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Editor-in-Chief
Prof. Ramesh Raj Kunwar



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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 July for 5th issue. In one issue, there will be minimum five research articles excluding research notes and book reviews, etc. Every year the journal will be published by the end of the following year. The article will be under the author(s)' copyright. Whoever is willing to contribute he/she/they should not pay any currency for publishing their papers in this journal. The published articles will go to online-www.nepjol.info.

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

Peer review statement

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

Instructions for authors

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

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

Structure

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

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Journal of Tourism & Adventure

Poles' Perceptions of Extreme and Adventure Tourism

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Abstract

The purpose of this article was to present awareness of extreme and adventure tourism among Polish people. A diagnostic survey was performed in order to determine the actual state of understanding of leisure activities and preferences of the people regarding adventure tourism using online social networking sites like Facebook in July 2021. A total of 1080 Polish respondents participated in the study, and the data were analysed descriptively. In this study, we found that leisure tourism is mostly practiced (41%) among the respondents, and the extreme and adventure tourism market share is 14%. Around 40% of respondents said they never practiced adventure tourism, and 26% said they hardly practice once a year. This demands additional efforts to increase the market share for

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extreme and adventure tourism. Thus, tourism entrepreneurs and policymakers can promote extreme and adventure tourism in the country, focusing on young people. Similarly, 31% said adventure and extreme tourism are dangerous. This means people must first overcome their psychological fear of participating in such activities. Thus, to encourage people in adventure and extreme tourism, the tourists' fears should be removed and psychologically motivated. Then, ensuring safety measures, short training, and awareness campaigns focusing on the young increases their participation in adventure and extreme tourism. The safety measures and positive psychology? in younger people increase the adventure and extreme tourism market.

Introduction

Leisure is a broad term and does not necessarily mean time not occupied by work, but this is how leisure is often assumed in definitions and life to be time away from work. The important thing is that it is an activity we enjoy, and here we can mention entertainment, gaining knowledge or learning unselfishly, and voluntary participation in a chosen environment. Leisure time can be considered as time away from work or study, the weekend, the daily time after work or study, and the annual longer time off, i.e., vacation or vacations. The time pool into paid time, time for household duties, personal time (sleep, eating, hygiene), and free time, which remains after subtracting working time, tasks, and personal time, after removing transport and commuting time is leisure time. To be specific, leisure time is the time left after work and household duties and is a component of human life that has supported humans since the beginning. Leisure time can be used in a variety of ways. In the past, leisure time was considered to be only the time for voluntary activity but nowadays, leisure time is synonymous with fun, relaxation, festivity, and leisure in the broadest sense. Further, it also includes time for self-improvement (Roman et al., 2020).

People who have leisure time spend time on recreation and relaxation through tourism. Out of many types, extreme and adventure tourism are growing interests in the young generation. Extreme tourism is perceived as very difficult and often even impossible to practice, but the number of its enthusiasts and participants is constantly growing. More and more people are looking for thrills, which, as the research shows, are the answer to a faster and more stressful life. As we live in a hectic and stressful world, we need more and more stimuli that will allow us to take a break from everyday life, turn our thoughts to other directions, and engage in physical activity, which will enable us to relax. Adventure tourism is much easier, but it allows people to calm down, slow down and contemplate nature. This type of tourism verifies preparation for life outside the system, outside agglomerations. It is based on physical and mental satisfaction with one's abilities (Stankiewicz and Nurkowanie, 2021). Adventure tourism, on the other hand, is active recreation in nature. It is not only relaxing, but it is also communing with nature, physically challenging, and educational. The approximate terminology was proposed by Bentley

et al. (2001), which refers to classic approaches to adventure tourism, i.e., those based on the natural environment.

Adventure tourism and extreme tourism are ways to spend leisure time, even though the types of sports can also be practiced during leisure time. Adventure tourism is tourism that involves any kind of activity or adventure, particularly refers to those that involve risk or require extensive planning. Extremes can cause loss of health or even life. Motivations given by participants include ambition, wanting to stand out, being better, or showing individuality. As a result of the development of modern technology, there is a chance to improve your performance and explore new interesting places or completely new activities. Increasingly better equipment and facilities make it possible to reach areas previously impossible to explore. Usually, these places are not new; progress and new technologies allow us to conquer what has already been discovered faster, differently, or more unusual. Extreme tourism is not the practice of typical, traditional sports or sports competitions. Still, the realization of individual performance is the transition from an ordinary sport in such a way that it will require extreme ability or endurance.

The adventure, in this case, will involve visiting specific, unvisited, or unknown places for a particular reason. Important in this type of tourism are the emotionality, satisfaction, joy, and pleasure of communing with nature, the satisfaction of being able to cope with difficult conditions and using one's skills. The determinant of adventure tourism is the level of risk. The literature on the subject emphasizes that risk plays a major role in deciding to participate in an adventure trip. For example, the desire to participate in the expedition may often decrease if the risk element is missing (Fennell, 2000). The risk component accompanying such expeditions makes it possible to divide this activity into low-risk and high-risk. The former is characterized by easy exploration and friendly places and doesn't require advanced skills or equipment. The second one needs much more specific equipment, knowledge, and abilities. This kind of tourism is actually available to everyone; it has no fundamental limitations (Roman et al., 2022). These two types of tourism are a part of a large branch of the economy, tourism, which is the whole phenomenon of movement and staying for leisure purposes of the participants. Tourism is an intensively developing branch of the economy; more and more people are resting, but the number of people directly and indirectly connected with it is also increasing. Tourist activity is not only to hotels and other accommodations. It includes banking, trade, restaurants, municipal economy, and transport (Roman and Bury, 2022).

People prefer adventure, and there are different types of adventure and extreme tourism activities practiced throughout the world for centuries (see next section). Regarding the literature on adventure tourism, many scholars focused on defining adventure tourism. For instance, adventure tourism (Weber, 2001; Buckley, 2006;

Swarbrooke et al., 2012), mountaineering adventure (Pomfret, 2006), and water-related adventure tourism (Rulal, 2014) provide insights into different types of adventure tourism. Some other literature on adventure tourism focused on motivation and perceived risks (Mason et al., 2016), risk and management implication (Carter, 2006), and motivation and loyalty of the demand (Carvahe-Franco et al., 2022). Adventure and extreme tourism are considered niche markets, and it is crucial to explore people's awareness and preferences and other related factors for both extreme and adventure tourism combined. Since individuals' subjective experience and perception of adventure also need to be considered for a complete understanding of adventure and extreme tourism (Weber, 2001), we aim to explore these factors using a questionnaire survey.

In this study, we selected Poland for the survey to explore the Polish people's perceptions related to adventure and extreme tourism. We chose Poland because extreme and adventure tourism is increasing among young people, and many types of adventure tourism are not only popular but also originated in Poland, such as ballooning (Opublikowano, 2017). We focused more on these types of tourism because we explored tourists' perceptions, specifically how they spend their leisure time, the desire to explore, information collection sources, discovery, and experience to test themselves to help discuss the industry's policy implication. Based on the study results, we can predict how we relax and spend our free time at a higher level of emotions and sensations, in this case, choosing extreme and adventure tourism.

Extreme tourism

Essence of extreme tourism

Extreme tourism is a trip to engage in extreme sports. Many authors point to the belonging of extreme tourism to adventure tourism, which is so diverse that it also includes "hard" forms with a high level of risk (Fennell, 2007). The characteristic of this form is a high risk, which often involves physical exhaustion, injury, and even loss of life (Pomfret, 2006). Those who practice this form of recreation face their mental and physical limits, and the motives for practicing it are self-realization, the need to impress, individualism, and the need to break away from the monotony of everyday life (Management Encyclopedia, 2021). Such forms of recreation are sought because of the need to relieve stress, "get out," and change the environment from the view of everyday concrete and asphalt cities (Sekida and Malchrowicz-Moško, 2016). This form of recreation began to flourish in the 1970s and continues to grow. Extreme tourism is about the places where it is practiced, these are strictly defined places, so there is a need to travel to these areas. Usually, these are mountainous coastal countries and regions - the most popular European country for extreme tourism is Montenegro, which combines these landscapes. The most popular non-European

country is New Zealand; even though it is small, it has excellent resources for extreme tourism enthusiasts. Travel agencies prepare and offer more and more professionally, including the employment of properly prepared professional trainers and instructors to increase safety and avoid unnecessary risks of accidents.

Types of extreme tourism

The phenomenon of extreme tourism is controversial, and this is how the social perception of the mentioned branch of tourism presents itself. The discussed type of tourist activity may also be associated with extreme sports, minimizing the risk and maximizing the experience. One of the main features of extreme tourism is its focus on finding unusual, niche forms of entertainment.

One of the types of extreme tourism is water tourism related to water bodies. We include canyoning, an activity created by alpine hikers and consists of climbing with equipment up mountain rivers and rafting down such a river, not excluding rafting down a waterfall, to a body of water near the waterfall. The route is picturesque but dangerous - it has various obstacles, such as narrow passages, waterfalls, and caves. It requires excellent physical condition and no fear of heights. The most popular areas for this sport are the Alps and Slovenia - they have the most attractive terrain for canyoning. In developing countries like Nepal, which have a terrain landscape and strong currents in rivers, white-water adventures such as canyoning, canoeing, and rafting are popular (Rulal, 2014).

Mountain kayaking is another form of extreme tourism, where tourists canoe down a mountain river in a single-person kayak. There are several varieties of this kind of kayaking: river running, flowing down the mountain rivers, creaking, which is flowing down narrow streams, which have a large drop.

Extreme water tourism is not only swimming underwater but also swimming in the water, moving on a board powered by a kite. This type of extreme tourism is called Kiteboarding. The history of using a kite for propulsion, and consequently for movement, goes back very far because the first records were found in China in the 5th century; further records date back to 1826, when George Pocock, an English explorer, used a kite to propel a carriage. This power was used in various ways throughout the following years, but only in 1977 was it given its present form. In Poland, this sport appeared only in 1999; the development of this discipline at the beginning was slow, but with time it accelerated and now enjoys great popularity. The most popular place where it is possible to practice this sport is the Hel Peninsula (PZKite, 2022).

Hydro speeding is based on rafting down a mountain river on a dedicated plastic board, and the whole body is used to steer and fins. This sport originated in France and derived from rafting and requires courage, physical strength, and the ability to swim. Hydro speeding is most prevalent in France. In Poland, the Dunajec river

has a hydro-speeding route where tourists can participate under the supervision of experienced and qualified coaches (Mcanoe, 2022).

Diving/Freediving is a sport where no equipment is used. The equipment for such diving is only a mask, wetsuit, and fins. This is a demanding and dangerous sport because many irreversible changes occur in an oxygen-depleted body. There are also variations of this sport, such as depth diving, where the task is to reach the maximum depth of diving in one breath (Kursy, 2022; Nurkomania, 2022). There are different types of diving as follows:

- Night diving in night diving, the emphasis is on navigation skills and proper lighting.
- Cave diving is diving into bodies of water hidden under the earth's surface. This sport comes from France, and there it is prevalent, but in Poland, there are also many objects to explore.
- Ice diving is diving in the ice
- Skydiving is a jump from an airplane, from an appropriate height, at first participants free-fall, and at the right moment, one should open the parachute and safely land on the ground. Free flight is the time to perform various acrobatics, arrangements, or tasks.

When talking about extreme tourism, we should also mention adventure racing. Adventure racing in the extreme terrestrial tourism zone, adventure racing combines several types of activities. Usually, these are orienteering marathons with trekking, mountain biking, swimming, and cross-country skiing. It might be cycling with climbing, kayaking, or rollerblading elements in another setting. The time that adventure racing takes place is specified for each event, ranging from a few hours to even a few days. No GPS or other electronics are used during the event, and the route is planned and executed using maps and a compass (Frączek-Bogacka, 2021). As with most extreme sports, motivation is the need to test yourself and your abilities.

Mountain biking should also be mentioned among the types of extreme tourism. It is not only about mountains. It includes all difficult terrains, with the difficult ground and natural obstacles. The cradle of this sport is the United States, and its origin dates back to the 1970s. Nowadays, there are several varieties of mountain biking, including a free ride on a natural trail with additional obstacles, steam or quad races, downhill, endure (rider rides on a designated route of different construction), trial (a ride on a bike, overcoming various obstacles, and not touching the ground with foot). Many different competitions are organized in this discipline, and the most popular are cross country and marathons. A marathon in mountain biking is a long-distance ride, from 50 to even 200 kilometers (National Geographic, 2021).

Motocross is another extreme land sport designed for people eager for a powerful and spectacular experience. This sport is based on racing motorcycles on gravel, grass,

or mud tracks. It usually takes place on a modified track, with hills and mountains added for variety and to increase the level of difficulty.

Mountain boarding is a combination of skateboarding and snowboarding. It is a ride on a snowboard attached to the pumped wheels, and people can ride almost everywhere, so it is not a sport that requires high financial investments. A similar sport is street luge, identical in that it also depends on a board, but the board and its wheels are completely different. Street luge is a crazy downhill ride on the road and dodging between vehicles; speeds reached during this ride are 100-140 km/h (Rozrywka, n.d.).

Climbing does not require any special qualifications or very sophisticated or expensive equipment. The types of climbing are climbing on artificial walls, rock climbing and climbing at heights, bouldering, ice climbing, etc. Climbing is done mainly in two ways. The top rope or rod belay consists of attaching oneself to the rope attached to the summit, to which one climbs, and the other end of the rope is attached to the belayer. The second type of climbing is bottom belaying, which means that the climber clips to the belaying devices one by one so that in case of falling off the wall, they fall as far as the distance from the subsequent belaying devices. The last type is climbing without a belay, a hazardous form.

Speleo or caving is another extreme sport in the mountains. Speleology is a typically scientific exploration of caves. In contrast, a speleologist is a person who is passionate about caves as a tourist and sport.

Base jumping is considered one of the most dangerous sports globally. This extreme sport has three variations: base jumping, wingsuit base jumping, and proximity. Bungee jumping is a safer and more adrenaline-pumping activity. A similar discipline is dream jumping, but longer and more effective, and the technique of this jump allows you to jump from any chosen object.

Parkour is a training method that relies on natural human abilities such as running, climbing, lifting, and jumping, but it can also be swimming. The main goal is to overcome the obstacles encountered on the road in the easiest, safest, and fastest way possible, but the way to overcome them depends only on the practitioner of this sport.

Paintball is also an extreme sport in the land group and involves surviving unshot on the playing field. This sport can be played by anyone, regardless of age or social status, let alone gender. Strength, agility, and speed are not important in this game; what counts most are determination, quick thinking, and sharpness (Paintball, 2021).

Paragliding is an air activity and free flight using a hang glider. As with most sports, it is necessary to go through a preparation course in order to enjoy the pleasures of

flying safely. The location is not a limitation either; a small hill is enough to get into the air. Paragliding is an extreme sport, but the risks are small with common sense and safety rules (Szczypczyńska, 2021).

Hang gliding is a discipline similar to paragliding, but the difference is that people fly with a rigid wing, which is the main difference from paragliding. This kind of flying does not require an airport or other infrastructure or high costs.

Skysurfing is a hybrid of parachuting and surfing. In addition to standard equipment, the jumper also has a surfboard, on which one performs stunts in the air. Skysurfing is a discipline for experienced skydivers because the board is additional resistance in the air and can cause uncontrolled movements of the jumper. In the case of competitions, there is also a cameraman with the jumper, who captures the flight, and later it is evaluated (Skykrawiec, 2021).

Cemetery is another type of tourism, which can be classified as extreme, only in a different aspect, allowing you to visit different cemeteries. It is not only seeing tombstones differentiated by the religion of the people resting there. It is also visiting non-religious cemeteries, where famous people from different spheres of life are buried (Gostkiewicz, 2012).

The mentioned types of extreme tourism have not fully exhausted the range of available types of such tourism. In the current world, only imagination limits the creation and practice of sports and tourism.

Adventure tourism

The essence of adventure tourism

One of the more and more popular forms of contemporary tourism is adventure tourism. According to the Canadian Tourism Commission (Fennell, 2000), it is associated with a greater or lesser level of activity. Thus, it constitutes “active leisure in the open air, which takes place in unusual, exotic, remote or wild terrain” (Fennell, 2000).

Adventure tourism is an active type of tourism that must have at least two features out of three: interaction with nature, physical activity, and cultural exchange. Adventure is the very argument that motivates a tourist to take a trip; these are often distant and exotic places. Adventure tourism is outdoor recreation, and the location of the performance is non-trivial, even exotic (Durydiwka, 2003). Buckley (2006) describes adventure tourism as commercial, organized guided expeditions, during which the main attraction is an outdoor activity, strongly dependent on natural terrain conditions, requiring sports equipment, and providing excitement to the participants of the escapade. In the literature on the subject, the emotional aspect of adventure tourism, spiritual and aesthetic experiences, insight, and deepening of knowledge (insight) and skills are increasingly emphasized (Weber, 2001).

Adventure tourism is distinguished because it has a risk component in the tourist's perception, the level of effort incurred by the expedition's participants is raised, and the participants must have certain skills to make the expedition successful (Weber, 2001). Some researchers argue that it is not the risk that is the goal of adventurers but the thrill of emotions. Carter (2006) argues that adventure activity attracts people more to the search for a sense of fear than risk. Adventure tourists consciously play with their fear, engaging in forms of activity that are almost risk-free and completely safe.

Adventure tourism can be divided into active and qualified tourism. The first is a low-risk, enjoyable leisure activity that does not require special skills to practice. The latter requires appropriate skills and preparation, the ability to use tourist facilities, and behave in a natural environment. The tourist must be psychophysically strong and resistant to hardships; often, he must also have qualifications confirmed by training. There is also a division according to tourism's difficulty, and three levels of problem can be distinguished here. The first one is low-risk tourism and includes backpacking, tourist tramping, Nordic walking, and diving. The second one is medium-risk tourism, which includes skiing and snowboarding, mountain biking, longboarding, rock climbing, speleology, slackline, and motocross. The third group is high-risk or extreme sports - base jumping, downhill, mountaineering, skydiving, urban climbing, and freeriding.

