and chauvinistic political enthusiasms that continue to mark the contemporary political climate, however, it represents an act of Nietzschean overcoming of the ever-present temptation to prize one's particular people over the rest of humanity. In Levinas's ethico-political calculus, then, a nation will distinguish itself as either noble or base — as either a state of Caesar or as a member of the Messianic order, as it were — by virtue of how it treats foreigners. As Levinas writes, 'To shelter the other in one's own land or home, to tolerate the presence of the landless and homeless on the "ancestral soil", so jealously, so meanly loved — is that the criterion of humanness? Unquestionably so.' This 'criterion of humanness' is utterly central to a politics of hospitality. As such, it represents perhaps the pivotal formula that political actors are expected to apply when practicing a politics of hospitality. Insofar as politics is inherently warlike and self-alienating, even the most ethical political actions are morally tainted. For Levinas, a politics of hospitality is fraternalistic, monotheistic and messianic in nature. But in this theologically-driven transition from anarchical ethics to politics, the problematic nature of Levinas's politics of hospitality becomes more and more apparent. In sum, the ethical imperative to extend hospitality to the stranger is compromised by the political obligation to create fraternalistic, monotheistic and messianic political institutions. Levinas's contribution to postmodern thought lies in conceptualizing a politics that is ethical in emphasis, and it is the stress on ethics that propels his politics of hospitality (Gauthier, 2007, pp. 175-180). From this comparison and the stress of ethics in the politics of hospitality by Levinas, it would then be very interesting to reflect this thought upon the globally concerned issues of present.

### **Derrida's concept of hospitality**

Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) considered the most important French philosopher of the late twentieth century grew up as a Jew in Algeria in the 1940s, during the anti-Semitic French colonial regime. Excluded in his youth from his school after the quotas for Jews were reduced, he was confronted with violent racism. He eventually managed to study philosophy in Paris. In 1967 Derrida's international reputation was secured by the publication of three books, and he went on to publish 40 different works. Various philosophers have tried to attach different labels to him—a pragmatist, a post-Kantian transcendentalist and a linguistic philosopher. Derrida was credited as the inventor of "deconstruction", the practice of dismantling texts by revealing their assumptions and contradiction (O'Gorman, 2006, p. 50). As Derrida proclaims, "Hospitality is the deconstruction of the at-home; deconstruction is

hospitality to the other, to the other than oneself” (Mikics, 2009, p. 232). Hospitality does not significantly surpass social boundaries. Derrida’s (2000a, 2000b) work on the sociological meaning of hospitality identifies a conceptual distinction between ‘absolute’ and ‘conditional’ forms of hospitality. He suggests that hospitality is normally conditional as the mere existence of a ‘host-guest’ relationship in some way implies impermanence, instruction, *modus operandi* and obligation (Stephenson, 2013).

“Absolute hospitality” according to Derrida requires the commitment to unconditional accommodation of the “absolute, unknown, anonymous” other, it requires to accept the Other “at home” to donate, to “give him a place”, without enquiring as to “identity, name, passport, capabilities or origins.” This unconditionally, unquestioned acceptance, should together with the conventionally accepted law of hospitality, requires neither reciprocity nor identification in name. Absolute hospitality which suspends reciprocity, does not require identification and is beyond the order of law, its application and a judgement- becomes a figure of an always futurized and thus unrealized hospitality. The relationship between absolute hospitality and the laws and rules which should serve its unconditional thus becomes, the object of political negotiation and political deliberation (Friese, 2004, p. 72). So, absolute hospitality requires “generosity” of the state even as the ethical notion of absolute hospitality goes beyond the frontier or border of the state (Gibson, 2014, p. 375). Absolute hospitality thus shares the same structure of the gift, justice, friendship as being “the very figure of the impossible” (Derrida, 1994, p. 7).

According to Derrida upon the law of hospitality, it violently imposes a contradiction on the very concept of hospitality in fixing a limit to it, in determining it: hospitality is certainly, necessarily, a right, a duty, an obligation, the greeting of foreign other as a friend but on the condition that the host, the Writ, the one who receives, lodges or gives asylum remains the patron, the master of the household, on the condition that he maintains his own authority in his own home, that he looks after himself and sees to and considers all that concerns him and thereby affirms the law of hospitality as the law of the household, *oikonomia*, the law of his households, the law of a place (house, hotel, hospital, hospice, family, city, nation, language, etc.), the law of identity which delimits the very place of proffered hospitality and maintains authority over it, maintains the truth of authority, remains the place of this maintaining, which is to say of truth, thus limiting the gift proffered and making this limitation, namely the being-oneself in one’s own home, the condition of the gift and hospitality (Derrida, 2000, p. 4). This condition as considered as the aporia of both the constitution and the implosion of the concept of hospitality, the effects of which has been explored by Derrida. This implosion also named as self-deconstruction renders hospitality to be a self-contradictory concept and experience which can only self-destruct (put otherwise, produce itself as impossible, only possible on the condition

of its impossibility) or protect itself from itself, auto-immunize itself in some way, which is to say deconstruct itself-precisely- in being put into practice (Derrida, 2000, p.5). As hospitality is owed to the other as stranger. But if one determines the other as stranger, one is already introducing the circles of conditionality that are family, nation, state, and citizenship. Hence, Derrida has claimed that we need to attempt to distinguish between the other and the stranger and venture into what is both the implication and the consequence of the double blind, the impossibility as the condition of possibility, namely, the troubling analogy in their common origin between *hostis* as host and *hostis* as enemy, between hospitality and hostility (Derrida, 2000. pp. 7-15).

In addition to its association to the law, hospitality has been reciprocal, engaged in an economy of exchange and even violence. In other words, an exchange takes place between the host and the guest. In offering hospitality, in welcoming the other, the host imposes certain conditions upon the guest (Wetmoreland, 2008, p.2). Further, according to Derrida, any law or concept would impose on hospitality and would cause it to no longer be absolute, or unconditional. So, Derrida defines hospitality as ethics and ethics as hospitality and hospitality as the principle or the whole of ethics. Hospitality is also defined as culture as there is no culture without hospitality (Wetmoreland, 2008). Absolute hospitality requires one to give all one has to another without asking any questions, imposing any restrictions or requiring any compensation. It involves neither the governance of duty nor the payment of debt. And if there is an imposition, nothing is left to be called absolute. Hospitality as such is never fully open; there is always some violence. Therefore, according to Derrida, absolute hospitality is both inconceivable and incomprehensible. Further, according to Kant hospitality is limited to the rights of the visitor to not be treated with hostility when he arrives on someone else's territory, but not the right of the resident, which must be established by and between political sovereignties. Favouring the conditionalities of hospitality, Wetmoreland (2008) implies that the law of absolute hospitality does not involve an invitation, nor does it involve an interrogation of the guest upon entering. In order to be hospitable, the host must rid himself of security, authority and property and promise benevolence. The guest becomes the host. Thus, absolute, unconditional hospitality is never possible in conjugation with indivisible sovereignty. So, the host welcomes into his home the very thing that can overturn his sovereignty and take him hostage (Wetmoreland, 2008, pp.3-7).

Drawing on the work of Levinas, Derrida offered an encompassing philosophy of hospitality, clearly differentiating between the 'law of hospitality' and the 'laws of hospitality': the law of unlimited hospitality, and on the other hand, the laws, those rights and duties that are always conditioned and conditional (Derrida, 2000, p.77). Further, Naas (2003, p.157) has pointed out that for when it comes to political, to hospitality in or of the state, conditions are always stipulated. It has been stated

that violence is also allowed by absolute hospitality. A new arrival or guest who stands at the door, at the border and is welcomed inside without condition. This very welcoming opens into violence which turns the home inside out. It appears as though the law of unconditional hospitality and the laws of hospitality conflict with one another. However, the two are irreducible to one another nonetheless. The law of hospitality opens up the possibility for contamination that it calls for no governing body such as a sovereign state or master of a home to establish laws and authority over another subject. The state or master retains the capacity to be overthrown. The laws of hospitality strongly rely upon laws and duty, or adherence to the law. These laws attempt to ensure the preservation of a state or master. Derrida in "Of Hospitality" as translated by Bowlby(2002, p.77) as questions the relationship between the two meanings: "It is as though the laws of hospitality, in marking limits, power, rights and duties, consisted in challenging and transgressing the law of hospitality, the one that would command that the 'new arrival' be offered an unconditional welcome." So, it seems as if the laws of conditional hospitality and the law of unconditional hospitality conflict with one another. Do the laws transgress the law of hospitality? Does the law of hospitality demand a transgression of the laws? They are not symmetrical, equally opposing one another. Rather, a hierarchy exists in which the law is above the laws, outside the laws (Westmoreland, 2007, p.8). However, the two complement each other in that the law of hospitality requires the laws of hospitality so as to not be abstract according to Peggy Kamuf (2006, p.207).