Nowadays, the share of tourism as an economic branch is increasing. People still feel the need to spend time actively; they need a change from everyday life, but they also perceive the need to take care of their health, and such values have active leisure. Active leisure in nature has a positive effect on physical health and a significant effect on mental health. As the research shows, the reasons prompting tourist and leisure trips are various, but the main ones are the need to experience something different, the need to change the environment and to rest outside the place of residence, to get to know nature and to observe its natural beauty. The reasons given are also resting from the noise and pollution of the city, meeting new people and developing social contacts, changing this everyday environment, and meeting the same people. The need to improve physical condition and general health is also a goal, and these reasons are often referred to as the so-called need for a reset. Preferences are slowly changing. More and more people are replacing static leisure, with the horizon observed from the position of a deck chair, with active leisure and an escape from monotony (Durydiwka, 2003).

Types of adventure tourism

The most popular types of adventure tourism in Poland include tramping, tourist trekking, and survival (Kurek et al., 2007).

Tramping is known as “cheap travel” and is most often done in small, informal groups. In English-language literature, tramping is also referred to as backpacking. The participant of which (a backpacker) usually travels individually to remote areas and uses local infrastructure.

Tourist trekking is, in turn, trips to remote, often sparsely populated areas of the world. These types of trips are more and more often the commercial offer of travel agencies, where hiking takes place under the care of specialized guides or mountaineers (Globe, 2019). On the other hand, survival is a form of adventure tourism that means a school of survival in difficult conditions of the natural environment, which has a significant educational or psychological aspect.

Ballooning is adventure tourism with a low level of difficulty and risk. It can often be a romantic trip, and an adventure trip, allowing tourists to observe nature from a different, higher perspective. Ballooning started a long time ago, on June 5, 1783, in France, by brothers Joseph and Jacques Montgolfier. The second country was Poland. On January 17, 1784, in Krakow, Cracow, scientists built a balloon that rose into the air (Opublikowano, 2017).

If safari, only Africa and the most popular countries are Tanzania and Kenya. Safari can be two versions travel by car and travel alone. During the safari, tourists can enjoy wild nature or animals in their native habitat and the beauty of nature. Tourists can also meet the people living there and see how they live (Planet Escape, 2021).

Birdwatching is a kind of tourism that does not require significant expenditure, just good binoculars, a telescope, and possibly a camera. The best places for wildlife peepers are floodplains, water bodies, agricultural areas, forest edges and woodlands, and mountainous areas. In some places, there are hiding places where one can hide and thus limit interference in the environment, resulting in excellent observations. In Poland, there are many places where people can watch the birds, like nature reserves (Polish Tourism Organization, 2021).

Backpacking is a cheap form of travel, independent of commercial tourism. Backpacking is nothing but traveling on one's own; it is appreciated by people who prefer to walk their own paths rather than submit to the plan of an organized tour.

Travelers in this way only take a backpack with them because it is very convenient with their way of traveling. The most popular destinations are India, Georgia, Uganda, Argentina, Ireland, and Bolivia are appealing countries because of their wonderful views, delicious food, and friendly locals.

Rafting is a little more demanding and no longer available to everyone, but thanks to its six difficulty levels, it can also be classified as adventure tourism. It is a rafting trip down a rushing mountain river in a pontoon or a raft, and a group of several

people can take part in it. In Poland, rafting on the Dunajec River dates back more than 200 years. The whole family can participate in such an attraction, there are no age limits here, and during the relaxation, you can admire the beauty of Podhale nature (Rivent, 2021).

The main difference between water skiing and wakeboarding is the number of boards one swims on. The first one, water skiing, is swimming on two boards using a particular lift or a motorboat pulling the skier, and equipment is needed to set it in motion. The same equipment sets in motion and allows you to stay on the water in wakeboarding, but the difference is that you float on one board. Water skiing has its own competitions - we can mention slalom, figure skating, and distance jumping here. The first of them consists in avoiding the buoys until you make a mistake, and with each pass, you shorten the pull line and speed up the ride. The second competition is figure skating, which involves performing acrobatic figures, usually in the form of a choreography, which the judges score. As for the distance jumping, meters of the jump length is counted (C&A, 2021).

Ski touring in a mountain setting combines skiing and mountain winter tourism - a great way to travel in the mountains in winter. This field is distinguished by its equipment: skis here are with skis and specific bindings adapted for walking. They allow you to move quickly and approach and descend a hill or mountain. This sport can be practiced in the mountains and the country, but there are also slopes in various locations and equipment rental shops. Regardless of the chosen terrain, taking advantage of training with an instructor at the beginning of the adventure with downhill skiing is worthwhile because it can prevent unnecessary injuries (Dąbrowski, 2012).

In snowboarding, the difference is that instead of two skis, you use one board. The shape and use depend on what you want to do on the board, as well as the predisposition of the athlete. The sport originated in the U.S. in the 1960s, the shape of the boards has evolved over the years, and it's still going on because everyone selects their board. Nowadays, snowboarding is a trendy sport; practically, you can find such equipment in every rental shop.

Mountain adventure tourism can also include caving. Amateurs of this kind of tourism can choose advanced caving as extreme tourism or less advanced caving in easier caves. Those who seek wonderful views and the power of nature will surely be satisfied. Children can participate in exploring caves with low difficulty; advanced equipment is not needed, as in the case of cave mountaineering or the exploration of caves that have not been completely explored. With the increasing level of difficulty of the caves, it is necessary to invest in equipment and training to ensure the expedition's safety (Szozda, 2019).

The urbex comes from the English language and combines two words, urban and exploration. Urbex is a type of activity that involves exploring and discovering dilapidated, empty places that have been forgotten or hidden but were created by man.

In skateboarding and longboarding, the difference between the two is the board's construction and, thus, the riding capabilities. The longboard is longer and adjusts to a person's height, allowing for a better and faster ride. A longboard also must taper at the wheels, allowing for better steering; it also has larger wheels than a skateboard, contributing to cushioning and better vibration absorption. A skateboard is a better choice for freestyle riders who want to perform various tricks - a small, lightweight, and agile skateboard is good for the skate park. Slackline is walking on a rope. Slackline, a firm, reasonably comprehensive, and springy webbing, is fastened between two points.

Methods

We used the snowball questionnaire survey in the study. The questionnaire was prepared in google forms and distributed through different SNSs, emails, and other networking sites. The questionnaire contained questions about the dominant form of practicing adventure and extreme tourism, the level of interest, and the possibility of practicing it in Poland among the respondents. The survey also explored the opinions and perceptions of extreme and adventure tourism. In total, opinions were collected from 1080 anonymous respondents from various regions who declared they actively engaged in adventure tourism in and outside Poland.

Table 1: Characteristics of the study sample

Items		Percentage	Items		Percentage
Gender	Male	58.1	Income (PLN)	500-1000	12
	Female	41.9		1001-1500	11.1
Age	Up to 25	64.8		1501-2500	43.5
	26-30	30.6		2501-3500	22.2
	31-40	3.5	Education	Higher	77.8
	41-50	0.9		Secondary	17.6
	51 and over	0.2		Basic vocational	2.6
	-	-		Primary	2.0

Sources: Authors survey. n=1080 Note: 1 USD= 4.25 PLN

The authors conducted a diagnostic survey to determine the actual state of awareness of leisure activities and people's preferences regarding adventure tourism

using online social networking sites like Facebook (July 2021). Details are in Table 1. Not limiting the surveyed group in any way resulted in a wide coverage of the topic of extreme and adventure tourism and allowed learning about the opinions of customers of different ages, education, and financial status.

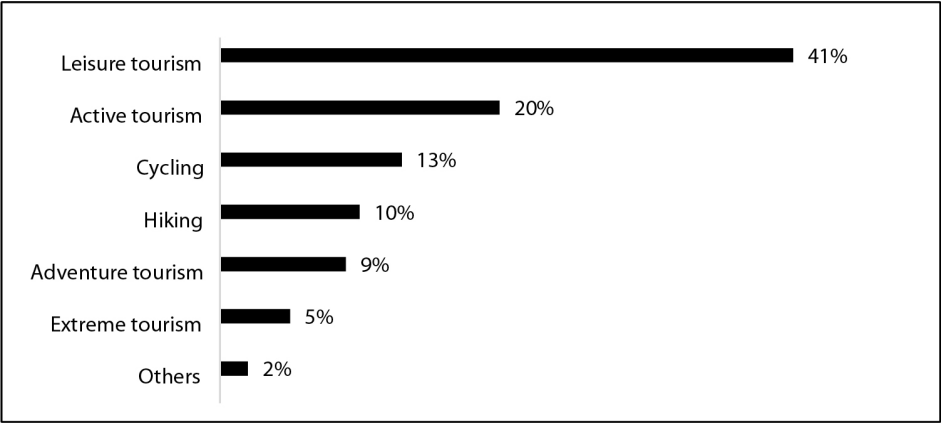
The majority of the respondents in this survey are young, less than 40 years of age, and 43.5% of respondents earn between 1500 to 2500 PLN monthly. Secondary and more-educated people majorly participated in the survey. During the online SNSs surveys, young and educated participants were frequently observed more than any others (Bhatta et al., 2022).

Results

Manners of spending leisure time by people

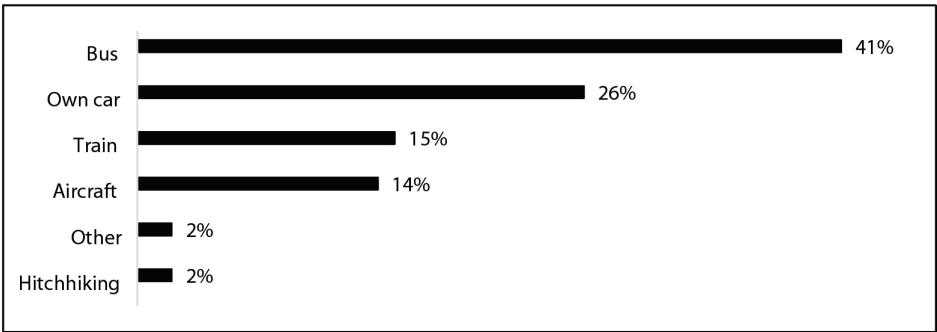
We asked people what types of tourism activities they participated in most (Figure 1). The results showed that leisure tourism is the most popular (41%), followed by active tourism (20%). This type of tourism was, therefore, the primary form of recreation. It allows both physical and mental relaxation without unnecessary effort. Cycling (13%), hiking (10%), adventure tourism (9%), and extreme tourism (5%) were the subsequent choices of Polish people. Altogether, extreme and adventure tourism was chosen by 14%.

Figure 1: Types of tourism practiced by respondents.



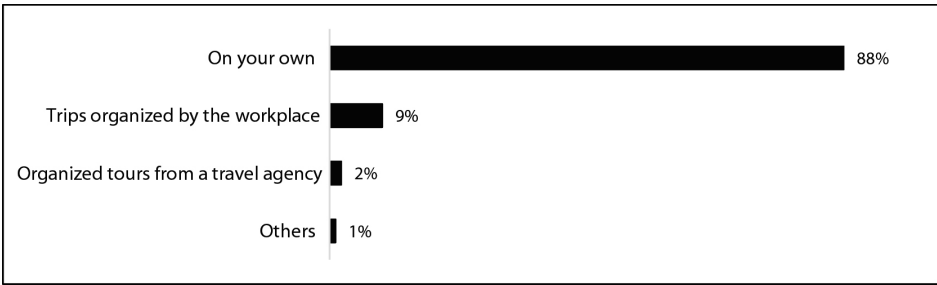
Regarding the travel modes for travel, Figure 2 shows that the majority of respondents chose coach (41%), car (26%), train (15%), and aircraft (14%) for their movement. This clarifies that the bus was the primary mode of travel. A similar result was explored in Nepal, where people use coaches to travel during COVID-19 because it is cheaper and easy to travel in a group (Bhatta et al., 2022).

Figure 2: The most frequently selected means of transportation for travel by respondents.



The organizing trips show the current trends and expectations of travelers. The vast majority of respondents (88%) answered that they organize their leisure time themselves, and 9% of people used the services of professional travel agencies (Figure 3). The remaining used other ways of organizing free time.

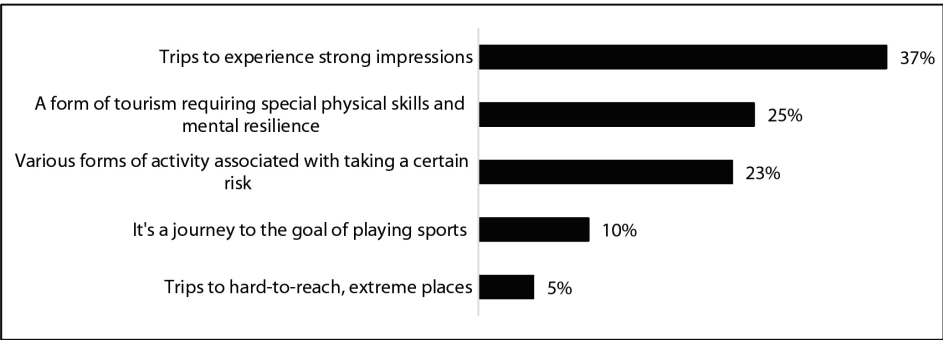
Figure 3: Ways to organize trips (overall).



Respondents' knowledge of extreme and adventure tourism

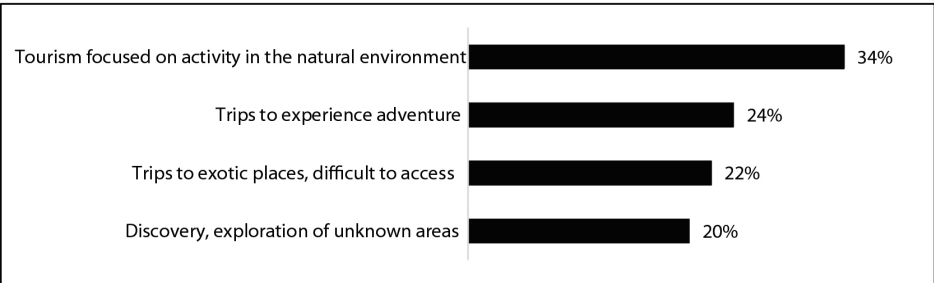
The definition of the term extreme tourism was asked, and the results are presented in Figure 4. A total of 37% of respondents identified extreme tourism with intense emotional experiences. Slightly fewer people (25%), think that extreme tourism requires special skills and extreme mental toughness, and 23% express that this type of activity requires taking great risks. Only 10% considered extreme tourism as a journey to practice sports.

Figure 4: Definition of the term “extreme tourism” among survey respondents.



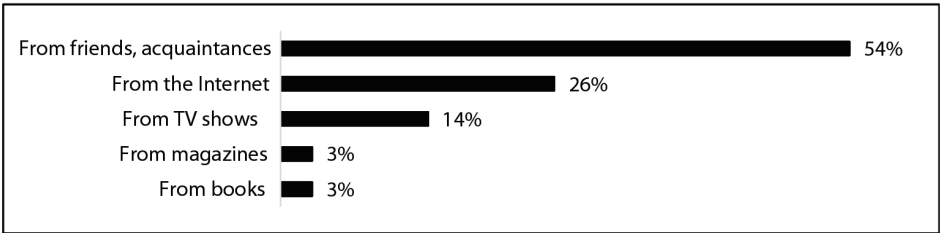
Survey participants were also asked what adventure tourism is for them (Figure 5). The opinions were not very divided. The largest portion of the participants (34%) associated with adventure tourism trips to nature, where they actively spend time. One in four respondents identified adventure tourism as a trip to experience adventure, while 22% believed that these are trips to exotic, hard-to-reach, dangerous places. The last group of respondents, accounting for 20%, saw adventure tourism as virgin exploration, exploratory journeys to undiscovered places.

Figure 5: Definition of the term “adventure tourism” among study participants.



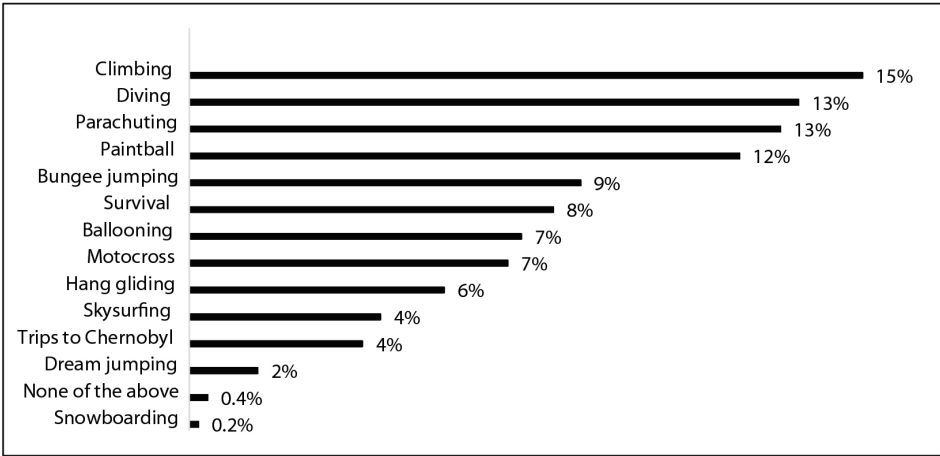
Regarding the knowledge checking of adventure and extreme tourism, we asked for the source of information (Figure 6). The most source of information was friends and acquaintances because they usually provide news from their experience in the survey. This form was indicated by 54% of the respondents. The next source of information was the Internet (26%). The third most frequently indicated source was television programs (14%). Besides the journalistic programs that show these types of tourism, there were also programs and even thematic channels from which to get knowledge. The rest of the information sources were books and magazines.

Figure 6. Sources of information when choosing a tourist destination for adventure and extreme tourism



We also asked which extreme tourism sports are known to the respondents. This question directly shows how familiar the topic of this type of tourism is to the respondents (Figure 7). We found that respondents were very knowledgeable about extreme sports, despite the multiplicity of their types. The most familiar were climbing (15%), scuba diving (13%), skydiving (13%), paintball (12%), bungee jumping (9%) and survival (8%). Overall, these are the most popular sports among extreme sports and the most frequently chosen to practice and explore.

Figure 7: Knowledge of listed extreme tourism sports among respondents. (*Respondents could indicate more than one response.)



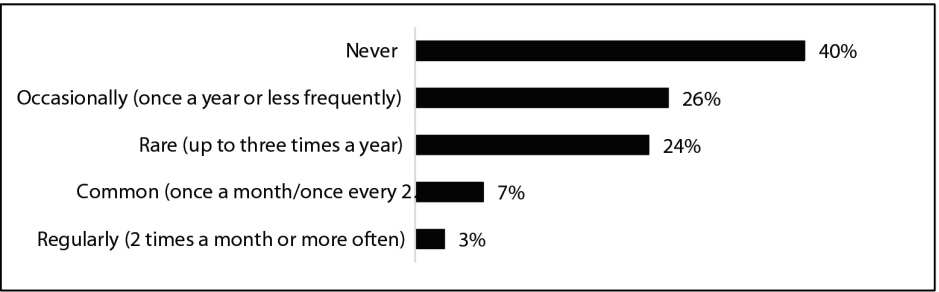
For completeness, the next question is whether the respondent knows these sports from experience, or only theoretically, or only knows of their existence. As the results show, a little over half of the respondents (52%) have done any extreme sports (Figure 8). This shows that knowledge about these sports is not only theoretical.

Figure 8: Practicing extreme sports among respondents.



About the reliability of the research is the information on how often extreme tourism is practiced by the respondents (Figure 9). It is important to show how popular extreme tourism is, and how often it fills one's free time.

Figure 9: Frequency of extreme tourism by respondents.



We found that most of the respondents did not use this form of activity (40%). Another part of the respondents practiced these kinds of sports occasionally (26%), quite rarely - once a year or even less. At the same time, 24% of respondents practiced extreme sports up to three times a year. The rest were people who enjoyed these sports quite regularly, it is quite often, even twice a month or more often. These data show that regular practices are only 10%.

Regarding personal feelings on the degrees of danger associated with extreme tourism (Figure 9), we found three types of opinions. The indications of those responding were very clear, and the majority, 83% of those asked, described it as a dangerous sport, with 20% describing the danger as definitely and 63% indicating rather dangerous. Only 17% indicated feeling negative but not definitely.

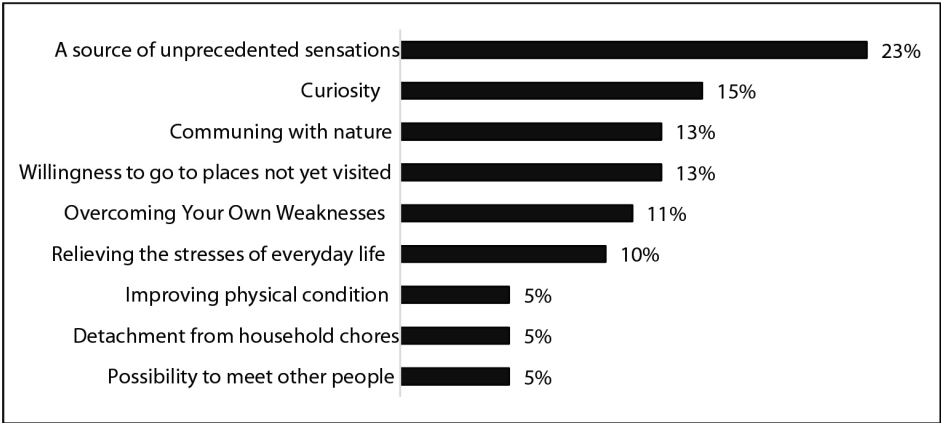
Figure 10: Recognition of extreme tourism as a dangerous type of tourism among respondents.



Motives and barriers to extreme sports participation of the surveyed people

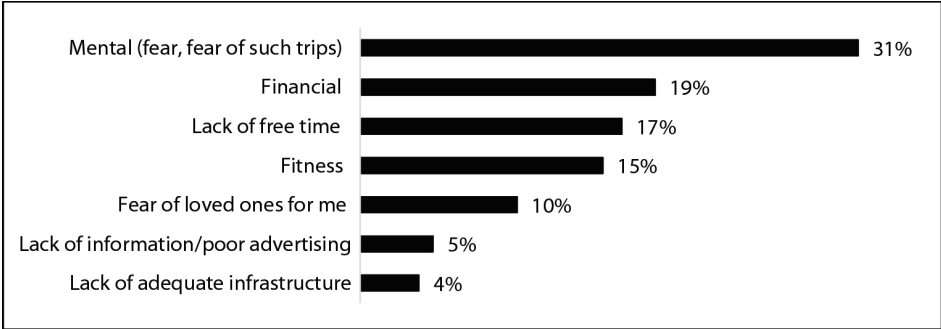
Respondents cited the arguments in Figure 11 as their motives for engaging in extreme sports.

Figure 11: Motives for participating in extreme sports. (*Could indicate more than one response.)



The most common reason, the motive that initiates the interest in extreme tourism, was chosen by 23% of respondents. Further, motives were curiosity (15%), communing with nature, and willingness to visit new destinations (13%). Other motives included: overcoming one's weaknesses (11%) and the desire to relieve the stress of everyday life (10%). The same number of responses (5% each) answered getting away from daily activities, improving physical condition, and the opportunity to meet other people, including those who share a passion.

Figure 12: The barriers of adventure travel



Discussions and conclusions

According to the research, extreme and adventure tourism are gaining more and more fans. They are more often chosen forms of activity, a form of spending free time.

The number of fans of this type of activity is growing thanks to the development of equipment, and the bases available for practicing this discipline without significance is the information that is increasingly available on the Internet. Information is also the reason why the awareness of tourists about the possibility of choosing various types of activity is growing. Based on the survey in Poland, we found that leisure tourism is mostly practiced (41%), and the extreme and adventure tourism market is 14%. Although extreme tourism has excessive potential, it is less practiced. Around 40% of respondents said they never practiced adventure tourism, and 26% said that they hardly practice once a year. Thus, tourism entrepreneurs and policymakers can promote extreme and adventure tourism in the country, focusing on young people.

The most common motive for choosing extreme and adventure tourism is curiosity and seeing these disciplines as a source of unprecedented experiences. It is also a chance for original and unforgettable experiences and individualization. As a result, extreme sports are increasingly regarded as a beautiful way of spending free time. More and more people take advantage of such an opportunity to experience the thrill. In our survey, 31% said adventure and extreme tourism are dangerous. This means people must first overcome their fear of participating in extreme and adventure tourism. Thus, the first barrier, i.e., mental fear, should be removed and ensure safety measures, short training, and awareness among the tourists. The easy equipment makes it possible for younger people to practice these kinds of tourism, and preparation of bases is also of great importance in this matter.

More and more activities are available for whole families, and the instructor's background contributes significantly to popularization. There is also a growing awareness of the fact that not much money is needed to practice these activities. While extreme tourism usually requires specific equipment, adventure tourism does not require much specific or specialized equipment. The emergence of more and different types of equipment on the market has also influenced its price, which can be found in a large range, and this allows more people to purchase it. The number of equipment rentals has also increased, which is also useful if someone wants to try different activities and choose the most suitable one.

The number of people taking advantage of this wide range of activities is growing every year, which is also a form of investment in this branch of the economy. Poland, as a country, also has a lot to offer. Thanks to its structure and the fact that it has such a diversified area, it is attractive to amateurs in many different activities. It has a base of excursions, accommodation, technical facilities, and instructors necessary for most activities. In response to demand, there are more and more places where you can indulge in your favorite activity and try completely new forms.

In this study, we are fully based on the data of young people from Poland collected through SNSs and snowball sampling from the developed countries' perspectives, and it could be more interesting if we compare the data from developed countries as well. Further, studies in different destinations would bring more significant results. These points should be considered in further studies.

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Data availability: Only integrated data will be available on request to the first author.

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**A Study on Determinants of Managerial
Communication in Hospitality Industry in Kathmandu
Valley: A Structural Equation Modelling Analysis**

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Abstract

The past half-century has seen a remarkable worldwide movement toward gender equality on many key economic and social indicators but trends have not been uniform. Increased rates of global Cultural differences both within and across countries. Multicultural issues in the workplace are more pervasive, complex, and subtle, where people from different cultural backgrounds bring different meanings, values, assumptions, and discourse styles into the workplace conversation; such differences often lead to misunderstandings and breakdowns in communication, and can threaten a common orientation to organizational goals. The major objective of this study is to analyzed factor determining managerial communication in hospitality industry. The study has accepted explanatory research design and opted five-star hotel as population sample which lies in Kathmandu valley where convenience sampling was used to select respondent. Additionally, data was collected by using structured questionnaire which was set in KOBO Toolbox and obtained data was analyzed by using descriptive and inferential analyses through MS-Excel,

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KOBO toolbox, SPSS and AMOS respectively. The result indicates that uncertainty avoidance, institutional collectivism, future orientation, performance orientation, participative, charismatic/ value-based and autonomous have significant relationship with each other which also indicates that all variables have significant influence on cultural diversity in managerial communication.

Introduction

Entrepreneurial orientation has three dimensions: Innovation, Proactiveness and Risk-taking (Covin, Jeffrey and Slevin, Dennis, 1989). Moreover, in today's globalized economy, internationalization has become a necessity for long-term survival (Calabrò, et al., 2018) for government and other industries where societal influences are stronger in emerging economies rather than in developed economies (Lammers and Garcia, 2017, Hoskisson et al., 2000; Lammers & Garcia, 2017; Devkota et al., 2020; Devkota et al., 2022). Likewise, Holtbrügge et al. (2013) revealed that the internationalization of firms requires professionals from different nations and cultures, with varying sets of values, business rules, communication styles, and not least different languages, to find ways to work together in a team more effectively. The past half-century has seen a remarkable worldwide movement toward gender equality on many key economic and social indicators but trends has not been proportionate (Sullivan et al., 2018). Moreover, increased rates of global migration, employees now commonly have multicultural backgrounds, and this is changing the workplace demographic (Szymanski, et al., 2019). Labor migrants were often disadvantaged in two of the three social categories—race, class and gender (Khattab & Hussein, 2018). There has not been a great deal of research in recent years on the effect of the business cycle on interregional migration (Biagi et al., 2018).

Cultural differences within and across countries can result in conflictive communication; therefore, communication strategies such as conflict resolution may provide an important means of bridging diverse cultural perspectives, (Ting-toomey et al., 2000; Devkota et al., 2021a; Paudel et al., 2021) equality does not always appear in the expected places. Additionally even in the present rush toward global expansion, the literature has given only limited attention to the role of culture in service marketing (Winsted, 1997; Mattila, 1999). By examining a number of hospitality and hotel association websites from around the world, eight main areas of concern for the hospitality industry were highlighted and examined in more detail. These areas included employment issues, taxation levels and environmental issues (Freire-González, 2018). The total contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP was USD8,811.0bn in 2018 (10.4% of GDP) and is expected to grow by 3.6% to USD9,126.7bn (10.4% of GDP) in 2019 (Wattanacharoensil et al., 2019).

Multicultural issues in the workplace are more pervasive, complex, and subtle, however, than simply questions about what language or languages will be spoken. Even

when people of different racial and cultural backgrounds speak the same language, they have difficulty communicating with one another (Paudel et al., 2021). People from different cultural backgrounds bring different meanings, values, assumptions, and discourse styles into the workplace conversation; such differences often lead to misunderstandings and breakdowns in communication, and can threaten a common orientation to organizational goals (Fine, 2018; Devkota et al., 2021b). Hotel guests interact not only with the hotel's physical environment and its employees but also with the hotel's other customers (Mattila 1999). The total contribution of Travel & Tourism to employment was 318,811,000 jobs in 2018 (10.0% of total employment) which is forecasted to rise by 2.9% in 2019 to 328,208,000 jobs (10.1% of total employment) (Wattanacharoensil et al., 2019). People in different cultures experience workplace bullying differently with different notions of bullying than researchers do (Lutgen-Sandvik et al., 2007; Niedl, 1996). Workplace bullying can have grave individual and organizational consequences. This study identified five coping strategies that are relatively complete and ungenerous: neglect, acquiescence, voice, exit, and retribution (NAVER). The quality of LMXs significantly affected employees' use of such coping strategies of acquiescence, exit, and retribution when subjected to workplace bullying (Lee et al., 2017).

Creating a multicultural organization, however, is not simple. Existing theories of organizing do not account for cultural differences; they assume either that those who are different will assimilate into the existing organizational culture or that their common interests will allow them to form political alliances with others (Paudel et al., 2021). Fine (2018) discussed that diversity among workforce results in positive affects like creativity, problem solving, innovation but on other hand diversity may result in some negative aspects like increasing conflicts, decreasing group performance and decreasing group cohesiveness (Saxena, 2014). This study aims to determine cultural diversity in managerial communication by identifying the current situation and factors that determine managerial communication as well as challenges faced by managers in hospitality sector inside Kathmandu Valley.

Research methods

Theoretical framework

In cross-cultural adaptation, Gudykunst and Ge (1988) through continuous interaction with the various aspects of the cultural environment where the individual's internal system undergoes a progression of quantitative and qualitative changes by integrating culturally acceptable concepts, attitudes, and actions; thus the individual becomes fit to live in the company of others (Young Yun Kim, 2001). Moreover, individuals enter an unfamiliar culture with the cultural communication competence that they internalized cultural imprinting that governs individuals' identity and

behavior remains largely unrecognized, unquestioned, and unchallenged until they encounter people with different cultural attributes (Gudykunst and Ge, 1988). Similarly, accommodation theory- Giles et al. (1993) focused on both interpersonal and intergroup communication which seeks to explain and predict why, when, and how people adjust their communicative behavior during social interaction, and what social consequences result from those adjustments. Moreover, Dragojevic et al. (2016) revealed the core concepts and relationships invoked by accommodation theory are available for addressing altogether pragmatic concerns - in particular, understanding relational alternatives, development, difficulties, and outcomes in medical, clinical, and caring settings; strategic options in legal discourse; the alignment of radio broadcasters with their audiences; processes of second- language learning and of acculturation in an interethnic context; and language switching in organizational settings in a bilingual community(White, et al., 1993),

Co-culture Theory Orbe, (1998) have ability to comprehend one concept is contingent on under- standing its relationship with the one and other group member (Orbe, 1998). In another word, co-culture theory focuses on the communication practices of those individuals who are part of underrepresented groups in any particular society. Co-cultural communication refers to interactions between underrepresented and dominant group members, as well as interactions within co-cultural groups (Orbe, 2017). Co-culture theory provides insight into the process that co-cultural group members use to negotiate their “cultural differentness” with others (with others both like, and unlike, themselves). For researchers interested in the experiences of underrepresented group members, co-cultural theorizing offers a framework to understand the process by which individuals come to select how they are going to interact with others in any given specific context (Orbe and Robertsc, 2012). The communication of people marginalized in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, disability, and sexual orientation. One core value of the theory is the agency that it provides for co-cultural group members: Instances of co-cultural communication are defined from the perspective of the underrepresented group members themselves.

The convergence model of communication-Kincaid (1979) suggested that individuals who share information will, over time, tend to converge toward one another, and thus become more uniform. Kincaid find the 7 biases of communication. Kincaid view the communication is linear, sources of bias based on dependency rather than relationship, Karlfried Knapp defines it as the interpersonal interaction between members of groups that differ from each other in respect to the knowledge shared by their members and their linguistic forms of symbolic behavior. positive expectancy violations can be more efficacious than positive expectancy confirmations when the objective is to enhance self-image, develop favorable interpersonal relationships, create a smooth flowing conversation, or influence another. But will violations be

equally efficacious in all cultures or in intercultural interchange (Burgoon, Hubbard and Gudykunst, 2005; Kharel et al., 2022).

The contingency theory of organizations is a major theoretical lens used to view organizations. Contingency theory contains much of importance in the history of organizational science (Donaldson, 2000). The contingency approach holds that for an organization to be effective, there has to be goodness of fit between its structure and environment. The organization and its managers, designers or owners are constrained by their environment in adopting certain structural designs. Their scope of choice is limited in that uncertain, volatile and complex environments require an 'organic', decentralized and informal structure. In contrast, predictable, static and simple environments call for a more 'mechanistic', centralized and highly formal structure. Lack of congruence or fit will result in reduced performance (Pennings, 1987). Face Negotiation Theory, Ting-Toomey (1998) states the cultural differences in the society shape the responses to conflicts in different societies. The theory holds up the idea of maintaining a face according to their cultures. The face is nothing but an identity, the persona we keep up in the society-a public image. As face represents oneself in the society, the people display an attitude which is desirable to them. There are certain factors in negotiating face (Bargiela-Chiappini and Haugh, 2009). McClelland's theory of human motivation and economic development McClelland (1953) the humane, power distance, and performance orientation of cultures are conceptually analogous to the affiliative, power, and achievement motives in McClelland's theory of human motivation. Implicit motivation theory is a theory of nonconscious motives originally advanced (McClelland et al., 1987). In its most general form, the theory asserts that the essential nature of long-term and complex human motivation can be understood in terms of three implicit (nonconscious) motives: achievement, affiliation, and power (social influence). This theory also identifies three explicit (conscious) motives related to achievement, affiliation, and power that are predictive of short-term, noncomplex behavior. Value belief theory Hofstede (2001) and Triandis (2001) social system can exist only because human behavior is not random but to some extent predictable (Hofstede, 2001) change in the ecology result in change in personality (Hofstede, 2001; Triandis, 2001) in the center system of society norms consisting of the value system, share by major group in the population (Hofstede, 2001).