Reflecting upon the aporia (confusion or doubt) of hospitality as put by Derrida in terms of the law and the laws of hospitality, he argues that we have to reconcile the demand for equality with the demand for singularity following which Zlomislis (2004) critically raised the question as to how can the states at the same time, take in account the equality of everyone and respect the heterogeneous singularity of everyone? As the aporia of hospitality, says that the Other, the orphan, the widow and the alien has to be welcomed. Hospitality, therefore is a risk which has to be negotiated at every instant and as such it tends to be an opening without the horizon of expectation where peace can be found beyond the confines of conflict Zlomislis (2004, n.p.). Therefore, Westmoreland (2008, p.9) concludes that the laws of hospitality receive inspiration from the law. These laws and the law of hospitality simultaneously include and exclude one another. Furthermore, hospitality remains "inconceivable and incomprehensible" and "becomes possible but as impossible," yet it "remains impracticable". And yet the two are forever inseparable.

## Discussion

By considering the concept of universal hospitality for the maintenance of perpetual peace as provided by Immanuel Kant and the crosscutting concern of the question raised by Derrida on the laws of common, conditional hospitality in contrast

with the law, or perhaps the ethics of unconditional hospitality, the researcher senses it to be imperative to consider the contemporary global and comprehensive political activities through the lens of hospitality and peace with special attention towards the concerns of refugees, migrants and asylum seekers. Therefore, this study bears colossal implications and significance in the sense that it endeavors to deliver a theoretic and conjectural understanding of the recent political uproars which has also been indicated by Onkal (2013, pp. 26-32) in his study as the “Neo-Global Conflicts”.

In this regards, Gibson (2002, p. 693), in her paper has strongly argued that the representation of the figure of stranger in contemporary culture conceals the complex power relations involved in the categorization of others. She has also mentioned about the difference in treatment and hospitality towards the tourists and the asylum seekers in which the borders work different ways as there are substantive differences between the ways of being displaced from home (Gibson, 2006, p. 697). Further, Gibson (2014, p. 367) through the ethical writings of Jacques Derrida on hospitality, generosity and parasitism has argued that it is the nation-state that parasites asylum seekers both through their defining difference and their contribution to the services economies connoting towards the “new racism” towards the asylum seekers which is located within the economic sphere, as asylum control is linked to the welfare state and to fears of strangers’ parasiting the host nation. The new racism as such denotes the move from the black immigrant to the figure of the “asylum seeker” mirrors the movement from as racism predicated upon biological difference to the current “new” form of racism entitled “xeno-racism” (Sivanandan, 2001; in Gibson, 2014, p. 368). The hatred circulating around the black immigrants has now been generalized to contempt for strangers or foreigners in general. It is this conjunction of racism with nationalism that now results in a generalized xenophobia (Dummett, 2001, p. 128). This xeno-racism is now directed towards asylum seekers, with the new enemy now regarded as “poverty”. Asylum seekers are thus demonized for “scrounging at capital’s gate and threatening capital’s culture” (Fekete, 2001, p. 23).

Following the nature of asylum seekers, asylum has sacred or quasi sacred resonance denoting a sanctuary od inviolable place of refuge and protection for criminals and debtors, from which they ought not to be forcibly removed. It can also mean a benevolent institution affording shelter and support to some class of afflicted, the unfortunate and destitute (Gibson, 2014, p. 373). The space of asylum is staked out by a power that is heterogeneous to the law of the state, of civic government. Or rather, it is “higher” kind of law that establishes its sovereignty on the basis of a moral/religious or “ethical” relation to the law’s abject classes. This heterogeneous, ethical relation renders the space inviolable to politics and law. So, in Derrida’s distinction between the political and ethical hospitality between law and justice, between the laws and the law of hospitality, the space of asylum can be found absolutely placed

in the ethical rhetoric of hospitality (Gibson, 2014, pp. 373-374). Immigrants and asylum seekers are often regarded as being forms of parasite, intruding into the body of the host nation. The coalition of asylum seekers with illegal immigration allows asylum seekers to be associated with so called “unproductive hospitality” (Derrida, 2002, p. 100), for the asylum seekers are regarded as not giving anything back to the host community. So, it is productive to compare the figures of two strangers: the asylum seekers and the tourist (Gibson, 2014, p. 379).

Citing the case of Britain's hospitality, Gibson (2007, p.159) has analyzed the mobilization of ‘hospitality’ in contemporary debates on immigration and asylum as a way of justifying increasingly fortified border controls into the nation. The abuse of the asylum system by the bogus or abusive asylum seekers and economic migrants; trying to fleece the welfare system of the nation has been posited a threat. The policy of deterrence of Britain that discourages potentially abusive asylum seekers from choosing to seek asylum through more restrictive and less generous welcomes to defend the nation against the risk of hospitality (Gibson, 2007, p. 162). So, the welcome of the other is thus restricted and controlled. The welcome offered to those genuine and deserving refugees is paradoxically enabled through the exclusion of those abusive others. As such, this intolerance and hostility between social groups is connected to narcissism. By definition, narcissistic individuals depend on an audience to validate their self-worth (Lash, 1978; Elmes & Barry, 1999, p. 164). However, narcissism fundamentally intrapsychic reflecting a structure of self that is either well developed or deficient (Elmes & Barry, 1999, p.164). According to Freud (1991, p. 72), narcissism has been identified as the ‘narcissism of minor differences’: ‘it is precisely the minor differences in people who are otherwise alike that form the basis of feelings of strangeness and hostility between them’. Nationalism then is a ‘kind of narcissism’, (Ignatieff, 1999, p.79) in its self-love for the national ideal and its aggression towards those others outside the national community. Ignatieff (1999, p.86) argues that nationalism is necessarily intolerant as it is predicated upon constructing an ‘us’ and a ‘them’. The ‘narcissism of minor differences’ is thus an ‘intolerance of minor differences’. This narcissism of the nation links to the conditional hospitality given by Derrida.

Hence, the context of unconditional hospitality and universal right for cosmopolitanism is compromised by the nationalistic behavior of the states with sovereignty being at the stake of negotiation, that renders fertile ground for conditional hospitality and sometimes also unreceptive acts by the nation-states that further leads towards the Kundani's concept of ‘logic of suspicion’ as an extension to the ‘logic of deterrence’, which has been adopted in Gibson (2007, p.168). The logic of suspicion views all refugees and asylum seekers as potentially abusive leading to a culture of disbelief which gives rise to the perception that refugees and asylum seekers do not travel because of genuine fear of persecution, but are instead merely economic

migrants attracted to the “Honey Pot” as in the case of Britain (Gibson, 2007, p. 168). This sort of protection of the nation’s welfare and the demonization of the figure of the asylum seeker can be located in the new economic racism, where ‘poverty is the new Black’ (Sivanandan, 2001, p.2). This ‘xenoracism’ is directed towards ‘impoverished strangers’ (Sivanandan, 2001, p.2) and is symptomatic of global capitalism. This is the new ‘global apartheid’ which separates the rich and poor into distinct territories (Balibar, 2004, p. 113).

This description of hospitality as a phenomenon then evokes the persistent questions raised by Germann-Molz and Gibson (2007), “how should we welcome the stranger, the sojourner, the traveler, the other? Where might hospitable encounters occur and what kinds of spaces does hospitality produce? Who is able to perform the welcoming host, and who can be admitted as a guest? And in extending hospitality to the other, how should we define our individual, communal, or national self?” The answers to these questions according to Germann-Molz and Gibson (2007, p.1), are highly edified in the law of hospitality and the laws of hospitality as discussed by Derrida. Further, this embodies impossibility of hospitality calls to mind the images of exclusion, closure and violence: walled borders, gated communities, asylum detention centers and race riots. The development of internet, communication and technologies and the new intersections and proximities brought by them brings the provocative dilemma of hospitality- how do we welcome the stranger in the contemporary concerns of the mobile world (Germann-Molz & Gibson, 2007, p.2). Social networks today are increasingly produced through mobile networks of environmental, cultural, social and economic interdependencies that transcend territorially bounded societies or nation-states (Ury, 2000; Hannam, Shellar & Ury, 2006; in Germann-Molz & Gibson, 2007, p.1). People and places across the globe are now bound together through complex and fluid connections that emerge around the transnational flows of commodities and capital, images and information, ethnicity and culture, crime, disease, waste and pollution. And of course, people. New patterns of migration, diaspora, and transnational labor, along with exponential growth of business travel and global tourism, now account for unprecedented levels of international mobility. The plethora of different journeys in today’s mobile world has thus led to a diversity in hospitalities.

Once again referring back to the very meaning of hospitality, according to Rosello, as cited by Germann-Molz & Gibson (in Kunwar, 2017, p.85), hospitality is not just a metaphor for reflecting on encounters with the strangers, but according to Urry (1990; in Kunwar, 2017, p. 85) it serves more broadly as a central concept for the emergent paradigm of ‘mobility’ that regulates, negotiates and celebrates the social relations between inside and outside, home and away, private and public, self and

other. So, in most of definitions of hospitality, it is implicated that hospitality means the movements of tourists and visitors (those mobile others who come and go) as well as the movements of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees (those mobile others who come and stay). So, the notion of hospitality as Hent de Vries (2001) argues has immense relevance [...] for the most urgent questions dominating contemporary political debates on immigration, globalization, multiculturalism, and citizenship (Germann-Molz & Gibson, 2007, p.3).