Variables and hypothesis

Based on the basis of theories and conceptual model defined in the previous chapter variables are defined for our research. Here the Societal Cultural Values & Practices is a independent, Organizational Culture values & Practices Culturally Endorsed Implicit Leadership Theories is an independent, Strategic Organizational Contingencies is a moderator, Actual Leader Attributes & Behaviors is independent,

Culturally Endorsed Implicit Leadership Theories is moderator, Leader Acceptance and Leader Effectiveness is a dependent (see table 1).

Table 1: Variable definitions

S. No	Types	Construct	Observed Variables
1	Independent	Societal Cultural Values & Practices	Uncertainty avoidance
			power distance
			in-Group Collectivism
2	Independent	Organizational Culture values & Practices Culturally Endorsed Implicit Leadership Theories	Assertiveness
			Gender Egalitarianism
			Institutional Collectivism
3	Moderator	Strategic Organizational Contingencies	Humane-Oriented
			Future Orientation
			Performance Orientation
4	Independent	Actual Leader Attributes & Behaviors	Team-Oriented
5	Moderator	Culturally Endorsed Implicit Leadership Theories	Self-protective
			Participative
6	Dependent	Leader Acceptance	Charismatic/Value-Based
7	Dependent	Leader Effectiveness	Humane-Oriented
			Autonomous

Societal cultural values & practices: Although societal culture has a direct impact on organizational culture, over time, organizational cultures influence the broader societal culture. Collective meaning that results from the dominant cultural values, beliefs, assumptions, and implicit motives endorsed by societal culture results in common leadership and implicit organization theories held by members of the culture.

- H₀₁:** Societal cultural norms of shared values and practices affect has significant impact on leaders' behavior.
- H₀₂:** Societal cultural values and practices has significant impact on organizational culture and practices.
- H₀₃:** Organizational culture and practices has significant influence on the culturally Endorsed Implicit Leadership Theories

Organizational culture values & practices (Culturally endorsed implicit leadership theories): Over time, founders and subsequent leaders in organizations respond to the

organizational culture and alter their behaviors and leader styles accordingly.

H₀₄: Organizational culture and practices has significant impact on leaders' behavior.

Strategic organizational contingencies: Organizational practices are largely directed toward meeting the requirements imposed by organizational.

H₀₅: Strategic organizational contingencies (organizational environment, size, and technology) has significant impact on organizational form, culture, and practices.

H₀₆: Strategic organizational contingencies have significant impact on leader attributes and behavior

Actual leader attributes & behaviors: Leaders are selected to meet the requirements of organizational contingencies. They will then continue to adjust behavior on the basis of these contingencies

H₀₇: Leadership has significant impact on organizational form, culture, and practice.

Culturally endorsed implicit leadership theories: CLTs and leader attributes and behaviors. Accordingly, leader attributes and behaviors that are congruent with CLTs will be more accepted than leader attributes and behaviors that are not congruent with CLTs.

H₀₈: Culturally Endorsed Implicit Leadership Theories has significant impact on leader attributes and behaviors.

Leader acceptance: Leaders who are not accepted by members of their organization will find it more difficult and arduous to influence these members than leaders who are accepted.

H₉: Acceptance of the leader by followers has significant impact on leader effectiveness

Leader effectiveness: Effective leaders will, over time, demonstrate their competence by being effective. Demonstration of competence will change attitudes of some of the organizational members toward the leader and result in increased acceptance of the leader. Further, over time, followers who do not accept the leader will either be dismissed or will leave their organization voluntarily.

H₁₀: Leader effectiveness has significant impact on strategic organizational contingencies.

H₁₁: Leader effectiveness has significant impact on leader acceptance.

Study area and population

This study used explanatory research design. Nepal has 77 districts, and from the 77 district, three districts encompass in Kathmandu valley (Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur) located in Bagmati province were taken for the test place of this studies. Kathmandu Valley lies at 1,300 hundred meters above sea level and is positioned amongst latitudes 27°32'13" and 27° forty-nine'10" north and longitudes 85°11'31" and 85°31'38" east. Its three districts, Kathmandu, Lalitpur, and Bhaktapur, cowl a place of 899 square kilometers, while the vicinity of the valley as an entire is 665 rectangular kilometers (Shakya et al., 2021). The valley encloses the whole region of Bhaktapur district, 85% of Kathmandu district and 50% of Lalitpur district. The target populations were people who are working in 5 start hotels in Kathmandu Valley. According the Kathmandu post 2019/02/22 Number of five-star hotels in Nepal reaches 12. According to HAN number of 5-star hotel in Kathmandu Valley is 7. For the research purpose we take 5-star hotels located within the Kathmandu valley (Paudel et al., 2021; Jha & Rijal, 2022).

Research instruments and procedure for data collection

This research relied on primary data collection method where both qualitative and quantitative data are available. Observation, expert opinion, survey questionnaire and reports are taken as the instruments for the research. To be clear on managerial communication and culture diversity researcher have visited to experts. Structured questionnaire is developed for the survey which covered all the four objectives of the study. Pre-test was done with 20 respondents (5% of population determined) to verify whether the given questions provide sufficient information or not. Using convenience sampling the 400 household were selected for data collection. Based on the sample size of 167 respondent were selected for data collection. It took three months to collect the data. Due to COVID-19 it was difficult to reach to every manager and get easy access to one-to-one interview and questioners. So, the data were collected from email, telephone interview and face to face interaction with respondent. Some of the respondent also provide response through online with the use of kobo tool box.

Data analysis techniques

Data Analysis technique is a strategy of placing facts and figures in order to explain and resolve the research problem. This study adopted both descriptive and inferential analyses where MS-Excel, Kobo Toolbox, charts, tables and figures were used in descriptive analysis likewise SPSS and AMOS were used to analyze data inferentially. Moreover, SEM was used to determine the structural relationship between latent variables and observed variables where EFA, CFA and Hypothesis were tested to determine the relationship among variables.

Result and analysis

The socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents among the 295 respondents' result revealed that majority (95%) of the respondents are male whose age group lies between 35-40. It indicated that male population has dominated the hospitality industries in the Kathmandu Valley and are youth. Similarly, socio-demographic characteristics also talked about the ethnicity of the respondents. The result revealed that majority of the respondents are Chhetri (31.52%) followed by Brahman (30.91%) are from the Bagmati Province. It indicates that the study area i.e. Kathmandu has more Chhetri ethnicity people in the Hospitality sector. Additionally, the study revealed that majority of the respondent from any ethnic groups had not received any kinds of vocational training to improve their communication in the Hospitality Industry. This further suggests there is room for improvement in the training aspects to enhance their communication and career path in the near future.

Summary statistics

295 respondents are observed and surveyed to measure skewness and kurtosis of the data for the study. Summary statistics represents the skewness, and kurtosis of the study which describe shape characteristics of a distribution and also test the normality (Jimenez-Castillo and Hoy, 2019). To have the outcome of acceptance and unacceptance of normality, skewness and kurtosis are applied. The result indicates that the skewness lies between -3 to +3 whereas kurtosis lies between -10 to +10 respectively (Kallner, 2018). It indicates that result lies under the acceptable range. Hence, dataset set has impeccable normality distribution.

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

EFA is a measurement tool to find the relations among the variables (observed variable and underlying variables) (Nasir and Morgan, 2017). Similarly, KMO and Bartlett's test is measured to inspect sampling adequacy and correlation between the variables (Chen et al., 2003). This study result revealed, KMO value is 0.777 which is greater than 0.5 and BTS is 0.00 which is less than 0.001 which represent there is no problem of data reliability and validity. Hence, the data were correlated having good sampling adequacy. Moreover, communalities reflect the extent to which a particular variable enters into the factors (Wheeler, 2004). The communalities are all high i.e., greater than 0.5, which indicates that the extracted aspects characterize the variables well. CHO4, CHO5, FOC2, FOC4, POC1, POC3, UAC1, UAC3, ICC4, CL3, AL2, AL5, PL3, PL5, TOL2 and TOL5 are dropped during EFA as their communalities are less than 0.5.

Common method bias appears when both the independent and dependent variable is presented the same response method (Kock et al., 2021). Harman's single factor test was carried out on the study to detect biasness. Total variance was measured

through from single factor and the study erupt cumulative variance for single factor was 16.29% which is less than 50% on the dataset (Harman, 1960). Hence, the dataset has no concern of common method bias which further indicates that the further data analysis aspect can be carry out. Similarly, to measure internal consistency of all the construct, Cronbach's alpha was assessed with minimum threshold value of 0.70 and the value of Cronbach's alpha in the study was greater than 0.75. This indicates good internal consistency among variables.

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

After performing EFA in SPSS, this study uses AMOS to conduct CFA to know whether the taken data fit into the model. Therefore, CFA is used to test for the goodness of fit through 7 indicators CMIN/DF, RMR, RMSEA, GFI, IFI, TLI and CFI (Wu et al., 2009). Brown (2015), to have the good level of model fit, our result needs to accomplish the standard value. Result from table 2 achieve all the standard value/ acceptable value indicating the model fit perfectly. Therefore, the measured variable represents the constructs perfectly.

Table 2: Summary of fitness index

Index	SEM Model Value	Acceptable Value
X2	495.914	
X2/df (CMIN/DF)	1.344	<5
P-Value	0.0000	≤ 0.05
GFI	0.94	≥0.90
RMR	0.065	<0.08
IFI (NFI)	0.975	≥0.90
TLI (NNFI)	0.968	≥0.90
CFI	0.974	≥0.90
RMSEA	0.046	≤ .08

Measurement model

The measurement model is the part of the model that studies relationship between the underlying variables and their measures (Awang, 2015). Measurement model is inspected to know whether the dataset have reliability and validity. Under validity; criteria of convergent validity and discriminant validity were observed. The criterions for convergent and discriminant validity were; AVE> 0.5, CR> 0.7, CR>AVE and AVE>MSV and $\sqrt{AVE}>R$. From Table 3 the minimum value for CR, AVE and MSV were 0.928, 0.812 and 0.005. As those values meet the satisfaction level of the criterions of validity, we assured that the dataset was reliable and valid. Moreover, table 4 shows the latent construct correlation between variables.

Table 3: Reliability and validity

Construct	Indicator	Factor Loading	CR	AVE	MSV
Societal Cultural Values & Practices	CH1	.823	0.928	0.812	0.183
	CH2	.803			
	CH3	.799			
	FC1	.802	0.940	0.839	0.259
	FC3	.806			
	FC5	.834			
Strategic Organizational Contingencies	PO2	.805	0.948	0.859	0.005
	PO4	.838			
	PO5	.814			
	UC2	.751	0.963	0.867	0.049
	UC4	.731			
	UC5	.742			
Organizational Culture values & Practices	I1	.940	0.941	0.841	0.259
	I2	.932			
	I3	.944			
	I5	.947			
Leader Acceptance	CU1	.913	0.949	0.823	0.050
	CU2	.894			
	CU4	.902			
	CU5	.903			
Leader Effectiveness	AU1	.927	0.948	0.820	0.064
	AU3	.902			
	AU4	.898			
	AU6	.924			
Culturally Endorsed Implicit Leadership Theories	PC1	.955	0.938	0.836	0.183
	PC2	.936			
	PC4	.937			
Actual Leader Attributes & Behaviors	TL1	.912	0.938	0.835	0.016
	TL3	.933			
	TL5	.918			

Table 4: Latent construct correlation

SEM Correlation									
	AU	UC	PC	I	CH	FC	TL	PO	CU
AU	0.905								
UC	0.115	0.931							
PC	0.079	-0.012	0.914						
I	-0.005	-0.075	0.174	0.917					
CH	0.253	-0.014	0.428	-0.105	0.901				
FC	0.007	-0.221	-0.133	0.509	0.074	0.916			
TL	-0.125	-0.094	0.083	-0.034	-0.017	0.108	0.914		
PO	-0.008	0.049	-0.045	-0.016	-0.071	-0.029	0.069	0.927	
CU	-0.157	0.071	0.196	0.224	-0.038	0.118	0.108	-0.032	0.907

Test of hypothesis

A hypothesis is a precise, testable declaration of what the researcher(s) predict will be the effect of the study (Al Ramahi et al., 2014). We examined 12 different hypotheses through p-value which must be less than 0.05 to have the decision on acceptance and rejection of those hypothesis (Lieber and L. 1990). Table 5 showed the p-value for all hypothesis were near to 1 (***) indicating the dependent and independent variables of each hypothesis have significant relationship. Hence, we accept all hypothesis. Figure 1, shows the path analysis which was drawn from the AMOS. This shows the correlation between dependent and independent variables with latent construct as well as error terms which were indicated by 'e'.

Figure 1: Path analysis

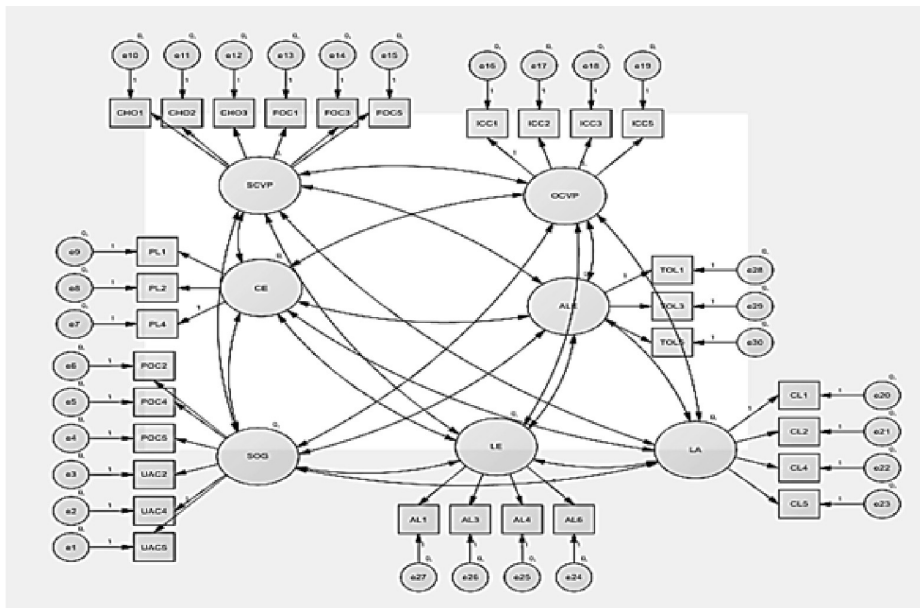


Figure 1, shows the path analysis which is done by using AMOS which shows the hypothesized relationship between variables. The path of the model is shown by arrow and oval which shows the causation and helps to determine regression weight as well as goodness of fit statistics in order to see the fitting of the model

Table 5: Hypotheses testing result

Hypothesis	P	Remarks
H ₀₁ SCVP→ALE	***	Significance
H ₀₂ SCVP →OCVP	***	Significance
H ₀₃ OCVP →CE	***	Significance
H ₀₄ OCVP →ALE	***	Significance
H ₀₅ SOG→OCVP	***	Significance
H ₀₆ SOG →ALE	***	Significance
H ₀₇ ALE→OCVP	***	Significance
H ₀₈ CE→ALE	***	Significance
H ₀₉ ALE→LE	***	Significance
H ₁₀ LE→SOG	***	Significance
H ₁₁ LE→LA	***	Significance

Mediation analysis

Mediation model represents the consideration of how a third variable influences the relation between two different variables (MacKenzie and Lutz, 1989). To measure the mediation, SOBEL testis performed. Mediation analysis is analyzed to check the indirect relationship between the variables i.e., independent variable; Social Cultural Value and Practices (SCVP), Organizational Culture values & Practices (OCVP), Actual Leader Attributes & Behaviors (ALE), mediating variable; Culturally Endorsed implicit leadership (PC), Strategic organization contingencies (PO) and dependent variable; Leadership acceptance (CU). PC is a mediating variable of SCVP, OCVP and ALE whereas PO is also a mediating variable of SCVP, OCVP and ALE as shown in table 5. Sobel test was conduct to examine effect on the relationship through the p-value criteria which must be less than 0.05. Our result for relationships were satisfied as the p-value were; $SCVP \rightarrow PC \rightarrow CU = 0.000$ ($a=0.52$, $b=0.763$), $SCVP \rightarrow PO \rightarrow CU = 0.000$ ($a=0.362$, $b=0.263$), $OCVP \rightarrow PC \rightarrow CU=0.000$ ($a=0.732$, $b=0.763$), $OCVP \rightarrow PO \rightarrow CU= 0.000$ ($a=0.70$, $b=0.263$), $ALE \rightarrow PC \rightarrow CU=0.000$ ($a=0.712$, $b=0.763$), $ALE \rightarrow PO \rightarrow CU=0.000$ ($a=0.326$, $b=0.263$). Hence, the dependent and independent variable were affected mediating variable indicating the variables have indirect relationship.

Table 5: Result of indirect effect and sobel test examining the mediating relationship

Relations			Mediating Effect		Test Statistic	p-value
			B	s_b		
SCVP→PC→CU	A	0.52	0.763	0.067	8.2368	0.00***
	s_a	0.089				
SCVP→PO→CU	A	0.362	0.263	0.063	5.2766	0.00***
	s_a	0.063				
OCVP→PC→CU	A	0.732	0.763	0.067	6.1764	0.00***
	s_a	0.066				
OCVP→PO→CU	A	0.70	0.263	0.083	4.7666	0.00***
	s_a	0.066				
ALE→PC→CU	A	0.712	0.763	0.06	8.1620	0.00***
	s_a	0.069				
ALE→PO→CU	A	0.326	0.263	0.083	7.2724	0.00***
	s_a	0.069				

Discussion

Inferential analysis which was conducted in SPSS and AMOS by using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) as analysis tool. Hypothesis testing of the selected construct was made which shows significant relation among selected variables. The supported hypothesis 1 shows that there is significant relationship between societal cultural norms of shared values and practices on leaders' behavior. Similarly, hypothesis 2 reveals that societal cultural values and practices affect organizational culture and practices. Hofstede's (2001) also highlights the relationship between culture and leadership practices with the help of several instances from diverse societies to show that there is effect of culture on leadership concepts and practices which is similar to this study. Walker and Dimmock (2002) also analyzed the impact of culture on leadership theory and practice in education. They showed that the notion of educational leadership is formed against the backdrop of the values, patterns of behavior and ideologies of a community.

Hypothesis 3 supported means that organizational culture and practices influence the culturally endorsed implicit leadership theories which is supported by the study by Lord & Maher (1991). In their study they revealed that societal culture and organizational form, culture and practice influence the process by which people come to share implicit theories of leadership. Hypothesis 4 is also supported that state that organizational culture and practices also affect leaders' behavior. The supported hypothesis 5 and 6 stated that Strategic organizational contingencies (organizational environment, size, and technology) affect organizational form, culture, and practices and Strategic organizational contingencies affect leader attributes and behavior respectively. The hypothesis 5 is supported by the study of Lawrence & Lorsch, (1967) which states that organizational contingencies imposed in the organization depends on the Organizational practices. Furthermore, the hypothesis 6 is supported by House et al., (2002) with their finding of stating the presence of impact of Strategic organizational contingencies on leader attributes and behavior. It revealed that Leaders are selected and they adjust their behaviors to meet the requirements of organizational contingencies. The hypothesis 7 is supported which shows that leadership affects organizational form, culture, and practice.

Supported hypothesis 8 revealed that culturally endorsed implicit leadership theories affects leader attributes and behaviors. Bullough et al., (2015)'s leadership theory to women's leadership also supports this finding as it shows the importance of the Culturally Endorsed Implicit Leadership Theories (CLTs), designed by the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) Research Program (Dorfman et al., 2004) in the context of women's political and business leadership roles in society. The hypothesis 9 states that the acceptance of the leader by followers facilitates leaders' effectiveness. This explains that if Leaders are not accepted then

they won't be able to influence subordinates. Similarly, hypothesis 10 states that Leader effectiveness has impact on strategic organizational contingencies and hypothesis 11 states that Leader effectiveness, over time, will increase leader acceptance. This implies that Leaders who focus and manage the organizational contingencies will be able to influence subordinates and hence will be more effective than leaders who do not.

Conclusion

The study aims to study on cultural diversity in managerial communication in Hospitality Industry in Kathmandu Valley. Societal Cultural Values & Practices, Organizational Culture values & Practices, Strategic Organizational Contingencies, Actual Leader Attributes & Behaviors, Culturally Endorsed Implicit Leadership Theories and Leader Acceptance and Leader Effectiveness were identified variable after completion of conceptual model and past research paper related with the model and they were further analyzed concluding that societal cultural norms of shared values and practices affect leaders' behavior and organizational culture and practices. Organizational culture and practices also influence the Culturally Endorsed Implicit Leadership Theories and leaders' behavior. It was observed that strategic organizational contingencies (organizational environment, size, and technology) affect organizational form, culture, and practices and also affect leader attributes and behavior. This also revealed that leadership affects organizational form, culture, and practice and Culturally Endorsed Implicit Leadership Theories affects leader attributes and behaviors. It is also observed that acceptance of the leader by followers facilitates leader effectiveness. This study also concluded that leader effectiveness impact on strategic organizational contingencies and help to increase leader acceptance over time. Finally, this study aids academics in understanding the variables affecting management communication in the hospitality sector and aids in resolving issues relating to cultural diversity in managerial communication in the Kathmandu Valley hospitality sector, among other things.

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Approaches to Local Community Participation in Tourism Development

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Article

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Abstract

Tourism has gradually developed in the wave of human civilization. However, it has not reached the level of Sustainable Tourism Development (STD). This paper is trying to explore its underneath causes by applying the desk study research method. This study has underscored two major reasons for no confirmation of STD to date. The first one is the misuse of Local Community Participation (LCP) instead of assuring the sovereign role of locals for their participation from tourism planning to its execution. The second one is 'no successful attempts of the researchers to make holistic planning from different approaches given by the researchers in the 'tourism and travel'. Furthermore, in the developing economy where good governance is hard to realize, even the sectoral planning of each economic sector is to be made and implemented as a backup plan.

Keywords

*Evolution
of tourism,
sustainable
tourism
development,
local community
participation,
hoistic planning*

Introduction

A Local Community (LC) refers to a group of interacting people living in a common location. Whereas, LCP has posed as thought or action taken by a person of the community to contribute to achieving common goals and be responsible for the efforts made (Sastropetro, 1986; in Idris et al., 2021). The LCP also comprises the participation of individuals or groups, both: material and non-material forms (Sulistiyorini, 2015; in Idris et al.,

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2021). Broadly, LC is the group of people who live in a particular geography, share their interests and attempt to strengthen their relations to uphold community-based natural resource management (Stone & Stone, 2020). Whereas, LCP is the provision of assuring material, institutional and economic gains that will be sustained for broad human development focusing on the whole population of the disadvantaged locality (Chanan, 1999).

In addition, the LCP in tourism refers to the involvement of the community in the process of identifying problems and potentialities of tourism in their environment and implementing the solutions and potentialities being able to evaluate them (Ramadhan, 2014; in Idris et al., 2021). In this process, three elements: forms of responsibility, a willingness to contribute to achieving the common goals, and a willingness to be involved in groups posit for the LCP in tourism (Sulistiyaningrum, 2015; in Idris et al., 2021). The LCP in tourism has posed in the dimensions of 1) idea, ideas, or constructive thinking; 2) energy to achieve the success of a plan and 3) material of a person or group in the form of money, property, or goods to achieve the joint efforts for Tourism Development (TD) (Sastropoetro, 1986; in Idris et al., 2021).

However, tourism in integrated form is the economic activity related to travel from one place to another. Different segments of the community have been developing it since the ancient period. It has embraced commercial purposes since the 18th century. The innovation and successful use of jet engines in the 20th-century tourists' journey lifted from 'pedestrianism' to flying, and from plotting one's route to being 'packaged' into a controlled itinerary (Walton, 2009). Thanks to the contributors in tourism literature and practitioners deploying this literature along with their innovations, from which tourism has posed the most important global economic sector, at present. In 2019, travel and tourism posed one of the world's largest sectors, accounting for 10.4% of global GDP (USD 9.2 trillion), 10.6% of all jobs (334 million), and was responsible for creating one in four of all new jobs across the world. Moreover, international visitor spending amounted to USD 1.7 trillion (6.8% of total exports, 27.4% of global services exports) (WTTC, 2021).

Meanwhile, Chanan (1999) and Arnstein (1969, 1975) have developed theories of LCP. The practical conversion of their theories can be perceived as the tools for transforming TD into STDs. Here, STD refers to the management of the needs of present tourists and hosts protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future (UNWTO, 1994; in Bhandari, 2022). Furthermore, a cooperative approach, models based on the types of the tourism industry, and predictable theories have portrayed the relationship between the LCP and TD for the ways of STD.

With the mentioned introduction, this paper has the objectives of answering- 1) what important literature exists in the approaches of LCP that help TD and 2)

why these approaches have not resulted yet to convert TD into STD. In this regard, the paper has set the specific objective to make a literature survey of approaches on how LCP transforms TD into STD. For achieving these objectives the discourse is forwarded on subtitles of methodology, result and discussion, and conclusions.

Methodology

The desk study method has been deployed to fulfill the set objectives. Many research articles/chapters of journals and books have been retrieved from the google scholar engine. Fifty-one of them from 29 articles and 5 books have been focused to synthesize.

Result and discussion

Evolution of tourism

Practically, tourism was blowing in the ancient period of history. It evolved into modern tourism in the 18th century. During the century, modern tourism has been defined (focus solely on distance traveled, or length of time spent away from home, for simplified purposes ascribed to journeys), grown, and spread. It was forwarded including older activities involving commercial transactions based on travel, hospitality, and entertainment. It is carried out whether in Europe or 'medieval' China or Japan and along with extending to awareness of tourism-related aspects of pilgrimage or trade.

Walton (2009) has assured that Tourism was predicated on transport, innovation, and overcoming hurdles. The innovation and successful use of jet engines in the 20th-century tourists' journey could embrace from 'pedestrianism' to flying; from one's route to a 'packaged' and controlled itinerary, and from walking to commercial aviation within a single composite journey. There was the replacement of sail by steam on tourist sea routes and then increasing availability of rail transport. The railway journey 'framed' the landscape in new ways without alienating the leisure traveler from the changing external environment. Motorists often followed signposted routes to established destinations. (pp. 784, 788)

From the onset of the 21st century, tourism has evolved as a competitive product that underpins planning and collaboration. In the meantime, surpassing the complications that arise from females' services, the identification of tourist destinations as feminine services were conventionally identified as female virtues (comfort, welcome, solace, courtesy, deference). The issues of ethnicity that affected both tourists and labor forces were locally adapted, appropriated, and represented as tourist attractions. A process that compromised notions of authenticity as soon as the activity becomes self-conscious or profit-oriented, generating the invention or renegotiating of traditions.

Even the next challenge - the traditionalists' perception of inherently subversive aspects of the inbound tourists who were trapped by wealth and presented assorted opportunities to the local and migrant populations was potentially destabilized through strict regulation and control, especially by local government. Tourism history, delineating as it does a set of phenomena that were heavily dependent on changing aesthetics and directions of the 'gaze', had also to embrace the 'visual turn', including architecture and design. Further, it was applied to the regeneration of resort environments that have acquired a history and 'industrial archaeology' of their own, and to the uses of history to inform new developments in ways that enhanced distinctiveness. (Walton, 2009, pp. 789-790)

Mise (2019) has developed spatial models in tourism planning that are based on the principles of social justice, equity, spatial democracy, and sustainability. These models skewed tourism outcomes as their planning tools are focused on the nature of planning processes and closely related to the field of decision theory, systems theory, and policy analysis. (pp. 109-110)

These theories and policies also attempt to be holistic or simply present one aspect of a larger system. In conclusion, the theme park notion is another evolution of tourism in the course of spatial manifestation. This theme park concept links urban and rural tourism through three dialects. The first dialectic - urban planning vs rural space has endowed the planning to integrate urban area (to extend) and rural area (towards the diversities of activities) where highway access and proximity to urban centers. The space of the theme park is designed to develop a harmonious and safe universe. It accommodates a density of visitors who engage in ambulatory practices, consumption, and leisure. Similarly, the second dialectic plans for separation (from its surroundings) vs dependence (of urban for supplies, workforce, and infrastructure). The final dialectic guides - imaginary narrative (whole material set by theme park) vs local territorial narratives (transform a marginal space, with low identity, into the development of tourism territory through key elements such as landscapes, infrastructure, and activities. (Lapointe, 2017, pp. 167-169)

Damanik and Yusuf (2021) also synthesized the importance of a holistic view in the study site of Borobudur Temple, Indonesia.

Tourism management has to access tourists' perceived value based on their (tourists) contribution to tourism development. For it, the visitors' management synchronizes all elements of a tourist destination, like, attractions, amenities, access, marketing, prices, reputation, and control of visitors' crowding, and behavior. (pp. 11-12)

In the case of theoretical contribution, the global sustainable tourism council [GSTC], (2019) has formally adopted the GSTC destination criteria-2019 required for the STD of a tourist destination.

It has developed a guideline that has encompassed 173 indicators to measure the sustainability of the destination. These criteria concern the management responsibility; setting the management strategy and action plan; monitoring and reporting of the management responsibility, strategy, and action; stakeholder engagement; managing pressure and change; and delivering local economic benefits. They are also concerned with socio-economic sustainability; cultural sustainability; and environmental sustainability of the tourist destination. (pp. 4-17)

Similarly, Neuhofer et al. (2022) have reported that the European Parliament published a resolution in March 2021 asking the European Commission (EC) to establish a new EU strategy for sustainable and strategic tourism that is aligned with the Digital Agenda, the Green Deal, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). So as, by 2023, common guidance on developing smart and sustainable tourism strategies at a national and regional level is set. Likewise, by 2025 and 2030, a system for core sustainable tourism indicators is in place at all levels; and all national tourism strategies refer to sustainability data to inform their policies, respectively. (p. 8)

The global and regional organizations also have contributed significantly to uplifting the tourism evolution into STD. The UN has aimed at alleviating poverty, protecting the planet, and achieving prosperity for all by bringing together policy makers, academia, practitioners, and all other relevant tourism stakeholders and providing policy and strategic engagement guidelines. As a member country of the UN, Nepal also has attempted to apply and acquire the 17 SDGs proposed by the UN in 2017. In this context, K.C. et al. (2021) have asserted that Nepal has the potential to achieve several interconnected SDGs through TD primarily decent work and economic growth (SDG 8). Several other indirectly related SDGs, such as poverty reduction (SDG 1) and good health and wellbeing (SDG 3) are also achievable. They have found that the growth of the service industry and green practice in Kathmandu Valley in the gradual movement toward growth and innovation (SDG9), adoption of sustainable forms of energy (SDG 7), promotion of sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11), and support for climate action (SDG 13) as some other instances of applicability and acquisition of the SDGs through Nepalese tourism. Similarly, the contribution of nature-based tourism to life on land (SDG 15) and the positive influence on rural livelihood from promoted ecotourism in protected areas (SDG 1) are other instances. Furthermore, promoting gender equality (SDG 5), valuing local food production (SDG 2), a sense of healthy living by fostering sanitation and pollution control (SDG 6), opportunities to reduce inequality (SDG 10), and hosting community involvement in managing tourism and its benefit-sharing (SDG 16) from community-based tourism are rest of other examples of the applicability and acquisition. However, the authors have pointed out the lack of marketing of tourism

resources (SDG 8), no further development of health services (SDG 3) from the fees collected in protected areas (Pas), and jeopardization of TD by haphazardly created roads in mountainous regions (SDG 15) are three obstacles to apply and acquire the SDGs from the Nepalese tourism. No creation for better industrial skills (SDG 4), no significant realization of mentoring to local planning authorities by the federal and provincial level planning authorities to achieve tourism goals (SDG 17), and inefficient coordinating efforts to realize the full potential of the tourism industry (SDG 16), and several challenges to private sectors for constructive contribution toward growth (SDG 8) are other obstacles. (p. 9)

Theories of local community participation

LCP in the development of locality is the popular jargon even in the tourism sector. Channan(1999) and Arnstein(1969 & 1975) have made rhetorical analyses and Gaber (2019) has proved how popular the work of Arnstein guides the researchers till 2019. Cheng et al. (2019), Stone and Stone (2020) and Hasana et al. (2022) have added their contribution to this campaign. These researchers' findings and their applicability have posed the theories of LCP.

Channan(1999) states the operational meaning of community involvement in local development that, a large portion of residents: 1) are involved in their local organization, network, and initiative; 2) know what is being planned for their locality by the authorities and have a mechanism for influencing decision making; 3) are confident that the development budget is being used to best effect and the population of the locality as a whole will benefit; 4) cooperate with the official scheme, investing their voluntary labour and adapting their organizations or taking new initiatives; and 5) feel ownership of the development and therefore preserve and enhance it. In the operation of these conditions, the community involvement is far more likely to be successful in eliminating two conditions – alienated feelings of residents from their surroundings and decision making, and ignoring tendencies of the authorities to the feelings and inside knowledge of surrounding people of the development project. In addition, the local people have identified themselves with their locality. (p. 3)

Chanan has recognized a much deeper and wider phenomenon for effective community involvement as an official scheme in its baseline survey. For it, the community sector, which is constituted by a widespread of community organizations, skilled participants, well-informed representatives, and enterprising community leaders, is to be investigated. He has stressed human capital development first as the basis of community involvement and marked that otherwise, it would be like a business taking on new technology and products without retaining its workforce. In the baseline survey, the LC has posed either weak or moderate, or strength levels. There are eight strategies for the improvement of weak and moderate levels of the community

sector in the groundwork. The first four strategies are - to assess the present level of activity, discover groups and individuals ready to participate, and initiate dialogue with them; set long-term plans to identify and boost the less developed but probably more widespread groups and networks and build up their capacity; support and stimulate greater coordination between community organization for strengthening of a community sector infrastructure, and work with excluded individuals and sections of the population, build up their personal development and help them to start their activities and groups. Rest of the other four strategies are, to work with the authorities and professional agencies to help the community people; be aware of the way the impact of their services on each other at the point of delivery in the community; become more aware and supportive of community activity, and assist in its development; and to make them more receptive to community involvement, adapt their methods of decision making and service delivery. (pp. 16-17)

Chanan has concluded regarding human capital formation for CP that, the need for a core team of dedicated workers for 'fostering CP as a deliberate intervention'. The deliberate intervention is to be the assistance to the primary task from many of the professionals and specialists who are already working in the locality on social issues, whether as the local authority or other agencies. The job of the dedicated team is to combine its direct work with residents and indirect work by providing the guidance needed by other professionals and agencies. These efforts have to assert simultaneous human development at several levels. Individuals (the most priority to the most excluded ones) are to be assured of a variety of pathways that are to be provided directly by public services and the LC sector. (p. 19)

However, Chanan has diagnosed the causes of unsuccessful LCP and its solutions for LC development.