With an effort to correlate the concept of place and mobility with hospitality, Creswell (2007, pp.50-51) has mentioned that Jacques Derrida's questions of hospitality have tended to focus on hospitality towards moving people who enter a place and confront that place and people who inhabit it with new challenges. How can a place (the nation-state, the city, the neighborhoods) accommodate the new arrivals and how much hospitality can be extended? How on the other hand might these motilities be legislated and regulated? So, questions of place and mobility are central to the question of hospitality. Further, the question of overwhelming 'excess' is a key one for theorization of hospitality. The excessive is that which needs to be rejected, regulated, excluded, removed. Excess is not possible without order. As Bauman has argued, waste is a by-product of order-making. The more you are concerned with order, the more noticeable is the excess. In Bauman's formulation, the order-making processes of modernity produce people-as waste- the homeless, the refugees, the migrants. And these very people that Derrida suggests are in need of an impossible hospitality- a welcoming without limits. It is comparatively easy to extend hospitality to those who fit in and belong to a place. It is excess/waste that makes hospitality a challenge (Creswell, 2007, p. 3).

Thus this point of discussion is very interesting in line with this study as it is noteworthy to also realize why are some group of people are considered as the waste or the by-product as more and more order making is practiced in the politics of hospitality. This means that the world today is becoming more and more intolerant for accepting the cultures and beliefs of many different units that have been coexisting since hitherto. Then once these groups are excluded as the waste, they become the refugees, migrants and the asylum seekers who are need of being accepted by the foreign state or nation. As such, the role of hospitality in terms of ethically welcoming the refugees or politically treating them under various conditions arises as a dilemma to the host nation. It is the gap between hospitality as a universal and unconditional right of cosmopolitanism and hospitality as something which is granted that has proven problematic within Western liberal societies trying to come to terms with issues of immigration and asylum (Creswell, 2007, p.60). When hospitality is mobilized in the current debates of immigration and asylum, it is in fact a way of justifying increasingly fortified border controlled into the nation (Gibson, 2007, p.159).

Friese (2004) has also highlighted the current debates, in addition to the thematization of hospitality as an integral part of ethics of the good life, or a renewed ethics of responsibility, are the tensions between, on one hand, the law of unconditional hospitality, an absolute ethic requirement, and the laws, i.e., the political and legal limitations, on the other. These debates take place in the context of pressing questions related to how contemporary democratic and pluralistic nation-states unable to dictate commonly shared moral and ethical percepts- should interpret and implement the law of hospitality. The question posed here is how – given the crisis of the modern systems of organized solidarity and in an atmosphere of growing nationalisms, resentment and animosity, general indifference and increasing xenophobia to hospitably welcome the exiled, the deported, refugees, migrants and these who long for a better, a good life. The question that the arrival of the other raises is thus that of responsibility and the response to a request posed by an Other and how to do justice to its unmistakable, irreducible, singularity and subjectivity (Friese, 2004, pp. 71-72).

Now, when it has been discussed about the treatments towards the migrants, Wintersteiner & Wohlmuther (2013, p. 41) with an effort to connect the complex relationship between tourism, peace and line these concepts with hospitality, feel that migration, ‘the negative of the tourism constellation cannot be ignored. While tourists travel for entertainment and recreation mostly from the West to the South with an orientalist view, migrants travel for survival and better living conditions or quality of life mainly from Global South to the Northern hemisphere. As it is, the tourists are warmly welcomed in a hospitable manner by the natives with the expression of personal friendliness or as a part of a strategy, the flow of hospitality rarely works in revers through. When these migrants actually manage to arrive, for them, the idea of hospitality does not exist. With ever stricter migration (or should we say anti-migration?) laws, the rich countries try to stop or to hinder the migration flow. The point to ponder upon further is that nobody is aware of this contradiction. As such, the movements of tourists and the movement of migrants are world apart; they do not contact each other, nor do they ‘see’ each other (Mazumdar, 2011, p. 71).

Hence, in order to make a difference, hospitality must no longer be limited to a cultural custom, but instead must acquire a legal status. This was at least the vision of European enlightenment-specially from Kant (Wintersteiner & Wohlmuther, 2013, p. 41).

Hence, in the present era when a nation such as the USA puts a ban on the acceptance of outsiders as refugees or migrants and the very recent decision upon the applicants from 11 countries defined as ‘high-risk countries’ including 10 Muslim-majority nations plus North Korea to face tougher ‘risk based assessments’ to be accepted as reported in *AFP* and *Reuters* and mentioned in the *Dailymail* (2018)

could be analyzed from the viewpoint of hospitality. Similarly, the specific case of Rohingya refugee's current crisis from Myanmar in which the Rohingya people are one of the most ill-treated and persecuted refugee groups in the world, having lived in a realm of statelessness for over six generations, and who are still doing so. Perhaps, in the absence of specific refugee policy in Bangladesh and politicization of the refugee situation, integration of Rohingya has always been a challenge which is marked by inadequate access to basic needs, exposure to violence, restricted movement, local hostility, and various forms of discrimination (Milton, Rahman, Hussain, Jindal, Choudhary, Akter, Ferdousi, Mouly, Hall & Eifrid, 2017). These and many other similar cases then can be attached with the logic of suspicion that forbids the nation to flexibly welcome the others into their own territory. The same kind of argument has been put forward by the scholars such as Wintersteiner & Wohlmuther (2013) which compels to rethink about the differences in the approach to hospitality by the rich and poor countries. Furthermore, this sort of xenoracism is not just a result of global capitalism but also the flourishing terrorism and fundamentalism in an up roaring modus. Thus, the 'culture of disbelief', whereby anybody crossing the border could potentially be an abusive asylum seeker, justifies 'the repetition of violence against the bodies of others in the name of protecting the nation' (Ahmed, 2004, p. 47). In constructing the figure of the abusive asylum seeker, a nation (Britain as the case) actually then seeks to redefine its own national character as such 'processes of exclusion and rejection uncover and reveal and become constitutive of national identity itself' (Cohen, 1994, p. 198). In such a limited model of hospitableness, the figure of abusive asylum seeker is constructed in order to support the nation's pride in its ideal (Gibson, 2007, p. 169).

As a result, the host nations then do not hesitate to paint a picture of the asylum seekers generally as abusers in order to justify the violent means to deny the admittance of the migrants, asylum seekers or the refugees. Therefore, this aporia of hospitality is in fact the condition of hospitality for Jacques Derrida. Derrida's recent writings have focused on hospitality, generosity and tolerance as the figures of the impossible. However, for Derrida, there is always a tension between the limits of the conditional hospitality and an infinite unconditional hospitality (Gibson, 2007, p. 169). The impossibility of a national hospitality for Derrida comes from the restrictions and securing of the borders by the nation-state as no nation finds it acceptable to abandon its border controls and immigration controls (Gibson, 2007, p. 170). Therefore, tolerance then is a 'conditional circumspect, careful hospitality' (Derrida, 2003, p. 128).

To sum up the discussion about the politicization of hospitality, according to the study of Laachir (2007), hospitality as an ancient tradition with ethical imperatives has become politicized in the Europe and New World in the last two decades with strict

laws issued to 'protect' rich states from any form of visitation from poor countries since they are perceived as potential economic immigrants that may threaten the financial, social and political stability of the host countries voicing their xenophobia and racism against those perceived as foreigners, are alarming examples to the return of the exclusionist popular nationalism and fascism to haunt postcolonial Europe (Laachir, 2007, p.177). Hospitality has become more difficult since the 9/11 attacks and the subsequent 'war on terror' led by the American Government. Events such as terrorist bombings in Madrid in March, 2004 and London, 2005 have been interpreted by some as a conflict between contending civilizations, Western and Islamic. This problem of xenophobia and racism (which is not limited to Europe) in the last decades after the horrors of colonialism and fascism raises a crucial question about the relationships between communities of different 'race', religion and culture. The main argument put forward by Laachir then is the attempt to fix the social, economic and cultural mobility of these diverse postcolonial diasporic communities is a manifestation of the perpetuation of colonial culture that still preserves the same power structures that existed in the colonies (Laachir, 2007, p.179).

As a critic to Kant's cosmopolitanism, Laachir (2007, p.179), has mentioned that Kant does not address the problem of how peace may be decided differently between those who have wealth and influence and those who have not. Thus, his cosmopolitanism is exclusive to certain powerful states that pass the law on the rest of humanity. Even though Kant's ideas of cosmopolitanism, universal hospitality and common right to the surface of the earth shared by all human beings have had a strong appeal in contemporary debates on democracy and citizenship, his 'racial theories' sit uncomfortably and embarrassingly with his claims to metropolitanism marked by exclusiveness. His democratic aspirations could not contain the black 'race', as his raciological ideas about the inferiority of the 'Negro' and his warning against the dangers of racial mixing contradict his cosmopolitanism. This idea of Kant has been developed in a number of works especially, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (1798) and his 1775 essay 'On the Different Races of Man' (Laachir, 2007 p. 179).

Therefore, it is this exclusionary aspect of hospitality that must be questioned. In light of this, Derrida (2002, p.22) accuses Kant of restricting hospitality to state sovereignty, as he defines it as law. Unlike Kant, Levinas introduces the disjunction between the host and the guest, the host becoming the guest if the guest in his/her own home as the home of the other, that is, to be welcomed by the face of the other that one intends to welcome. Such a political connotation of hospitality, according to Levinas then introduces 'tyrannical violence'. Auxiliary, Derrida, 1999, p. 23) suggests that hospitality therefore, is opposed to the 'thematization' because it is welcoming of the other who cannot be calculated or known, that is, the other is infinite and

‘withdraws from the theme’. So, Levinas suggests a theory of respecting the other instead of ‘mastering’ him/her; that is, a theory of desire that bases itself on infinite separation instead of negation and assimilation. Hence, what is needed today in comparing Kant and Levinas, and with regard to the right of refuge in a world of millions of displaced people, Derrida (1999, p.101) argues, is to call out for another international law, another border politics, another humanitarian politics, indeed a humanitarian commitment that effectively operates beyond the interests of the Nation-state.

### **Conclusion**

Hence, the distinction introduced in Derrida’s work on unconditional or absolute hospitality as the ethics and conditional hospitality as the law or politics, is directing our attention to find an ‘intermediate schema’ between the two to keep the political laws and regulations open to new changes and circumstances and to keep alive the fact that hospitality is always inhabited by hostility. Derrida stresses the aporetic relationship between the unconditional hospitality or ethics, which starts with risks, and the conditional hospitality or politics that starts with the calculation or controlling of these risks. However, if this calculation means the closure of all boundaries, not only territorial but also cultural, social and linguistic, this would mean the death of the nation (Laachir, 2007, p.183) as because in a globalized world today, no nation can be remaining aloof from the rest of the world and has to be able to balance a way out between the ethics and politics of hospitality despite of the reality that both of them appear to be parallel concepts to each other. To finally conclude that the aporia of hospitality presented by Derrida, does not mean paralysis, but in fact, it means the primacy of the ethics over politics, and thus, keeping alive the danger of hostility in the making of the politics of hospitality by ‘political intervention’ that respects the ‘uniqueness of the other every time a decision is taken’ Laachir (2007, p.188).

This indicates the need of a new form of conscience among the nations that can possibly prevent the various vicarious acts of hostilities that has been taking place around the world. The researchers also would like to express that this sort of study can be helpful in answering persistent questions like the fear of protectionism by American government led by Trump as presented by Sawson (2018, n.p.), why the South Asia as a region and the nations as the sovereign entities are not able to extend their hospitality to the Rohingyas who have fled the war and terror from the various state and non-state actors? What does it now at the existing milieu take to empathize with the refugees, asylum seekers and migrants as a result of conflict, war and terror? Also, reflecting upon the interconnectedness among hospitality, peace, conflict and tourism with an intend to answer the prevalent question, “In the context of tourism in the area of ongoing socio-political unrest, how are hospitality, peace and conflict interrelated?”, Buda (2012, pp.50-59), has posited that an area of ongoing conflict

inevitably raises emotions which turns the people/state facing the conflict to have a different and mostly less affinity towards the concept of hospitality ultimately connoting the place (state or people) as less hospitable and hence the declination of tourism industry. Therefore, Buda (2012, p.59) has suggested that the issue of hospitality and peace needs to be debated in the studies of tourism as well. So, now the greater question that lies before us is it justifiable for the nations as the political entities to conditionally offer hospitalities as per their convenience and has the Kant's concept of universal hospitality and cosmopolitan rights coming till the role of United Nations as an international system becoming obsolete? And lastly, if there is the need of a revision in the system to contextualize the concept of hospitality for the greater protection of human rights of every one?

Because from the above discussions, it is quite pertinent that theoretically, even if a nation is willing to welcome the others, the very notion of politics of hospitality influenced by the laws of hospitality as argued by Derrida restricts it from providing unconditional welcome promoted by Kant. Likewise, the dilemma of prioritizing ethics over politics as per Levinas also plays a significant role whereby it tends to become very difficult for the nation to find a balance between the ethics and politics of hospitality when treating the refugees, asylum seekers and migrants who even if are offered the hospitality will become imposed hospitality as used by Kunwar (2017) and as mentioned by Zlomislic (2004, n.p.) that hospitality is an opening without the horizon of expectation where peace can be found beyond the confines of conflict.

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## Catastrophe of Environment: The Impact of Natural Disasters on Tourism Industry

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### Abstract

*Natural disasters have a catastrophic impact on the lives of humans, interrupting their social and economic activities to a great extent. Communities that are located in high-risk regions encounter greater challenges in developing a resilient and sustainable tourism economy (Tsai et. al., 2016). The past examples of tsunamis, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions all over the world have shown that there are two sides of the issue in terms of tourism sector. First, the devastating effects of the natural disaster slow down the tourism sector like all other activities in a particular destination. On the other hand, the natural disasters are capable of fostering the strong feelings of solidarity (Goodwin, 2005), luring the global interest to the region for further economic opportunities, including tourism. The aim of this manuscript is to investigate the influence of drawbacks and possible positive impacts of natural disasters on tourism activities and to model them in a proper manner. The paper will start with a body of literature on the impact of natural disasters on the tourism industry based on the previous studies. The study will be dealing with the question how natural disasters have an impact on tourism through economic aspects, destination image and the degree of community activity. The methodology will be literature review and critical evaluation of the findings. Finally, a model will be suggested*

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*in order to provide a quantitative analysis for the natural disasters, including the possible related economic and social variables.*

### **Introduction**

Natural disasters, such as earthquakes, tsunamis, volcano eruptions etc. have been historically causing disastrous impact on the lives of people. In the last 20 years, a global increase in the damage coming from natural disasters has been recorded where the death ratios in low income countries are considerably higher (Kirchberger, 2017, p.41). Recent examples in the past, like Indian Ocean earthquake and Tsunami in 2004 or Haiti earthquake in 2010, stand as clear examples for how catastrophic can be such natural disasters. In such instances, thousands of residents and tourists died or severely wounded and millions of people have been affected. Apart from fatalities, homelessness and economic loss are two prominent dangers that the regions suffering from natural disasters may encounter (Yan & Bissell, 2015, p.2). The catastrophic impact of a natural disaster directly shows itself as damage in buildings including houses, hospitals, schools, factories etc. where people are spending their daily lives or meeting their needs, and further it decreases the motivation of people to take part in economic activities since they may be concerned with the loss of their relatives or properties.

As in all economic activities, tourism sector and touristic destinations are vulnerable to natural disasters, the intensity of which has been rapidly increasing in the next years with respect to climate change (Walters et. al., 2015, p.101). First of all, the occurrence of natural disasters tends to decrease the overall arrivals of international tourists (Peters & Pikkemaat, 2006). Since tourists usually prefer a destination in order to find some rest, the existence of a natural disaster threat or presence of an emergency situation in a touristic destination, tourist will consider other touristic destination alternatives to maximize their utility that they receive from tourism activity. Consequently, economic revenues that a destination receives decrease sharply parallel to the decrease in the number of tourist arrivals, hence the damage that the location gets from natural disaster deepens even further. Nevertheless, the impact of natural disaster is present even if there is no actual natural disaster occurred, and rather there is just a probability for such instances. In other words, travel decisions are made by taking the possible risks into consideration. Therefore, risk perception of tourists combined with the risk analysis on the natural disaster help to understand the dynamics behind such economic and social behaviors.

Although previous literature provides valuable information about natural disasters and their impact on tourism, there has been no study conducted to model the relationship between the variables. The target of this study is to evaluate possible social and economic factors that are capable of explaining the impact of natural

disasters on tourism sector. The research question is therefore how natural disasters have an impact on tourism through three socio-economic main variables, namely economic aspects, destination image and the degree of community activity. By providing a model for the measurement of the impact, the study will open a new pathway for the quantitative analysis of the relationship between natural disasters and tourism sector.

### **The effect of risk perception in tourism**

By definition, risk perception refers to the extent of awareness for a specific issue and its consequences on one's close environment that shapes individual policy preferences, civic engagement, adaptation behavior and other type of responses (Lee et. al., 2015, p.1). In other terms, risk perception is the individual interpretation of a potential risk, regardless of the size of threat in its essence. Since the precise prediction of future natural disasters is practically impossible in the real world settings, scholars focus on assessment of risk perception for individuals which is crucial to find a solution to cope with unforeseen accidents (Yamamura, 2016, p.143). After the development in the means of transportation and increasing competition in the global tourism market, tourists have multiple options for travelling as opposed to past, hence when they perceive high risk in a particular area, they are more likely to focus on other options rather than insisting on traveling to these destinations. Although this does not mean that tourists will not visit a destination with natural disaster risk at all, risk perception can be considered as a good indicator for local authorities or local stakeholders to take the risk of natural disasters into consideration and take measures accordingly.