The oversimplification in setting the objectives and their operation for the schemes of the LC involvement has failed. There are six major causes. 'The authorities for the public services and agencies have tried to jump to advanced forms of involvement that are not underlying the community activity and condition'; and 'the understanding of the authorities and agencies does not perceive the base on a particular context' are two of them. The third and fourth are - 'drawing a few typical local people into the project'; and 'only a limited number of the more skilled and confident residents were able to perform the scheme'. The rest of the two causes are - 'even such residents cannot participate meaningfully unless some structures linked them to the mass of residents' and 'there is no scientific evaluation to find the causes of the ineffective LCP'. Therefore, he has suggested two models (the scheme that established general/daily community activity and determined by community involvement by the internal dynamism of the community) for establishing clear objectives for LC involvement. As the result, there would be two reciprocal benefits (the objectives of the main

agencies and departments will be fulfilled, and the development of the community can be added) to the community and the public services. Channan has suggested ten building blocks (learning, fair and just, active and organized, influential, green, safe, lasting, and caring – community; and rest two - based on the commonwealth, and a good place to live) for community development as the result of well establishing the objectives for community involvement in the development of their locality. (pp. 25-27)

Moreover, he asserts three levels of locals and required activities to uplift these levels of LCP.

Little activities are required for a new stimulus to the residents who know the importance of LCP. More awareness activities are to be provided for the residents who have a moderate level of knowledge. However, necessary activities are needed for the residents who are in the baseline, at the start of a scheme in the community. The community has to involve in the dialogue with professionals - working as the local authorities about their policies, policies' effects; assessment of local activity; potentialities and difficulties of the activity, and public agencies' assistance in the local development. As a result, a profile should be drawn up, in terms of 1) the main issues that concern local people and how these relate to the aims of the development scheme; 2) what local organizations are trying to tackle those issues, and what other community activities are taking place; 3) what proportion of local people participate in at least one activity or local organization; 4) what sort of help excluded people need to make them able to link into the activity; 5) how far the organizations cooperate and what support bodies, umbrella groups, forums or foundations, if any, are assisting community activity; and 6) how far the public services related to community needs and activities. (pp. 29-32)

Chanan elucidates six activities for 'horizontal' participation and five necessities for vertical participation of the LC.

Spreading a culture of active citizenship in the locality and making feel safe and easy for people to move around with good infrastructure even the people with disabilities - are two of them. 'Strengthening and extending training through managing volunteers, negotiating with local authorities, or dealing with charity law' are the other two. Starting new groups and financing grants for LC organizations to build up networks and infrastructure are the rest of them. - to increase the 'horizontal' participation for the development of each important factor of a community using the concurrent information fundamentals.

Similarly, involving the most organized part of the community from the start; stimulating new or better activity amongst the majority, and providing special assistance to particularly excluded people and organizations are the first three

necessities of vertical participation (mutually enhancing and reflecting the growing involvement of local people) of the LC. The rest of the others for the multi-level/vertical community participation in the development are - widening consultation and involvement by stages for the active CP and ensuring the relationship between the advanced elements and the expanding base. (pp. 33-35,37)

In his forwarded studies on CP, Chanan has summarized it as a natural phenomenon that impacts 'democracy (local decision-making)'; 'intrinsic activities (mutual aid)'; and 'employability'. Though the prime concern for the improvement of a disadvantaged locality rests on job creation, a mixture of people from all sections of the population is essential to galvanize any community activity. In these references, only sticking to the explicitly job-creating organizations in the case of minorities, and ignoring the great variety of mutual aid and mutual interest organizations that provide essential soil for the sector whole, decreases the level of LCP. (pp. 41-42)

Chanan has even studied the measurement indicators for the development schemes with CP. It is because of the European structure funds tend to include a requirement to demonstrate proper use of the money and a record of the results using the indicators. Moreover, neglect of evaluation with the scientific indicators would merely mean that the anticipated factor continues to be regarded as less tangible than others so as less important. Therefore, the 26 evaluative factors in three clusters - those to do with residents; those to do with the LC and voluntary organizations, and those to do with public authorities and agencies; have been finalized to meet the needs. (pp. 50-52)

Similarly, Arnstein (1969) has concluded the prevailing level of CP from her studies that the use of "citizen participation" has been waged largely in terms of exacerbated rhetoric and misleading euphemisms. It is analyzed with the typology of "citizen participation" in planning to contrive a ladder of eight rungs. The first - manipulation and the second - therapy (bottom rungs) have represented non-participation to the have-not citizens whereas the power holders have used these rungs to educate and cure not to disturb their hegemony of power in the planning from the side of have-nots. Higher rungs - informing and consultation are proffered by the power holders to have-nots to ensure that their views will be heeded by the powerful. The fifth-placation rung represents simply a higher-level tokenism because the ground rules allow have-nots to advise in planning, but retain the power holders in right to decide. The sixth partnership enables have-nots to negotiate and engage in trade-offs with traditional power holders, whereas, in the topmost rungs - delegated power and citizen control, have-not citizens obtain the majority of decision-making seats in the planning organization for their development. (pp. 216-223)

Arnstein(1975) proved the importance of the topmost rungs of the LCP from public participation through a demonstration project at Arthur D. Little (ADL) in Cambridge Massachusetts.

There, some members of the ADL team who were interested in experimenting with such a model in their further techno local projects; and the team of ADL, public interest group advisory panel, and national science foundation committed to carrying out the model and to opening the results to public view. (p. 73)

Regarding her studies, Gaber (2019) has concluded that Arnstein's broader citizen participation model has posited the emerging dialogue about the equalizing relationship between local government and community groups among the next generation of planners and scholars. Translation into five different languages and more than 18000 citations of her article: "A ladder for citizen participation" on google scholar list have proved it. (p. 188)

In this campaign, Hasana et al. (2022), conclude the four typologies. These typologies have revealed the evolution of LCP in ecotourism.

A passive participation in the community is the fourth typology where the native residents have under representation at all levels of ecotourism jobs. However, there is no representation of the residents in the top-level management jobs. Under the third typology - participation at the operation level - the LC cannot participate in decision-making. In the second higher typology - participation through partnership - the LC is asserted for the function as an informal organization. The apex level of LCP is the first CP typology - participation in decision-making and control. At this level, the LC is accomplished by granting full sovereignty in deciding and operating the type of tourism activities they want to initiate in their region with an opportunity to plan the ecotourism projects based on the social-political environment of that region. In these regards, only some ecotourism projects are successfully running with the full participation of LCs. Even the extent and type of CP vary in each ecotourism project depending on social, cultural, and political factors in the projects. (pp. 11-16, 20)

Scholars have researched ways to evolve LCP at the first degree of typology. In this mission, Stone and Stone (2020) have recognized six major challenges of the LCP in tourism-definition problems; multi-stakeholder participation; diversity, and heterogeneity; deficiency in business acumen; lack of income distribution plans, and reinvestment priorities; and passive community participation. For the rest of the last five challenges, the interested stakeholders have to engage in the tourism and related businesses of Community-Based Tourism (CBT). The rest of the other stakeholders are to involve in other related projects that ensure their improved livelihoods. Outer stakeholders of the CBT have to encourage inner stakeholders to overcome these first four clusters of challenges. Further, a "one - size - fits - all" model is to be avoided.

CBT implementation model, applying local specific contexts that can reconcile CBT and local context differences is to be insured. Furthermore, there must be attempts for removing cultural, administrative, political, and social barriers and differences. Providing resources that trigger the smooth implementation of CBT even taking a lengthy educational process and flexibility are also to be included. (p. 9)

There are five mechanisms to raise the level of locals for LCP in TD. The first one is 'institutions develop community sustainable tourism civic education. 'Cohesion and insight for consciousness events to promote STD attitudes' poses as the second mechanism. 'Lively public hearings should be encouraged to turn passive into active participation' and 'mechanisms for reporting environmental damage should be created' stand the third and fourth ones. 'Community environmental cleanup days should be held' is the final one to uphold the first level of LCP in tourism development. (Cheng et al., 2019, p. 15)

Theories of relation between local community participation and tourism development

Economists and researchers have developed some theories of the relation between the LCP and TD. These theories have either focus on a cooperative or participative approach or prediction.

Cooperative approach

Some of the theories of the relation between the LCP and TD have provoked cooperation among the stakeholders of tourism. This creates synergies for TD only in the application of the bottom-up approach in planning.

Effective collaborative planning between the stakeholders of ecotourism - local people, government (local, provincial, and central), and NGOs can construct, protect and promote the three foundation pillars: environment conservation, local people's participation, and profitability of the economy, particularly of the tourist destination. However, this cooperative approach failed because of the stakeholders' network that is based on informing them rather than planning and ensuring ownership. (Osman et al., 2018, p. 126)

On the other aspect, residents' positive perception of tourism impacts plays a significant mediating role in shaping the relationship between community attachment, environmental attitudes, and economic gain on support for TD. These findings support prior studies - residents who perceive more positive tourism that impacts more support for tourism development. (Gannon et al., 2021, pp. 24-26)

Furthermore, Roxas et al. (2020) have found that support, commitment, and cooperation of tourism stakeholders (international bodies, national government, local government, LC, and businesses) to boost sustainable tourism. Because

these peculiarities establish synergies among them and collaborative advantages in governing destinations. These stakeholders contribute to sustainability through regulation, conservation, and livelihood-creation and recognize tourists' active role in contributing to sustainability by strengthening regulation, conservation, and livelihood creation. Meanwhile, in terms of livelihood creation, a recalibrated, organized, and seamless value chain will allow stakeholders to partake in the benefits of STDs. By redesigning tourists' experience that increases their participation in local customs, their travel perspective can be transformed. The tourists will practice sustainable tourism through their conscious protection and accountability of environments and travel behavior like patronizing tourism activities and complying with local protocols, observing environmental ethics, respecting local communities, and taking part in the distribution of development in the communities. (pp. 395-396)

In addition to Gannon et al. and Roxas et al., Giampiccoli and Saayman(2018) have concluded that CBT is self-participatory if the participation is decided on and implemented by community members themselves. In this stage, the CBT destinations proceed ahead in TD. However, its potential is gradually jeopardized and reduced by the growth in tourism due to external businesses, the local elite, and external facilitators. It is because of, a top-down approach implementation often. Instead, CBT must benefit disadvantaged community members and bring about redistribution, social justice, and empowerment. (p. 22)

Tourism industry in local community participation approach

LC is a secondary stakeholder in tourism so it needs strong support for its sovereign role in tourism planning. Primary stakeholders are characterized by the contractual relationship with the megaproject, such as customers or suppliers, or have direct legal authority over the project like governmental organizations; whereas, secondary stakeholders do not have a formal contractual bond with the project but they influence the project in name of community groups, lobbyists, environmentalists, and other non-governmental organizations. Community is regarded as a catchall for interests that do not fit into any of the primary stakeholder's concerns; therefore, the LC is commonly classified as a secondary stakeholder (Francesco & Kate, 2017). In this reference, Tourism Social Entrepreneurship (TSE) is a more holistic strategy for sustainable community development. Because, social entrepreneurship through tourism was exemplified as a market-based strategy that can act as a viable tool for alleviating societal problems whilst maximizing the benefits, and minimizing the negative consequences. Further, in an era where innovative and sustainable tourism industry practices are continuously researched and developed. There, TSE exhibits a timely alternative to conventional tourism entrepreneurship. (Aquino et al., 2018, p. 14)

Predictable theories

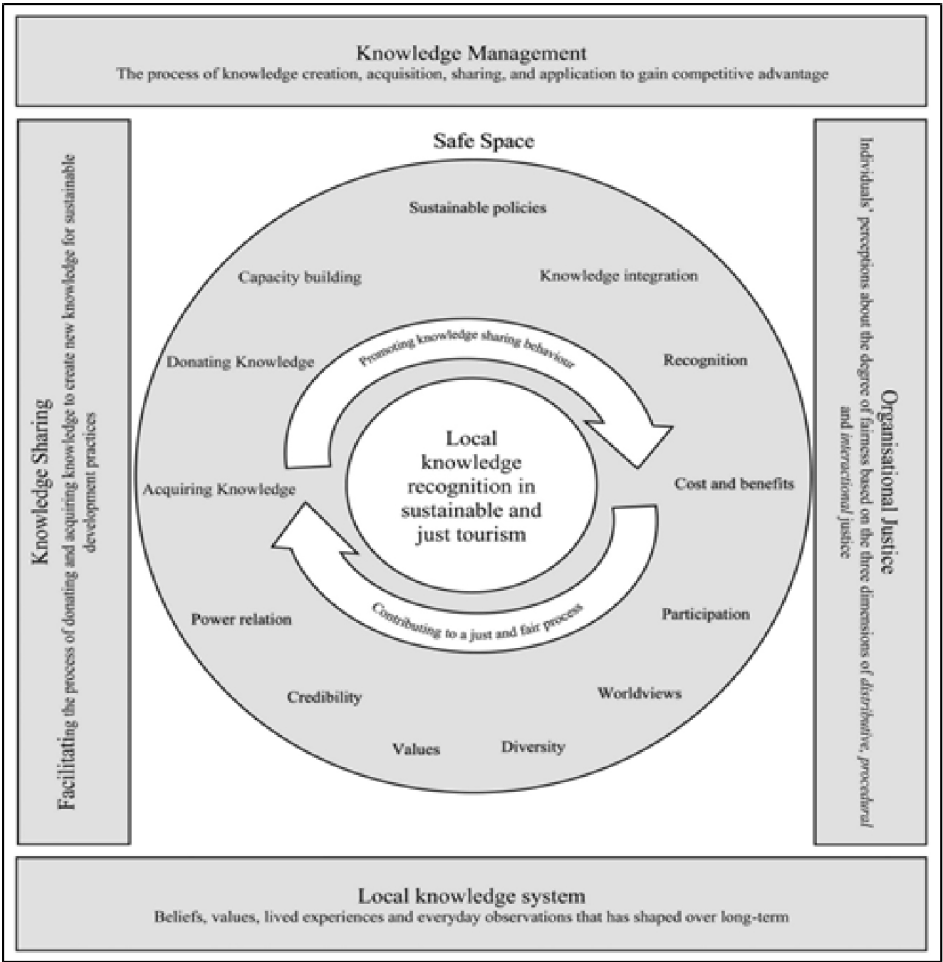
Theories of inter-disciplinary terms of ‘local knowledge sharing (KS)’ and ‘just and fair process’ in tourism, social exchange theory (SET), and theory of planned behavior (TPB) predict STD.

In course of making theory on the interdisciplinary term of local KS in the context of STD, first, Rastegar and Ruhanen(2021) synthesized the fundamentals of encouraging KS.

A useful tool in examining individuals’ KS behavior is organizational justice. Organizational justice is generally studied through three dimensions - distributive, (fairness in allocating resources recognizing the right of individuals to have their say), procedural (individuals must have “equal participation in the decision-making process”), and interactional justice (individuals’ perception of fairness in treatment and communication process). There are positive impacts of the dimension of organizational justice of KS as explained by SET (more knowledge to achieve an organizational goal motivates LC for more fair treatment). Due to the just process, the top-down procedure of tourism policy formation has converted into a bottom-up approach in policy formation. Drawing on knowledge management (KM), KS, local knowledge, and organizational justice principles, these theorists have proposed the safe space framework as depicted in figure 1. (pp. 5-6, 10)

In the framework, the first step in facilitating KS behavior among local actors is to understand local knowledge systems, which are formed by power relation, credibility, values, diversity, worldviews, participation, and three key concepts of local knowledge - dynamic, diversity, and being managed by cultural institution rules. As such, a KM system is based on the principles of justice and sustainability that respects local values and worldviews. The KM can create a safe space for KS behavior among local stakeholders that predict STDs.

Figure 1: Framework for Creating a Safe Space to Regulate Knowledge Sharing in the Local Context when Mapping STD



Note. Adopted from Rastegar and Ruhanen (2021, p. 10)

Similarly, Erul, et al. (2020) have found that the emotional solidarity scale and its factors (residents' welcoming nature, sympathetic understanding, and emotional closeness) predict residents' attitudes towards tourism development. This finding has been supported by the TPB, which shows that the more supportive one's attitudes are regarding tourism, along with the greater the social norms and perceived behavioral control, the stronger residents' behavioral intentions.

The findings of Nunkoo and Ramkissoon (2011) have also supported the theories of predictability for the relationship between community involvement and STDs.

They have found that tourism support has been influenced by perceived benefits, perceived costs, and community satisfaction; and the perceived benefits have been affected by community satisfaction, institutional trust, power to influence tourism, and neighborhood conditions.

Conclusion

Tourism has been parallelly growing with human civilization. Its development embraced the commercial form. The global economic contribution of travel and tourism has proved its economic hegemony in the world. However, this hospitality sector has come to the forefront of emitting CO₂. Furthermore, its sustainability is questioned. The models and theories developed in the late 20th and early 21st centuries have urged directly and indirectly to mitigate the negativities of tourism and transform the TD into the STD as different pieces of solutions (approaches). LCP with sovereign power from planning to execution of tourism destinations is the strongest foundation of STD. Conversely, there is a need of making an integrated plan for government, entrepreneurs, and local communities of every economy in the world to embrace the transformation of TD into STD. Mainly, political stability, abolition of corruption, transparency in all public concerns, the inclusion of tourism stakeholders from planning to the execution of the plans, and all indicators are to be based on good governance are required for the successful planning and its operation. As it is different especially in developing countries like Nepal, even sectoral plans for the federal government, entrepreneurs, and local governments are also to be made and executed. As the result, there could be progress even from a particular sector despite the deterioration persists in another or the rest of other sectors for the STD.

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Buddhism and Tourism: A General Review

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Article

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Abstract

Everyone in the world is Buddhist because every heart has love, peace, and compassion. This is a study to find out the gap in knowledge between Buddhism and tourism. Buddhism pursues happiness by using knowledge and practice to achieve mental equanimity. In Buddhism, equanimity, or peace of mind, is achieved by detaching oneself from the cycle of craving that produces suffering and travelling broadens horizons and provides patience. It relieves stress and unwinds the mind to develop tolerance and empathy. Travelling helps to discover self. It helps to be open-minded, offers break from routine life, and provides patience. It relieves stress and unwinds the mind. It discovers human strengths and weaknesses. This article examines the social connectivity between Buddhism and tourism in Nepal. Methodologically, it is desk based qualitative study. It is a general review of Buddhism and tourism. The study finds a Buddhist worldview, plays a significant role in shaping attitudes toward Buddhist tourism.