However, the study conducted Park and Reisinger (2010) suggests that perceived influence of natural disasters and international travel risks differ significantly for tourists with respect to cultural background, socio-demographic properties and economic power. For example, low income level tourists are more concerned about natural disasters compared to high-income profiles, probably because they have less money and they would like to maximize their benefit from such travel trips, and therefore they avoid from making risky travel plans where they encounter adverse impacts of natural disaster (Park & Reisinger, 2010, pp.20-21). In addition to this, a recent study on tourist risk perception for travel decisions, Rittichainuwat et. al. (2018) founded that the risk perception of tourists are related to natural disaster occurrence frequency and destination specific whereas the probability of a natural disaster perception is significantly determined by proximity of a risky area as well as past experience that tourists have witnessed in their lifetime. The risk perception is therefore closely related to the concept of destination image, which implies the overall attributes of a specific destination that include the extent that the destination is capable of overcoming a threat of natural disaster. In this sense, as the destination

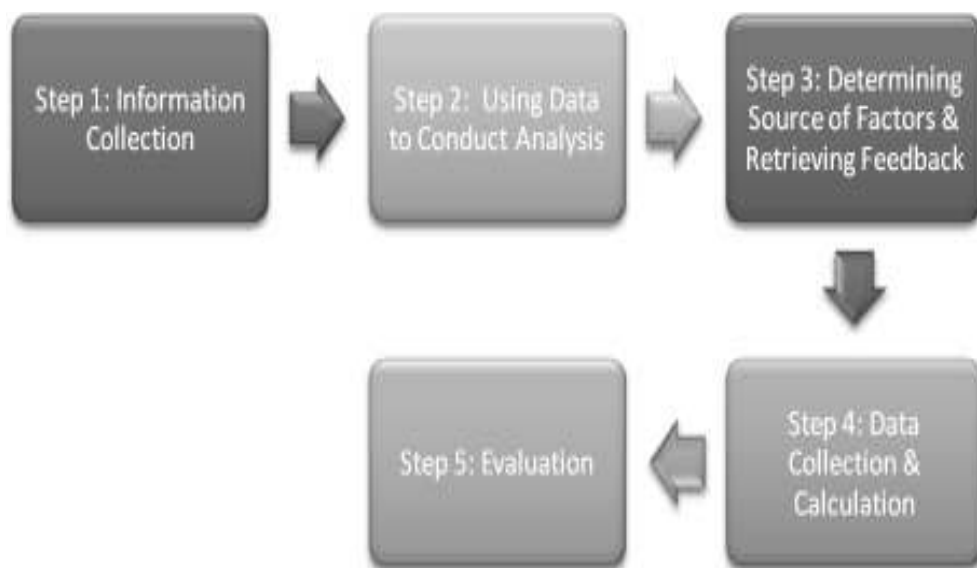
performs a successful crisis management at a time of natural disaster, tourists will be informed about this and they may feel secure to choose that destination, at least for next tourism periods, despite the occurrence of emergency situation.

In short, there are many factors that influence the risk perception with respect to background of individuals and for this reason; both academic investigation and policy development need to take this diversity into consideration in order to achieve better outcomes. Nevertheless, providing a secure environment for tourism with precautions for natural disasters such as strengthening the construction of buildings, monitoring building materials, emergency plans and so on, as well as initiating a well-functioning crisis management with a clear division of responsibilities in case of an emergency situation.

### **Risk assessment for the impact of natural disasters in tourism**

Local or national authorities work on precautions in various ways in order to diminish the negative impact of natural disasters. For instance, promotion of bio-shield through coastal vegetation has been a common practice in the last decade, as they provide a natural protection and a method of disaster management against natural disasters such as storm surges or tsunamis (Feagin et. al., 2010, p.1). However, none of these precautionary applications will work properly without analyzing the risks in a proper manner, hence risk analysis are conducted as the first step for overcoming the adverse impacts of natural disasters.

Risk assessment for the natural disaster is an important process in order to evaluate the possible damage of the risks and take some measures before they cause massive amount of loss of life and property. For that reason, academicians as well as policy makers have been focusing on risk analysis of natural disasters. As suggested in the study by Tsai and Chen (2011) risk analysis is conducted into five main steps. Figure 1 summarizes the procedure:

**Figure 1: Natural disaster risk assessment steps in tourism**

Source: Tsai & Chen, 2011.

To begin with the first step, basic information is collected for evaluating the construction of tourism facilities including the value of building, total value of contents, business volume, number of floors, year of construction, location and so on. After this, previously collected specified data and different disaster risk assessments are used to conduct the environmental analysis with geographic information system. Third, the source of factors that may have an impact on a natural disaster is determined and the feedback derived from environmental location disaster risk assessment. Next, the data are collected from local sources and the risk assessment index is calculated by using a formula for the degree of earthquake damage that takes geological conditions, existing building conditions, social-economic conditions, conditions of disaster prevention, conditions of refuge and disaster-relief and risk management strategies. Finally, the drawbacks of risk management are evaluated to improve the assessment for the risk of natural disaster (Tsai & Chen, 2011, pp.164-165).

Having discussed the methods for risk assessment, the paper will first discuss three main aspects of the damage of natural disaster on tourism namely the total revenues in a destination, destination image and the level of community activity, and then a model will be suggested in order to depict the relationship between those variables.

#### **Determinants of the impact of natural disasters on tourism**

In this section, the impact of natural disaster will be carefully investigated through three different aspects, including economic situation, destination image, and

the communal solidarity, and then these aspects will be considered in a suggested model. To begin with, natural disasters such as tsunamis and earthquakes have a direct impact on certain aspects of economy, such as housing and labor market, in an excessive manner (Kirchberger, 2017, p.42). Although some scholars claim that even extremely large disasters do not have any significant impact on economic growth in the long run (Cavallo et. al., 2013), rising death tolls and loss of property directly influence all sectors in a particular destination. In an emergency situation, the target of the economy would not be maintaining product and service supply; rather the community will concentrate on recovering the damage of natural disaster as rapidly as possible. Besides that, post-disaster effect of natural disaster is hard to overcome, as most of the buildings (schools, hospitals etc.), factories and other production facilities, and - for tourism sector - hotels, restaurants, etc. will require reparation and restoration. As a result, one of the main variables that indicate the damage of natural disaster can be considered as the change in total revenues, which constitute direct economic loss (labor force, properties etc.) as well as indirect economic slowdown that prevents future economic gains in the destination.

Furthermore, a natural disaster is likely to cause dire consequences on the destination image of a particular tourism region. In the early tourism literature, the motivation of tourists for travelling have been distinguished into two categories, namely “push” and “pull” factors, where “push” factors denote personal needs such as escaping the city or relaxing, whereas “pull” factors indicate the destination-specific attributes like a desire to see a particular attractions, landscapes or events in a specific destination (Dann, 1977, p. 187). When travelers witness the preparedness of a destination for a possible natural disaster from the media or a post-disaster situation cannot be managed successfully, destination image of this region is badly affected, leading to adverse further impacts on the economy of this destination, since travelers would be less likely to consider going that place for touristic purposes. Previous studies have shown that when a destination image of a particular travel place is considerably low due to concerns about safety or economic stability, then the opportunities of economic recovery, such as new investments or new visitors, will be diminished (Walters et. al., 2015, p.111). For that reason, the second main variable for measuring the impact of natural disaster is destination image, as it is an important determinant factor for post-disaster travel decision and hence, the economic future of this particular tourism region.

However, the impact of natural disasters is not limited to negative ones. For instance, the study conducted by Yamamura (2016) revealed that the Great Hanshin-Awaji earthquake occurred in Japan in 1995 contributed to the participation in community activity by increasing the interaction among people and voluntary collective action due to an emergency situation. At the times of catastrophic events,

the solidarity bonds within a society get strengthened since most of their co-residents or citizens are in misery. As individuals witness the hardships around them, or if they have ever experienced such a disastrous natural accident in their lives, they are motivated to help other people to cover their losses by participating into these community activities, including voluntary medical treatment, housing or food provision or financial support. Therefore, the level of community activity should be considered as the third and last main determinant for the impact of natural disaster, indicating the positive aspects after a natural catastrophe.

### The model

In the light of explanations based on the existing literature in the previous section, the model can be written as:

$$(1) \quad ND = \beta_0 - \beta_1 \cdot TR - \beta_2 \cdot DI + \beta_3 \cdot CA + \varepsilon$$

where,

ND implies the *impact of Natural Disaster on tourism sector*

TR implies *Total Revenues*

DI implies *the level of Destination Image*

CA implies *the degree of Community Activity*

$\beta_0$ ,  $\beta_1$ ,  $\beta_2$  and  $\beta_3$  imply coefficients, and

$\varepsilon$  implies residual (i.e. the effect of other variables).

According to the model, total revenues, the level of destination image and the degree of community activity are three main variables by which the effect of natural disasters on tourism sector can be explained. In this model, total revenues and the level of destination image variables are considered as negatively related to natural disasters, since the presence of a catastrophe directly decreases the economic revenues in a particular destination as well as popularity for tourism activity due to safety reasons. On the other hand, natural disasters may boost the community activities, which will increase future investments or other type of social benefits. In addition to this, there might be other variables that are capable of explaining the variance in the level of the effect of natural disasters on tourism sector that the suggested model has not captured. Therefore, a residual is presented in the model, denoting the variance that cannot be explained by the three variables.

It should be also noted that this model is suitable for any kind of numerical data because the target of model presented in this study is to measure the damage of natural disaster in a quantitative manner. By modeling the damage of natural disaster on tourism sector with respect to three main variables, the research allows the measurement through statistical analysis and a mathematical structure for

investigation rather than subjective methods which decrease the objectivity and reliability of findings.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, natural disasters may create long-lasting impacts on the lives of people, and as an outcome of this, tourism sector may be negatively affected due to labor power decrease and damage in tourism facilities or worsening destination image with respect to bad management of crisis. However, at the same time, touristic destination may change the natural disaster crisis into an opportunity for future investment in the region, by enhancing community support towards the region with a well-organized crisis management. Therefore the disaster management appears as an important strategy for many touristic destinations, since it is impossible to say exactly when a natural disaster will happen and to what extent it will be effective.

Furthermore, the burden of natural disaster precautions or crisis management is not solely on a specific actor. According to the previous findings in the crisis management, both government bodies and actors in the market play a significant role in prevention of disaster before they occur as well as post-disaster actions in order to cope with the negative impacts (Yamamura, 2016, p.144). The emergency situations are the times where people come together and cooperate to overcome the misery in a destination, since everyone would be adversely affected by the disaster regardless of their socio-economic, ethnical or cultural background. Therefore, public-wide decisions should be taken collectively for the measures of natural disasters, such as related to obligatory construction materials for buildings, ensuring periodical check for security systems, emergency plans for a possible natural catastrophe and organization of a community action. All in all, natural disasters are threat for the whole society in a region, thus the steps to overcome the negative impacts of a disaster would require solidarity, mutual support and collective action.

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**Discourses of Volunteer Farm Tourism in Nepal:  
A Methodological Approach to World Wide  
Opportunities on Organic Farms**

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alternative farm  
tourism

**Abstract**

*In this research note, I propose an appropriate methodology to study discourses around the volunteer farm exchange programme World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF) in Nepal. WWOOF is an international movement that connects organic farmers and international travellers who wish to exchange their labour for food and accommodation. Previously WWOOF was described as volunteer tourism, alternative tourism or as an alternative to tourism. As a non-profit exchange programme WWOOF abodes the commercialisation of tourism and attracts long-term international travellers who do not describe themselves as tourists and see WWOOF as a way to explore the destinations off the beaten track. As such, WWOOF members share different philosophy or discourse of travel from commercial farm tourism. Thus, it is essential to understand what drives farm hosts and volunteers to participate in this unique exchange programme in Nepal.*

**Introduction**

Sustainability principles and green ideals entered people's daily lives about three decades ago and leisure and holidays were influenced by those trends too (Cohen, 2002; Joshi & Dhyan, 2009; Mowforth & Munt, 2015). In this way, programmes like World Wide Opportunities on

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Organic Farms (WWOOF) have become increasingly popular among travellers (Maycock, 2008). WWOOF is an international movement that links international travellers interested in volunteering on the organic farmer that promotes non-commercial cultural and educational exchanges aiming to contribute to building a sustainable global community (Federation of WWOOF Organisations, 2018). The daily arrangements within WWOOF programme consider volunteers are contributing with labour on the farm up to six hours a day in exchange for food, lodging, social interactions and sharing knowledge about organic farming (McIntosh, 2009).

Some researchers position WWOOF programme as a form of alternative tourism (McIntosh & Bonnemann, 2006; Mosedale, 2009), others associate it with volunteer tourism (Deville, Wearing, & McDonald, 2016). The majority of WWOOF volunteers are international travellers travelling long term on a limited budget; they differentiate themselves from commercial tourists and see WWOOF programme as a possibility to travel off the beaten track (Nimmo, 2001). Dana (2012) and (Ord, 2010) conclude that the national coordinators of WWOOF branches choose to distance the programme from tourism altogether. Thus, as an international movement WWOOF contributes to non-commercial volunteers exchange that avoids the commercialisation of tourism. As such, this exchange practice is underpinned by distinct philosophy or discourse of travel differentiating the programme from commercial farm tourism or traditional volunteer exchange programmes (Phillip, Hunter, & Blackstock, 2010).

The WWOOF movement gained increasing attention from academics about two decades ago. McIntosh and Campbell (2001) pioneered research on WWOOF and focused on hosts' attitudes and motivation in the New Zealand context. However, previous studies do not go deep enough to uncover the deeper understanding of social dimensions of host-guest experiences in WWOOFing (Cronauer, 2012; Deville, 2011). In their recent study, Wengel, McIntosh, and Cockburn-Wootten (2018) challenge the idealistic picture of WWOOF movement and report finding that highlight tensions of economic and ethical accountability within WWOOFing.

In this research note, I suggest an appropriate theoretical framework and methodological approach to investigate and critically examine the discourses of host-guest interactions in non-profit volunteer exchange programme in Nepal on the example of WWOOF programme; the empirical findings of this research will be reported elsewhere. The research outlined in this research note is part of an international multisite study of host-guest interactions in WWOOF programme. The project focused on the communication aspects and understanding of the philosophy that underpins this non-profit host-guest exchange.

### Literature review

The World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms originated from the United Kingdom in the 1970s. Firsts WWOOFers aimed to support the organic movement and the farmers while escaping the urban environment in a meaningful way (Pier, 2011). Over the last four decades the movement spread among the organic farmers and volunteers worldwide and as of 2010 there are nearly 12000 hosts and about 80000 volunteers in about 50 countries (International WWOOF Association, 2013). In the Nepal context, WWOOF started in 2003. In recent years WWOOFing gained increasing popularity among travellers coming to Nepal; 115 farmers are listed on the website along with 2500 volunteers joined the programme so far (WWOOF Nepal, 2018). In 2017 200 volunteers mainly interested in cultural exchange came to work on WWOOF farms in Nepal (WWOOF Nepal, 2018).

Previously researchers provided a general overview of the concept of WWOOFing (Maycock, 2008), looked at WWOOF as part of rural and farm tourism and deemed WWOOFers as alternative tourists interested in sustainable tourism practices (Dewille, 2011; McIntosh & Campbell, 2001; McIntosh & Bonnemann, 2006). Stehlik (2002) focused on cultural exchange aspects and informal adult learning in WWOOF. Dewille (2011) suggested that WWOOF represents a 'new model of travel' allowing long-term budget travellers the opportunity to extend the period of travel and to interact with locals in non-commercial setting. Other studies focused on host-guest interactions in the WWOOF movement (Cronauer, 2012; Dewille, 2011; Wengel et al., 2018). In their latest study, Wengel et al. (2018) focus on in-depth host-guests relationships and challenge the positively framed aims of this type of volunteer tourism exchange programme that is usually reported in tourism literature. In particular, their findings highlight the tensions of economic and ethical accountability within the WWOOF programme.

In this multi-sited international research project, I endeavoured to understand the narratives of hosts and guests and examine how these shape and sustain the philosophies around host-guest exchange in WWOOF. Arguably, WWOOF is a distinct form of tourism, WWOOF movement embraces strong underlying values and philosophies, based on ideals around sustainability, organic farming and non-commercial tourism exchange practices (Cronauer, 2012). Previous research has neglected the role of communication and philosophy underpinning this form of non-commercial exchange. However, these aspects are vital to ensure the match of expectations, values and cultural perceptions of farmers and volunteers.

Within this research on WWOOF movement, language and text are integral parts playing a crucial role in information exchange, as WWOOF volunteers gain and share their experiences via the internet platforms like Facebook, TripAdvisor, blogs

as well as using word of mouth and friends' personal experiences. Consequently, online communication about WWOOF Nepal and representation of WWOOF Nepal homepage and Facebook page are important components of this research.

### **Proposing an appropriate theoretical framework**

Despite the historical dominance of positivist frameworks in social sciences research the qualitative research has gained momentum over the past two decades (Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Wilson & Hollinshead, 2015). As such, tourism scholars turned their attention to constructionist paradigm to examine social interactions in tourism setting (Dunn, 2005; Hunter, 2016; Li, 2010; Pritchard & Morgan, 2005, 2006; Tribe, 2008). Social constructionists consider subjective meanings of multiple realities constructed by individuals and based on their philosophy, worldviews and experiences (Young & Collin, 2004). The communicational aspect of host-guest interactions and understanding the philosophies around WWOOF fits into the constructivist paradigm as these are the part of the socially constructed realities (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Therefore, I propose constructionist framework as the most appropriate methodological approach to investigate critical discourses around WWOOF in order to make sense of the participants' experiences in Nepal. Subsequently, I discuss appropriate methods for data collection and analysis in the following section.

To gain the deeper understandings on subjective realities constructionist researcher apply various methods which may substantially vary from each other. As such, ethnographic methods rooted in anthropological research are widely applied in geography and tourism studies (Botterill & Platenkamp, 2012). Ethnographic studies are time-consuming as they allow the researcher to 'live' the research and be one of the participants while conducting observation and participating in daily activities (Bryman, 2016). Tourism ethnographies used to explore the aspects of dark tourism (Buda, 2015), community development (Azcárate, 2006; Cole, 2008), understand tourists' experiences (Frazer & Waitt, 2016; Westerhausen, 2002), host-guests' relations (Wei, Qian, & Sun, 2018) and impact of tourism on water resources (Cole, 2017).

This research aimed to understand in-depth host-guests' relations between Nepali farmers and international volunteers shaped by 'organic nature' of farming and interest in local socio-cultural practices (Maycock, 2008). Hence, the primary data for this study come from the ethnographic fieldwork conducted in 2014 and 2017 throughout four months. Following methods for data collection were used: individual in-depth interviews with tourists, farmers and tourism stakeholders, participant observation, reflexive diary and netnographic accounts of WWOOF Nepal. The unstructured qualitative interviews with farmers and volunteers were based on a set of themes. As a WWOOF volunteer myself I observed participants on the farms and captured

daily events in a reflexive journal. These data complemented qualitative interviewing and allowed to bear out my assumptions and hence provided deeper meanings of the encounters made by research participants (Bryman, 2012; King & Horrocks, 2010). Furthermore, the reflexive journal helped with interpretation of findings (Watt, 2007) and increased my understanding of participants interactions, philosophies and realities (Gilgun, 2008; Ortlipp, 2008).