Introduction

Buddhism is a storehouse of knowledge. There are 1000 Buddhas in Buddhism which means there are thousands of bits of knowledge, philosophy, and theory (Badal, 2021, p. 27). The truth is not single as only one Buddha has told somewhere. Truth is universal. The simple rule or philosophy of love is Buddhism. Peace, love and compassion within human beings are Buddhism. The absence of anger,

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greed, theft, betrayal, and violence is Buddhism. The rational quality of love within human beings is Buddhism. Simply being a human by you is Buddhism. This transformation of human welfare is possible by the visit to Lumbini Nepal. Buddhism is not simply a religion but it is a way of life (Badal, 2021, p. 27). Buddhism and tourism: A general review is a study to find out the knowledge gap in Buddhism and tourism.

Although Sakyamuni Buddha was born in Nepal, Swayambhunath and Boudhanath in Kathmandu were established in the time of the immemorial period in the mythological age, Buddhism in Nepal started spreading since the reign of Ashoka through Indian and Tibetan missionaries around 300 BC. The Kiratas were the first people in Nepal who embraced Gautama Buddha's teachings, followed by the Lichchavis and Newar people. Buddha was born in Lumbini in an independent Shakya Kingdom. Lumbini is considered to lie in the present-day Rupandehi District, Lumbini zone of Nepal. Buddhism is the second-largest religion in Nepal. According to the 2001 census, 10.74% of Nepal's population practiced Buddhism, consisting mainly of Tibeto-Burman-speaking ethnicities, the Newar. However, in the 2011 census, Buddhists made up just 9% of the country's population. However, entire Hindus accept Buddha as the ninth incarnation of supreme lord Vishnu. Accept some orthodox Buddhists and Pandits (priests) who want to create disharmony between the Hindus and Buddhists. Lord Pashupatinath, Machchhendranath, Kumari, Swayambhunath, Boudhanath, Bramha, Tara, and Indra, are the common gods of Hindus and Buddhists. Buddhism is about love and compassion, so a real Buddhist cannot see any discrimination in Nepalese society (Acharya, 2006, p. 193).

Buddhist thought and practice of sociology uncover a rich body of interconnected writings that explore sociological theory, methods, and teachings and conceive unique ways to study sociology and social problems. Buddhist temples and their uses and social connectivity to Buddhist tourism are heavily reliant on international support and funding from external sources because creating such a place is a massive undertaking. Buddhist temples are self-financing institutions that depend directly on pilgrims for their vitality. But sometimes their presence also generates consternation among the residents, who see them as competitors in the tourism economy (Shinde, 2021, p. 1). The findings of the present study revealed there is a "complementary and positive relation between Buddhism and tourism". It means the promotion of Buddhism helps develop quality tourism and it promotes Buddhism and Buddhist sites. Buddhist temples are not only related to religion it has huge space in tourism it is also taken as Buddhist tourism sites which represent spiritually motivated travel, perhaps the oldest and most prevalent type of travel in human history.

Over the last few decades, destination marketing organizations worldwide have promoted tourism at sacred sites with the goal of diversifying their tourism product offerings, rejuvenating failing economies and generating funding for preservation

and conservation. Millions of Buddhist followers travel to at least four important pilgrimage sites related to Buddha's life and Nepal is the foundation of Buddha. Traditional Buddhist temples are designed to inspire inner and outer peace (Gellner, 2004, p. 140).

Buddhist temples, in general, are the places to learn Buddhist teaching and Buddhism in Nepal. Its architectural structures are varied according to the philosophy of Mahayana, Theravada and Vajrayana sects of Buddhism. The Buddhist temples are designed to symbolize five elements: fire, air, earth, water and wisdom. Non-Buddhists' motivations for visiting temples are an opportunity to learn about diverse cultures and lifestyles. As a diverse cultural area that attracts a large number of tourists, this study provides insights into the motivations of non-Buddhists visiting temples in Nepal (Choea et al. 2013, p. 1). Motives for Buddhist temple visitation offer a unique opportunity for investigation because the tourism motivation literature has not addressed travel to religious sites, and research on travel to religious sites has developed separately from the tourism perspective. The investigation only accounted for non-Buddhists and did not attempt to compare their motivations to those of Buddhists. Future examinations exploring the link between tourism and Buddhism might focus on the impact of Buddhist tourism on local economies, the negative cultural impacts of tourists on Buddhist sites, and the differences in visitation patterns between Buddhists and non-Buddhists (Choea et al. 2013, p. 1). Buddhist thoughts and practices directly contribute to society to maintain peace and compassion. Buddhism could offer guidelines on an understanding of social institutions, social problems, and the dynamics of social change in society. In this curious world, everyone wants profundity or wisdom, usually; the temples consist not only of their buildings but also the surrounding environment with knowledge, and philosophy for an easy life and prayer.

The main curiosity for the world about Buddhism is about four principles, they are: 1. "The Three Jewels of Consciousness- "Sila, Pargya, Samadhi", 2. "The Four Noble Truths", 3. "Eightfold Path", 4. "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence –Panchasheel". Buddhist teachings are explored in reference to their sociological theory applications. Mindfulness practices that are endemic to Buddhism are explored as tools for sociologists to consider as reflexively, develop sociological insights, and pursue social justice (Schipper, 2012, p. 203). This investigation on tourism literature is to explore the motivations of non-Buddhists, in visiting Buddhist temples. Buddhist tourism motivates non-Buddhists given the increasing popularity of spiritual activities, yoga and meditation retreats. It is as well as the exponential growth of Buddhist-themed tourism campaigns. The findings provide insights for tourism officials responsible for promoting ways to attract tourists to Buddhist temples within their respective destinations (Choea et al. 2013, p. 1).

The concept of travel in Buddhism seemed to have been initiated by the Buddha himself. Buddhism and Buddhist sites help develop quality tourism in Nepal. Pilgrimage got much importance as the Buddha treasured it as a sacred act for the followers and non-followers. The Buddha preached only about the true law of nature. He never taught Buddhism as a religion (Rai, 2020, p. 22). Tourists' desire is unique and they attract to different activities. Buddhism, Buddhist temples and their activities, lifestyles and philosophy, festivities, cultures, and spiritual activities are the center point of attraction. In the current technological busy world, people are depressed due to over-expectations and many random chronological disorders. In this context, we can highlight the related peace and spiritual tourism linked with Buddhist temples making a high increment of non-Buddhist. In this world, there are many touristic spots and countries, but tourists are choosing Nepal because of its many uniqueness. Among them, one reason is Buddhism. Next is that; Nepal is the birthplace of Lord Sakyamuni Buddha. Due to Buddhist activities, tourism and tourism products of Nepal show that there is innovation and diversity in the way the tourism product is fashioned, nurtured, and marketed (Sharma, 2007, p. 349). Although Buddhist temples provide the religious infrastructure essential for the pilgrimage economy. It continues to be perceived as an outsider by local communities and agencies that deprive them of the opportunities to engage in tourism-related occupations. Besides the religious and heritage aspects of a site, there are other supporting services that are equally crucial for a successful religious tourism economy in that particular place; every aspect of the economy is related to pilgrimage and religious tourism. It is also evident that the benefits that are realized from tourism for the local economy are much less in comparison to the revenues that are accrued by international tour operators and concerned sites.

The importance of potential visitors' psychological needs, for example, 'escape' or 'off the beaten path'. In the current study, these reasons entail travel motivated by cerebrally enriching purposes, as well as the need to seek a tranquil and serene environment that induces relaxation (Choea, Blazeyb & Mitasc, 2013, p. 1). The world is living in a miserable condition due to ignorance, lack of awareness, hatred, grievances, quarrels, and poverty. To get rid of such an evil situation, people love traveling to heal the disturbances of the mind. Buddhism adds its psychology of peace and compassion to travelers through yoga and meditation practiced by Buddha in the cool Himalayan country.

What are the uses and how do Buddhism and Buddhist temples connect to the society of Nepal and how can be directly linked with tourism? What are the opportunities, challenges? And socio-economic status due to Buddhism in the tourism sectors of Nepal?

The aim of this research is to investigate the social connectivity of Buddhism and tourism and their interconnection to society.

To find out the social connectivity of Buddhism and Buddhist temples of Nepal and how it can be directly linked with tourism. To explore the opportunities, challenges, and socio-economic status due to Buddhism in the tourism sectors of Nepal.

This study analyses Nepal can be the reason for the best destination because of its Buddhist heritage and philosophy. It explores the importance of Buddhism and Buddhist temples to provide a new sight of touristic attraction. The study is very useful and covers the critical scientific approaches which help to frame the development of Buddhist sites in Nepal. The study also helps to expose the importance, uses, and social connectivity of Buddhist temples and the role of tourism performance on the socio-economic growth of the country. This study also analyses the relationship between Buddhism and tourism in Nepal. The study is concluded with a summary of the findings.

Methodology

This study is about Buddhism and tourism and the research is desk-based qualitative research from a secondary source. It is a specific review of literature on Buddhism and tourism in its interconnection. It also analyses the opportunities and challenges in the interconnectedness of Buddhism and tourism. Methodologically it is a literature review with a descriptive method.

Review of literature

General review

Tourism is one of the growing service sectors in Nepal. In 2011 the direct and indirect contribution of the Nepal tourism industry to total GDP and employment is expected to reach 6.7% and 2.4% respectively (WTTC, 2011, p. 1). Buddhism inspired a movement that aimed to address issues of human rights and social inequality. Buddhists are not explicitly involved in movements for social change yet do hold beliefs and participate in practices that have an impact on social change and development (Tomalin, 2007, p. 1).

The religion's founder, Buddha, is considered an extraordinary being, but not a god. The word Buddha means "enlightened." The path to enlightenment is attained by utilizing morality, meditation and wisdom. Buddha's most important teachings, known as The Four Noble Truths, are essential for understanding religion. Buddhism in Nepal started spreading during the reign of Ashoka through Indian and Tibetan missionaries (Holiday, 2021, p. 208). The Kiratas were the first people in Nepal who embraced Gautama Buddha's teachings, followed by the Licchavis and Newar people. Buddhism is the second-largest religion in Nepal (Dhakal, 2021, p. 71). Buddhist temples are the place where visitors go to unwind, relax and learn Buddhism. The unique feature of a monastery is its serenity. In that sense, monasteries are located in

remote places, far from the hustle and bustle. The Buddhist temples are not only the place where to preserve, promote and disseminate the treasure teaching of Buddha. These are the attraction sites of heritage which are the massive assets of tourism in Nepal (Amgai, 2021, p. 1). Buddhist pilgrimage sites are scattered across the country, revered as the holiest places by Buddhist and Hindu pilgrims and every people in Nepal and foreign travelers. Devout Buddhists and Hindus as well visit the monasteries to pay homage some visit to immerse them in silence while others are on spiritual quests (Rai, 2020, p. 22).

Tourists increasingly visit religious sites for 'architecture, art, decorative interest, tranquility, 'sacred space' and personal contact with the 'soul' of a place as they attempt to connect a transcendental space providing spiritual meaning in a life of ephemeral values. Thus, understanding tourists' motivations may help religious sites develop new arenas and partners for attracting more visitors who may wish to visit Buddhist sites because this would give them an opportunity to learn about diverse cultures and lifestyles. Understanding the relationship between tourism performance and economic growth may assist researchers, practitioners, and investors in their estimates of the future planning of the tourism industry. This understanding is of significance for policymakers in developing policies to best suit the economic objectives of the country (Karki, 2015, p. 1).

This study also found a pattern of social distance between believers and non-believers. The believers of Buddhism were found more aware of Buddhist heritages and they are ready to stay longer and spend more money. The core of tourism was identified as Buddhist spirituality, Buddhist history, and culture, Buddhist archaeology, Buddhist pilgrimage, etc. which attract larger tourist numbers and retain longer at the destination. Hence, it is concluded that there is a complementary and positive relationship between Buddhism and tourism. Means overall Buddhism helps to promote tourism in Nepal and tourism conserves Buddhist heritages and propagates Buddhist teachings of eternal peace, harmony, and non-violence (Rai, 2020, p. 22).

Buddhism has been interpreted hermeneutically and allies with almost major disciplines- cosmology, psychology, religion, philosophy, science, and the Buddha symbolized as peace, non-violence, nirvana, dependent co-arising, and timelessness, ethical leader, social reformer (Ghimire, Ethical Pragmatic Nature of Buddhism: Conceptual Analysis, 2020, p. 1).

The teaching of Buddha seems as a guideline for cultivating morality, compassion, and empathy. For that reason, millions of Buddhist followers and non-Buddhists are attracted to Buddhist heritages, and to learn and understand the depth they visit Buddhist temples, especially at least four important pilgrimage sites related to Buddha's life: Lumbini, where Buddha was born, Bodhgaya, where he attained enlightenment,

Sarnath, where he delivered the first sermon, and Kushinagar, where he breathed his last. Lumbini and Bodhgaya were declared UNESCO World Heritage Sites in 1997 and 2002 respectively; Sarnath is in the process of being listed as one. All these sites have recorded an enormous increase in visitors, both domestic and international. This increase is because transnational Buddhist organizations are increasingly mainstreaming Buddhist teachings and philosophies to non-Buddhists, for their universal values, and inspiring them to visit places related to Buddha (Shinde, 2021, p. 1). Buddha after realizing the causes of the turmoil of the then society went among the people. He used intervention for social transformation. He, as a provocative action researcher, dealt with political and moral theories (Robinson & Johnson, 1970, p. 25). Buddha, on the one hand, conceived that humans can have knowledge of one's own ability and develop the right desires for social order. Buddha proposed the Karmic theory which is metaphysical in form and ethical in purpose he prescribed a set of behaviors with the explanations of their values and purposes to bring happiness as depicted in the relation between values, purpose, and ethics in modern view (Malloy, 2003, p. 1). His theory comprises moral rules for daily lives became the most practical tool for the people who were eager to know the relation of 'works in this life to result in the next life' (Ghimire, 2020, p. 1). Buddhist temples are the place of social transformation with the treasure of knowledge spread by Buddha.

According to Hari Dhoj Rai, he found in his research on Buddhist heritage sites that have been explored, excavated, conserved, developed, and promoted because of tourism activities all over the world. The relation between Buddhism and tourism, Buddhist heritage sites have a positive relationship with tourism which means the promotion of Buddhist sites by Buddhist temples helps to develop quality tourism in Nepal (Rai, 2020, p. 22).

From Shinde's paper derives residents argue that because Buddhist temples derive benefits from the incoming pilgrims, they should be considered economic enterprises. As per regulations, only a certain number of monks and pilgrims can stay in monasteries to maintain monastic establishments. The development of infrastructure, to embark on a tourism management plan that promotes the co-created heritage of the site and accounts for the needs of both international and domestic visitors; and helps create opportunities for strengthening the participation of host communities in the tourism economy (Shinde, 2021, p. 1). The key idea of co-creation of heritage for religious tourism is when international monasteries superimpose and juxtapose their own traditional practices and rituals on the sacred landscape. They provide the necessary religious infrastructure for Buddhist pilgrims to mediate the sanctity of the place and partake in the spirit of the place where Buddha was born. A flip side of this co-creation is that it is perceived as "imported Buddhism" by local communities, as they see this juxtaposition on their environment as an import that

has little to do with their own religious practice (Shinde, 2021, p. 1). It is important to promote Buddhist sites for learning about new things, and the tranquil, and serene aspects of visiting a Buddhist temple.

Further opportunities for addressing visitors' intellectual development and relaxation include programs, such as tea ceremonies, yoga, meditation, and Zen classes and workshops in Buddhism, martial arts, traditional games and other attractive Buddhist festivals which are related to society, culture, tradition which represent history as well as current status are holds in Buddhist temples. The process of co-creation also generates tourism, because monasteries become attractions of the culture. This is further aided by the fact that the master plan was designed for a serene experience and had elements that would appeal to the different sensitivities and expectations of visitors. This religious-recreational mix then presents a new kind of heritage that needs to be interpreted, conveyed, and appreciated by addressing which directly helps to motivate the tourism sector (Choea et al. 2013, p. 1).

In literature reviews of the paper Kiran Sinde, exploratory work finds out many questions were answered but many more have also been raised for example, what are the impacts of the seemingly imported Buddhism on every day practices, rituals, and performances of native Buddhist populations? How would monasteries interact with local communities to produce more equitable benefits from the tourism economy? It also asks how sites can continue to maintain their status in the wake of the combined sacred and leisure orientations that might threaten to affect the sanctity of the place, and whether they will move beyond a reliance on external support for its vitality (Shinde, 2021, p. 1). At a broader level, it is prudent to examine how the form of tourism seen in Buddhist temples intersects with other forms of tourism popular in the mountainous Nepal region, and how similar or different Buddhist pilgrimages in Nepal are to those observed in other Buddhist heritage places. Finding answers to these aspects can provide a more holistic understanding of how the value of heritage can be fully realized for improving tourism prospects in world heritage sites as well as Buddhist temples (Shinde, 2021, p. 1).

(World Bank Group, 2014-2018) stated that the process starts with an analysis of the current tourism situation, a vision for the desired future, a demand assessment, and an analysis of the gaps that need to be filled and the challenges faced to progress the vision. The following activities were carried out to inform this document: A Visitor Motivation and Expenditure Survey conducted in 2012 from a sample of 2,500 visitors at all major Buddhist circuit sites; it needs a comprehensive analysis of legal and regulatory challenges and constraints. Site visits and interviews with public and private stakeholders. The establishment of regular consultations and validation with a public-private Buddhist circuit steering committee, identification and documentation of potential catalytic projects. Review of all existing reports and plans.

Cultural tourism has a long history, and with its roots in the grand tour is arguably the original form of tourism. Understanding of the relationship between tourism performance and economic growth may assist the researchers, practices and investors in their estimates of the future planning of the tourism industry. This understanding is of significance for policymakers in developing policies to best suit the economic objectives of the country (Mason, 2003, p. 1).