The third method of data collection represents aligned with the ethnographic nature of this study is focused on netnographic accounts of WWOOF Nepal. As such, I examined the internet platforms including Facebook, TripAdvisor and blogs mentioning accounts of WWOOFing in Nepal. I also focused on the WWOOF Nepal website as it serves as a mediator for participants and contains significant relevant information. Although netnography was coined to understand consumer experiences (Kozinets, 2012; Rageh, Melewar, & Woodside, 2013; Snehota, Mandelli, & La Rocca, 2014) it has gained momentum and become increasingly popular method in tourism studies (Hsu, Dehuang, & Woodside, 2009; Mkono & Markwell, 2014; O'Connor, 2010; Tavakoli & Mura, 2018). The netnographic component of this research allowed a deeper insight into the philosophy of WWOOFing, helped to explore personal meanings, attitudes and experiences of the participants as well as to gain insights in experiences of hard to reach research participants (Mkono, 2012; Wu & Pearce, 2014).

Considering the focus of this paper on the discourse around WWOOF Nepal I chose to turn my attention to discourse analysis as an appropriate method of data analysis. Discourse analysis is a widespread qualitative research tool associated with constructionist epistemology (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Burr, 2003; Gergen, 1999; White, 2004). Discourse analysis presents a reflexive, interpretive method interested in language as a mean of social construction (Burman & Parker, 1993). Researchers claim that social reality is a product of discourses, and discourse analysis aids the understanding of how the reality is constructed, sustained and experienced by research participants (Phillips & Hardy, 2002). Hence, as an analysis method, I propose Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). CDA is used to investigate language, discourse and communication and it considers 'language as a social practice' (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 258). It thus focuses on language, power, history, ideology and connections among them. In tourism studies Caruana and Crane (2011) used CDA to investigate how freedom is constructed in tourism magazines' texts. Feighery (2006) analysed the information brochures to understand representation of tourism organisations in England and Small and Harris (2012) investigate the airline experiences of obese and non-obese passengers by using CDA.

## Conclusion

In this research note, I suggest a possible appropriate methodology to study discourses around the WWOOF phenomenon. WWOOF is a phenomenon which requires diversified methods and methodologies in order to discover understand complex host- guests interactions and philosophies underpinning this non-profit tourism exchange programme. Thus, social constructionism was deemed as the most appropriate theoretical framework which served as an epistemological foundation around discourses of WWOOFing. I further propose a multi-method approach to data collection including ethnographic participant observations, in-depth interviews, reflexive diary and netnographic accounts of WWOOF Nepal. Discourse analysis, strongly associated with constructivist epistemology (White, 2004), was deemed as an appropriate tool of data analysis for this study as discourses around WWOOF represent “socially constructed knowledge of reality...[T]hey have been developed in specific social contexts, and in ways which are appropriate to the interest of social actors in these contexts” (Kress & Leeuwen, 1996, p. 4).

This research note contributes to the academic literature on qualitative methodologies, multi-method approach to data collection, the phenomenon of WWOOF, as well as the literature on hosts-guests' relationships in non-commercial volunteer tourism. The findings of this research contribute not only to academic literature in tourism and communication but also could benefit WWOOF movement, farmers and volunteers by enhancing the mutual understanding of core values and philosophies of the unique experience within this international exchange programme.

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**New Trends in Adventure Tourism: A Lesson from 6th  
International Adventure Conference, 30 January- 2  
February 2018, Segovia, Spain**

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**Abstract**

*This article tries to assess new trends in adventure tourism with the review of 6th international adventure conference-2018 organized by Adventure Tourism Research Association (ATRA). For the review, the 'book of abstracts' which includes 41 abstracts of papers is studied and analyzed to come up with the findings and gaps in the studies. The study found some new trends and ideas in adventure tourism related to adventure activities, adventure challenges and adventure travelers' motivation. Further, the article identifies gaps in the conference papers and suggest applicable research areas for extending and developing the subject area in such future events.*

**Introduction**

Adventure tourism is a unique segment of tourism industry which is experience-based and related to adventure or risk. The Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA, 2013) defines adventure tourism as a trip that includes at least two of the following three elements: physical activity, natural environment, and cultural immersion. It entails that an adventure activity is distinct from other tourism activities. Walle (1997) stated that the distinction between adventure activities and other recreational tourism activities rely on the manner of accomplishing it and the emotions

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that the person experiences while performing it. According to him “Adventurous quests rely on thrilling the person through risk taking.”

Adventure tourism is one of the young but growing segment of tourism. Its significance lies in attracting high value customers who are willing to pay a premium for ‘extraordinary experience’. In addition, adventure tourism is attracting attention for its emphasis on rural areas, local culture, and because it can often be developed within existing infrastructure (UNWTO, 2014). So, the development and management of adventure tourism is crucial for the growth of industry as well as a nation. There is increased demand as well as supply of adventure tourism. In emerging and developing markets, the growth of the sector is attractive with the increase of disposable income in that markets. Czech, Israel, Poland, Korea Republic, Chile, Romania etc. are the new emerging markets for adventure tourism. Similarly, the use of information sources and technologies helped to access the destination and adventure activities easily. On the other hand, there is growth in the supply of adventure tourism with the development of trained and professional adventure providers and the brand identity focused marketing of the destinations. It is a niche market but has good opportunities to develop and expand.

This article aims to assess new trends in adventure tourism with the review of 6th International Adventure Conference (30 January- 2 February 2018), Segovia, Spain. In addition, new avenues to be considered in adventure tourism will be explored. So, the study will have two contributions: to find out new trends in adventure tourism which can be a lesson for the stakeholders for the growth of the industry; and to suggest the forum for the consideration of fulfilling the gaps in adventure tourism research when conducting such events in future.

### **Adventure tourism**

Humans have been engaging in adventurous travel for hundreds of years via exploration by the likes of Marco Polo, Captain James Cook, and Sir Ernest Shackleton, who had primarily scientific, geographic, or colonial motives. However, commercial adventure travel is a relatively new phenomenon, in which travelers hire a professional guide to provide a range of technical support and equipment, as well as culture and nature interpretation (UNWTO, 2014). Adventure tourism definitions vary from authors to authors. It is defined as ‘thrilled and perhaps frightened but not actually endangered’ (Cater, 2006); ‘travel to unusual, exotic and remote wilderness destinations’ (Kane & Tucker, 2004; Millington, Locke, & Locke, 2001); ‘quest for excitement’ (Standeven, 1999); ‘any number of leisure pursuits which provide exposure to physical danger (Meier, 1978).

Adventure travel may include any of the following 34 activities: joining an archeological expedition; attending local festival/fairs; backpacking; bird watching;

camping, caving; climbing; taking a cruise; participating in cultural, educational or environmentally sustainable activities; fishing/fly-fishing; getting to know the locals; hiking; horseback riding; hunting, kayaking; whitewater rafting; learning a new language; orienteering; joining a research expedition or safari; sailing, scuba diving; snorkeling; skiing and snowboarding; surfing; trekking; walking; visiting friends and family; visiting a historical site; and participating in a volunteer tourism program (ATDI, 2016). Those activities can be divided into two broad categories: soft adventure and hard adventure. Since the risk is associated with adventure tourism, the extend of perceived or physical risk is studied to analyze whether an adventure activity is hard or soft adventure. Bhattacharya (2013) stated, for soft adventure, perceptual risk is there but physical risk is less but in case of hard adventure tourism, the perceptual as well as the physical risk both are high. However, according to UNWTO (2014), the easiest way to identify an adventure trip as hard or soft adventure is by its primary activity. It further said adventure will always be a subjective term for travelers, because it is related to one's individual experience. Adventure to one traveler may seem mundane to another.

### **History of international adventure conference**

International Adventure Conference is organized annually by Adventure Tourism Research Association (ATRA). ATRA is a consequence of the relationships and consensus built during the first two adventure conferences in Scotland - in 2012 and 2013. It aims to create a forum for the creation and dissemination of research into adventure tourism. ATRA has previously organized conferences in Scotland, Norway, England and Ireland with participants from 30 more countries over the years. Previous proceedings of conference covered many areas of adventure tourism.

### **6<sup>th</sup> International Adventure Conference-2018, Segovia, Spain**

The conference included 41 papers along with 3 keynote speakers and 1 after-dinner speaker. The conference tried to answer the questions such as how does the changing climate impact on our engagement with 'the great outdoors?' what can the role of adventure tourism and outdoor education play in addressing these areas of change? What does 'the great outdoor' means for these different peoples living under shifting climates? (Book of Abstracts, 2018) and so on. I have included the following areas in adventure tourism covered in the 'book of abstracts' which is presented later in the finding section:

- **Adventure Management/Development:** Adventure tourism is a growing field in tourism. For its development and management, all the stakeholders engaged need to focus on issues by identifying the challenges and developing strategies. There should be a good enabling environment which encompasses many interrelated conditions that affect the success of sustainable and responsible adventure tourism. Those conditions are sound policies, tourism

infrastructure, innovative marketing, training and so on. UNWTO (2014) suggests adventure companies need to be encouraged to work across three major areas: strategy, operations and marketing.

- **Consumer behavior or motivation:** Consumer behavior or motivation plays a central role to understand the travel behavior and decision- making process while travelling. Travelers' behaviors such as choice of adventure activities or destination, repeat visitation and intention to recommend etc. are highly based on their satisfaction of the activity or destination. Specifically, tourist satisfaction is described as how well a destination fulfilled a tourist's specific needs (Meng et al., 2008), and motivation has been acknowledged as one of the antecedents to satisfaction (Yoon & Uysal, 2005).
- **Technology:** Technology adaptation in adventure tourism helps to reduce costs, enhance operational efficiency and most importantly to improve service quality and customer experience (Kim & Ham, 2007; Singh, Kim, & Huh, 2006; Winata & Mia, 2005). Technology has not only impacted traveler behavior in each phase of the buying process but also the manners in which adventure companies and destinations position and market their products (UNWTO, 2014). Similarly, the internet and online marketing has intrinsic impacts on the adventure tourism. For instance, travelers get access to a wide range of information. Meantime, technology allows travelers to get customized services; businesses to reach to wider market.
- **Adventure Challenges:** Adventure tourism safety has received attention and the risks associated with adventure activities are very high (Bentley, Page & Macky, 2007). With a series of widely publicized incidents in recent years, risk management has become a major issue for organizations involved in all areas of adventure tourism- including adventure sports centres, specialist tour operators and trekking companies (Bentley, 2005; Bentley et al., 2007; Smartt and Chalmers, 2009). Another challenge in adventure tourism is for its future. For instance, challenges such as carrying capacities, environmental fragility and limitations and climate change (UNWTO, 2014).

### **Methodology**

In this article, the 'book of abstract' from the sixth international adventure conference is reviewed. It includes altogether 45 contributions comprising 3 keynotes, 1 after-dinner speech and 41 abstracts of studies. The study covers only the 41 abstracts of studies since they are the research studies contributed by the participants for the conference.

Foremost, abstracts' content analysis was performed to find out the focused subject or theme of the adventure tourism. Thereafter, studies were identified

individually whether related to ‘development or management’ or ‘technology’ or ‘consumer behavior or motivation’ or adventure challenges’. These areas along with ‘adventure activities’ were assessed to find out the types of activities. In addition to this, abstracts/studies were classified based on the country of study location. By the analysis of findings, I came to pinpoint some of the new trends in the adventure tourism as covered in 6th international adventure conference, 2018, Segovia, Spain. For the methodology, the data were first coded and classified using table. Thereafter, simple quantitative tool frequency distribution was used, and the resulted figures are plotted in the tables, bar charts and pie chart.

**Analysis and findings**

I have classified the identified studies by the focused area of study, country of study location, and types of adventure activities to assess new trends and ideas in adventure tourism. The new trends are discussed in the discussion section later.

**Focused area of the abstracts/studies**

The figure above presents the distribution of abstracts/studies by the focused subject area. It can be seen that ‘consumer behavior or motivation’ is the most focused area, being mentioned in 41.46 % of the studies’ abstract (i.e. 17 out of 41 selected abstracts), while the second is ‘development or management’ (36.59%, 15 out of 41). However, technology and adventure challenges area of adventure tourism receive less attention. Some of the studies’ abstract showed a combination of more than one subject area, comprising 5 out of 41 abstracts.

**Adventure activities**

S. N.	Adventure Activities	Type
1	Bird watching	Soft
2	Hiking/trekking/walking tours	Mixed
3	Cultural activities	Soft
4	Safaris (salmon safari/snow mobile safari)	Soft
5	Kayaking (sea/white water)	Soft
6	Horse riding	Soft
7	Cycling	Mixed
8	Fishing/whale watching	Soft
9	Climbing (rock/mountain/ice)	Hard
10	Caving (ice)	Hard
11	Canoeing	Soft
12	Diving (scuba)	Soft

S. N.	Adventure Activities	Type
13	Snorkeling	Soft
14	Skiing/ snowboarding	Soft
15	Forestring	Soft
16	Surfing	Soft
17	Educational programs (workshops/learning programs)	soft

In the table above, 17 different adventure activities are mentioned which were included in the 'book of abstracts' as identified in 20 abstracts/studies out of 41 abstracts/studies. It needs to be noted that 21 studies did not mentioned the adventure activities; these were focused elsewhere. Subsequently, these different adventure activities are categorized by the types such as 'soft' or 'hard' adventure. Some of the activities are categorized as 'mixed' as these include both 'soft' and 'hard' type of adventure. As shown in the pic chart, soft adventure activities account 76% of the activities mentioned in the 'book of abstracts'. On the other hand, hard adventure activities account 12% of the activities. Similarly, mixed types of activities also represent 12% of the studies.

### Country of study location

The figure above shows the distribution of articles based on the country of study location. Out of 41 studies, Spain was the most common study location, included with 7 studies. Norway, Portugal and UK were the study location for 5, 4 and 4 studies, respectively. Each one of the countries such as New Zealand, Germany, USA, South Africa, Canada, Tanzania, Iceland and Ireland was studied in each of a study. However, two studies were based on more than a country. A greater number of abstracts i.e. 11 did not include the country of study location.

### Discussion and implications

New trends in '*consumer behavior or motivation*' covered in studies related to the 'role of shelf', 'shelf identity', 'learning' which are new motivation for why travelers intend to go for adventure tourism. Travelers want to discover themselves with adventure. At the same time their learning in such contexts has encouraged them towards adventurous activities. Understanding their motivation should be a primary objective of adventure providers. When it comes to '*technology*', today consumer decision making processes are highly influenced by digital technologies and other information sources. Similarly, many new tools and technologies are used to facilitate the adventure travelers. Spanish tourism companies used MIDE system, a system including four aspects: environment, itinerary, movement and effort which is useful when conducting the risk management planning for a route proposal and helps to realize an objective valuation of the difficulty of a route. In another study, for the

people who cannot move by themselves (physically challenged), the concept of 'Joelette' and 'directional bar'-two articulated and facilitated technologies- is stated which facilitates them to access to the natural environment with the support from travel guides. A study stated a new data collection method supported by technology which can be a useful methodology for researchers. Data from text messages or SMS as a near synchronous method was used in a study together with an interactionist approach through supplementary mobile telephone conversations, to understand the lived experiences of participants.

There were some new trends related to '*adventure challenges*' as well. A study discussed the power relations between inbound and outbound adventure operators and partners. It is important to have balanced power relations which reinforces the effect of partner irreplaceability on the acquiescence of inbound operators and subsequently on conflict. A less focused subject elsewhere about the constraints on women's participation in mountaineering tourism was studied which showed there are four dimensional constraints such as intra-personal, inter-personal, structural and family constraint. Those three new constraints along with family constraint are important to understand. Some papers raised the issue of adventure accidents and hazards as well as climate change impact on glacier tourism and others. These are the top and burning challenges in adventure tourism today. Similarly, in '*management or development of adventure tourism*', some new trends were stated. Musical games in nature, bike-ball, indoor climbing learning for outdoor education, alternative tourism, micro-adventure, employer-university liaisons for the growth of adventure tourism etc. have opened the door to expand and explore the adventure tourism further. In addition, new *adventure activities* such as salmon safari, whale watching, workshops or indoor learning activities for outdoor adventure, foresting etc. were included. The ancient concept of foresting is another new idea which we can develop relating it to the health.

### **Research Gaps and Potential Research Areas**

A considerable number of studies in the 'book of abstracts' focuses on the 'consumer behavior or motivation' and 'development or management of adventure tourism' whereas 'technology' and 'adventure challenges' have given less attention. Nonetheless, these are equally important in adventure tourism. The paper also finds that the country of study location was not well-balanced. The dominant presentation of European countries and a non-significant presentation of rest of the continents cannot provide an overview of world's adventure tourism. The major adventure destinations such as Australia, Nepal, Israel, Korea Republic and many more in Asian continents are not included in the conference which is another major gap. In other words, almost developed countries are studied whereas developing countries are not given an attention. The emerging adventure tourism destinations and market growth comes from the developing countries in these days.

Based on the gaps present in the studies, I have recommended some potential research areas for further research in adventure tourism. The first potential area relates to the emphasis on technologies in adventure tourism. The tourism sector is one of the sectors most impacted by the Internet. The Internet and the development of online portals have drastically changed the landscape of mass tourism; however, the impact to the adventure tourism sector is more on the demand side than the supply side. Consumers are empowered through access to a wide range of information and tools, including a massive and ever-growing number of consumer-generated reviews (UNWTO, 2014). The application of technologies and innovation could widen up the scope of adventure tourism. There could be many new uses and advantages of technologies in adventure tourism. The researchers are needed to assess whether there are opportunities to adopt innovation and technology in the supply side too.

The second potential area for future research is the consideration of adventure challenges. The challenge is for the tourism sector to use its best efforts to reduce the negative impacts of tourism, while safeguarding and/or enhancing local environments, biodiversity, and culture (UNWTO, 2014). Similarly, safety standards and issues are important in adventure tourism as it is associated with risks. Several studies have shown that safety is an important consideration when people undertake adventure activities (Carr, 2002; Hall & McArthur, 1994). Carr (2002) suggested that most international tourists are giving considerable importance to safety, as they are seeking guided mountaineering experiences, which means they are seeking the safest wilderness experience possible.

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