In the fiscal year 2005/2006, the Government of Nepal announced the policy of mainstreaming religious institutions such as madrasa, gumbas, gurukuls and ashrams. The budget speech opened the way for inclusion in education for the children involved in religion. It stated, "Special arrangement will be made to bring the traditional religious schools, such as madrasa, gumba and gurukul into the mainstream in pursuance of the spirit of Education for All". The budget has been allocated for the mainstreaming and strategies and approaches have been schemed (Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development (RCEID), 2007). An enjoyable and impactful travel experience depends on more than physical landscapes and heritage services rendered by locals the ambience and aesthetics of the travel environment are equally important aspects of an attractive and sustainable tourism destination (World Bank Group, 2014-2018). Tourism is valued as the major contributor to a sustainable Nepal economy, having developed as an attractive, safe, exciting and unique destination through conservation and promotion, leading to equitable distribution of tourism benefits helps to establish greater harmony in society (Bhandari). Buddhism is one of the main forms of tourism that most policymakers seem to be betting on for the future. The world tourism organization, for example, asserted that cultural tourism accounted for 37% of global tourism, and forecast that it would grow at a rate of 15% per year (WTTC, 2011, p. 1).

A national policy on religious education should be developed for a new Nepal because the country has become a secular state. Consideration should be made to the tenets of religious education before formulating policies of linking religious institutions with mainstream education. There is a need for a comprehensive approach. So, separate studies should be conducted to know its roles connect to tourism (Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2007).

Siddhartha meditated and eventually came to an understanding of the concept of enlightenment. After this, he became known as Buddha or the enlightened one. Eventually, he started teaching his philosophy and gained a large number of followers. After going through a life of self-denial, discipline and meditation, he is said to have attained enlightenment which resulted in the alleviation of his pain and suffering. Then, he embarked on a journey of teaching others the path that would liberate them from the cycle of life and death. Gradually, Buddhism spread to numerous countries such as central Asian, East Asian, and Southeast Asian cultures. Today

Buddhism has spread to almost all the countries of the world with the population of Buddhists estimated to be around 500 million. The largest population is in China, Thailand, Cambodia, and Myanmar have the highest proportion of Buddhists in their population. Buddhism is also becoming more widely practiced in America, Australia, and the United Kingdom. Although there are many divisions or schools within Buddhism, there are two main branches that differs in some areas of focus (Shrestha, 2008, p. 1).

Theravada Buddhism focuses on individual enlightenment and experience as well as monastic life. Mahayana Buddhism focuses on collective freedom from suffering and teaching the ways to enlightenment. Zen and Tibetan Buddhism, both considered offshoots of the Mahayana tradition, are the two types of Buddhism most people in western countries practice (Thapa, January 2006, p.25). It is a tradition that focuses on personal spiritual development. To many, it is more of a philosophy and a humanistic way of life which can be summed up as striving to lead a moral life being aware of one's thoughts and actions; and developing wisdom, compassion, and understanding (Speckhardt, 2017, p. 1). Later Vajrayana originates with the mixture of Theravada and Mahayana approximately the origin of Vajrayana is unclear, except that it coincided with the spread of the mentalist schools of Buddhism. It flourished from the 6th to the 11th century and exerted a lasting influence on the neighboring countries of India. The rich visual arts of Vajrayana reach their culmination in the sacred mandala, a representation of the universe used as an aid for meditation (Yogi, 2022, p. 23). Buddhist heritages propagate or spread Buddhist teachings of eternal peace, harmony and non-violence all over the world. The study shows that there is a complementary and positive relationship between the Buddhism and tourism in terms of mindfulness, peace and happiness. It means expansion of Buddhists philosophy, or Buddhism, helps to promote tourism. On the other hand, tourism conserves Buddhist heritages. Buddhism propagates eternal peace, harmony and non-violence in the world, are the main theme of Buddhist philosophy (Rai, 2020, p. 22). In such a way Buddhism and tourism are interrelated.

Weiler and Hall (1992) found that cultural tourists were relatively young, the majority tertiary- educated, and a third were in professional occupations. These demographic descriptions resonate with our findings about participants in the current study. People should recognize the emotional- spiritual motivations, regardless of their religious beliefs in this current world where distress exists everywhere due to Covid and other elements of human daily lifestyles. Different types of festivals are also performed in Buddhist temples which are also the center point of attraction for tourists and also represent and benefited the locals in many ways. All activities related to Buddhist spiritual heritage are in order to benefit tourism (Choea et al. 2013, p. 1).

Opportunities and challenges

The findings of the present study revealed there is a “complementary and positive relation between Buddhism and tourism”. It means the promotion of Buddhism helps develop quality tourism and it promotes Buddhism and Buddhist sites. Buddhist teaching also appreciate planning, development, promotion and educative purpose Buddhist temples are not only related to religion it has huge space in tourism it is also taken as Buddhist tourism sites which represent spiritually motivated travel, ‘perhaps the oldest and most prevalent type of travel in human. Over the last few decades, destination marketing organizations worldwide have promoted tourism at sacred sites with the goal of diversifying their tourism product offerings, rejuvenating failing economies and generating funding for preservation and conservation. Buddhist temples are of particular interest given the growth of Buddhism- themed tourism campaigns. This will be very effective themed for the people to heal the psychological damages occur by Covid and this peace and spiritual tourism are the central point of attraction in post Covid. Buddha was the first positivist and identified the observation method. Buddhism is one of the scientific religions of the world (Shrestha, 2008, p. 1). This is the scientific religion so it can be critically measured, analyze and evaluate which evaluates scientific civilization Buddhism makes the lifestyle an easy life-changing formula. Buddhists believe in karma or ‘intentional action’. Worship helps Buddhists to transform their minds through positive action so that they can escape the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, known as samsara, and gain enlightenment.

- The Buddhist heritage sites encompass historic sites associated with the life of Sakyamuni Buddha and two earlier Buddha’s namely, Krakuchhanda and Kanakamuni which is the precious assets of the heritage of Nepal. The pilgrims have a very good opportunity to worship and pay homage to three Buddha’s in a single trip because Nepal is the birthplace of Buddha, and thousands of national and international Buddhists, as well as non- Buddhists, come to visit. It has direct and indirect effects on the socio-economic development of Buddhist temples because some Buddhist heritages and philosophies are also in the shadow of the tourism industry to upgrade those sites.
- Religious tourism raises awareness of humanity, and common heritage and provides resources for preservation.
- It can contribute to local development.
- It builds cultural understanding.

Despite huge potential, tourism has not benefitted the region in a way it otherwise had to. Buddhism-based thematic tourism development would definitely yield more benefits in Nepal as in Mecca Madinah, Jerusalem, and Vatican City (Rai, 2020, p. 22). The study of the relationship between Buddhism and tourism is undertaken to create a new understanding to contribute to the quality of tourism development in Nepal (Rai, 2020, p. 22). The study will be useful and covers the critical scientific approaches which will be helpful to frame the development of tourism and motivation to non-Buddhist visiting Buddhist temples. The findings of the study will play an important role in Buddhism and Buddhist temples in tourism performance on economic as well as social growth of the country.

Connectivity

Roles of Rahul Sankrityayan in Nepalese cultural tourism are an analysis of Nepalese cultural tourism potentialities and facilitation of great personality. The study has identified the points on independent movement, diplomacy, Buddhist religious tourism, art, literature, and language, and on theorizing tourism. Therefore, Nepal has to make a park in the memory of Sankrityayan with a Vihar is for meditation, museum and library for the researchers, and a stupa with some sorts of relic's pilgrims. The main objective of the study is to find out the contributions of Sankrityayan to Nepalese tourism development and to identify the roles of Rahul in cultural tourism between India and Nepal (Badal, 2019, p. 13). Such cultural attributes link tourism with Buddhism.

Research gaps

The highly conscious religious tourists from developed countries like Japan, China, Korea, Thailand, India, due to being the birthplace of Lord Buddha, Nepal have linked tourism and Buddhism. However, Nepal is not being able to grab the opportunity (Agrawal, 2010, p. 477). It is necessary to find out the linkages between Buddhism with tourism.

Buddhist influences are pervasive in most aspects of Nepali culture. The present educational situations of Gumpas, Vihars, and Buddhist schools are the modalities of linking it with mainstream education. In short, Buddhist schools are contributing a lot in the fields of formal and spiritual education (Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, 2007, p. 1). The scientific linkage between Buddhism and the modern education system can attract pools of educated tourists but it needs in-depth research.

Buddhist thoughts and practice of sociology uncover a rich body of interconnected writings of different knowledge. It is the study that explores the sociological theory, methods and teachings with a new dimension. It conceives unique ways to study sociology, social problems, and social change (Schipper, 2012, p. 203). It means it is

possible to link modern sociology with Buddhism. The linkage attracts Buddhists and Bon Buddhist tourists.

With regard to economic and social development, tourism promotes the “fullest participation of all people” and facilitates a more equitable distribution of the benefits of globalization to everyone. The study could be the resource that documents the relationship between all branches of Buddhism and its similarities with tourism. Buddhist temples have their intrinsic connectivity to tourism that can be seen as economic and social impacts. It explores and provides new sights of touristic views and Buddhist temples attraction (Carmen Meinert, 2010, p. 1) in tourism development.

The established relationship between Buddhism and tourism is complementary positive relationship. It means Buddhism helps to promote tourism and tourism conserves Buddhist heritages. Buddhist teachings of eternal peace, harmony and non-violence in real practice could be the reason to attraction to the tourist (Rai, 2020, p. 22). To make such a wonderful land Nepal is only one suitable place.

Tourists increasingly visit religious sites for ‘architecture, art, decorative interest, tranquility, ‘sacred space’ and personal contact with the ‘soul’ of a place as they attempt to connect a transcendental space providing spiritual meaning in a life of ephemeral values. Thus, understanding tourists’ motivations may help religious sites develop new arenas and partners for attracting more visitors. Tourism stakeholders should recognize the emotional-spiritual motivations, regardless of their religious beliefs (Choea et al. 2013, p. 1). It means Nepal can attract millions of peace seeking spiritual tourists around the world.

Entire Buddhist temples must be developed culturally, socially, educationally and most importantly, must be able to attract tourists from all over the world. Buddhism excavation and conservation in the Buddhist heritages sites motivates tourists. Buddhist culture, archaeology, and spirituality are the main product of tourism, till the government concern is to be highlighted. There is no clear vision to upgrade the sites from the government level. Uses and connectivity are still seeming lacking. Thus, it is necessary to find out the connectivity points between “Buddhism” and “Tourism” with related challenges and opportunities. It needs in-depth major research. Till now, in this field, there is a lack of study in Nepal. This research is presenting insights into such issues for the first time around Buddhist heritage and tourism management. Buddhism and tourism have a strong connection with the society and economy of Nepal. Tourism and Buddhism should be studied united for a better peaceful future for Nepal to the world.

Conclusion

The study investigates the social connectivity of Buddhism and tourism and their interconnection to society. The Buddhist community of Nepal and the tourism industry has to work together. Buddhist temples, Vihars, monasteries, etc., can be the

reason for the best tourism destinations for love and peace seekers. The opportunities in Buddhism and tourism when together, both entities can increase their followers. The cooperation increases the horizon of tourism and Buddhism. To enhance the connectivity entire stakeholders should be united but it is challenging. Orthodox chickenhearted people are the problem. The uses of Buddhist temples connect to the society and economy of Nepal and it can be directly linked with tourism. It helps to enhance the socio-economic status of the people of Nepal. Future scholars should take these aspects into account and rethink the influence of Buddhist tourism on local sustainable development. It is necessary to conduct, at least PhD research, on the issue of the connectivity of tourism and Buddhism with its opportunities and challenges.

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Women in Tourism and Hospitality -A Case Study of Bhaktapur

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Article

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Abstract

Globally more women are employed in tourism and hospitality industry which is also a very lucrative means to achieve gender equality, women empowerment and socio-economic upliftment of women. Empowerment of women and tourism are interrelated, and both terms should be developed side by side for better future. However, the gender-based roles in tourism and hospitality are defined by the nature of work along with the requirements of tourist. As far as Bhaktapur is concerned, tourism is one of the main sectors in the state that contributes in income and employment to people. This study explores the contribution of women in tourism and hospitality industry in Bhaktapur. Various aspects have been explored such as women employed in various hospitality and tourism sectors, the total number of women employed, category and duration of jobs, socio-economical upliftment. The main information is based on numerous sources of social learning like field visits while doing researches, visit of different sites, focus on group discussions, General Questionnaire Survey, and a number of interviews and interactions with the professionals of tourism sector in Bhaktapur.

Keywords

Bhaktapur,
Empowerment,
Socio-economic,
Tourism, Women
entrepreneurs

Introduction

Tourism is one of the most exciting and growing sectors globally. It is considered as one of the main elements for the development of employment generation, economic growth and

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is effective in reducing poverty. Joshi and Dhyani (2009) stated that “tourism development in any area invariably leads to economic growth of that area, which is manifested in terms of increase in income and employment opportunities, infrastructural growth, improvement in the standard of living, etc.” World Travel & Tourism Council’s (WTTC) research study reveals that travel and tourism is one of the world’s thriving industries, generating approximately US\$ 1.7 trillion annually and creating 319 million jobs to the global economy in 2018 (Bastola, 2020). Similarly, over 600 million international tourists take on a holiday to different parts of the world annually (Mahatara, 2019). Both men and women, irrespective of their age, caste and background have found opportunity to uplift themselves through this sector.

Women empowerment and tourism

Women empowerment may be defined as promoting women’s sense of self-worth, their ability to control their own choices, and their right to impact social change for all. It is closely associated with female empowerment – an essential human right that is also crucial to achieving a more harmonious, prosperous and a balanced world. Women’s empowerment and promoting women’s rights have appeared as a part of a foremost worldwide movement and is continuing to break new ground in recent years. Days like International Women’s Empowerment Day are also gathering momentum. However, empowerment of women is categorized into five main sections, educational, social, political, psychological and economical.

Women play a crucial role in development of tourism as well as nation and in return tourism and hospitality allows women to uplift their socio-economical status. Women make up half of the workforce and population globally, so tourism and hospitality industry provides them opportunities, facilitates to acquire experience as well as skill and empowers them to develop the whole world. On 16th November 2007, as United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro, while addressing International Women Leaders Global Security Summit in New York, said “When women are empowered, all of society benefits.”

Other studies validate that the segregation of women’s work in tourism and hospitality takes place, showing that women are overrepresented in the lower-level positions (Clevenger & Singh, 2013; Costa, Carvalho, & Breda, 2011; Hemmati, 2000; Simão & Breda, 2014) and that they still have significantly lesser opportunities to reach management positions. According to Rydsik, Pritchard, Morgan, and Sedgley (2012), in tourism and hospitality women are often excluded from having access to mentoring opportunities (since they are not regarded to have career potential), and they suffer from sexual harassment, exploitation, stereotyping, as well as promotion and salary discrimination (Pritchard, 2014; Rydsik et al., 2012). If tourism and hospitality industry can tackle the issues of harassment and exploitation, then it will attract more women, both as employee and the employer. Slowly, as the women’s right issue has become a prominent factor globally, women have marched ahead and taken ownership of several travel and hospitality companies as well as have been designated to higher positions.

In case of Bhaktapur, the tourism sector has provided various entry points for women and opportunities for creating self-employment in small and medium sized income generating activities, thus creating paths towards the elimination of poverty of women and local communities.

One of the most popular tourist's destinations in Nepal is Bhaktapur and it has tremendous potential to flourish economically through tourism. It has been observed that tourism and hospitality sector has changed the economic and social standard of remote areas of Everest and Annapurna. This has encouraged more and more women to come forward and take charge of hospitality industry and contribute significantly to the local as well as national economy. The scenario and social norms have gradually changed as life has become more difficult and an extra income is a welcome relief to any family. This phenomenon has pushed women to step outside of their home in search of work and one of the most lucrative sectors for them has been tourism and hospitality. Women now are not only working in the lower level of this industry but several have become chefs, guides and even business owners. It is evident that women's socio-economic status has been improved through tourism and hospitality industry in spite of several challenges they face in juggling double roles as homemakers and career women.

Status of women

The status of women in Nepal continues to be underprivileged. The main areas where women lag behind are education, decision-making opportunities, income, health and active involvement in policy making. The prime reasons for this systematic discrimination are poverty, illiteracy, social customs and beliefs as well as lack of awareness of their own rights.

The formation of women's committee or mother's group in rural areas have provided women with benefits such as access to loans, skill development, entrepreneurship resulting in self-awareness and decision making. Similarly, urban women are major land/house owners and have access to economic resources including bank credit to expand their economic horizon thus becoming independent. The access to education has also produced technocrats, bureaucrats, bankers, educators which is a welcome change as these positions were traditionally held by men. Overall, the future looks bright as more dynamic women have become frontrunners to inspire others to lead and achieve what they truly deserve.

Tourism in Nepal

Globally, it is perceived that tourism and hospitality creates a win- win situation for both government as well as the people especially in a developing nation like ours. Nepal has been a popular tourist destination since 1951. It has diverse topography and attracts about a million tourists from all over the world. Tourism is one of the main sources of foreign currency and employment in Nepal. Nepal is a multicultural and blended country with more than 123 spoken languages, over 125 ethnicities and cultural traditions. Tourism in Nepal, despite having a long history started to accelerate since 1950's, after the end of autocratic Rana Regime. Before 1950s, only a handful of tourists visited Nepal under strict permission of Rana regime. In other words, in Nepal tourism started to flourish in 1950's through mountaineering activities. On 29th of May 1953, Sir Edmund Hillary (New Zealand) and Tenzing Norgay (Nepal) became first people to stand on the summit of Mt. Everest (8848m). This highlighted virgin and pristine Nepal into international arena. During 1960's Nepal began direct links to Indian cities and this land locked country became more accessible to the outside world. From 1955, Nepal started issuing tourist visa. The same year a private airline called 'Himalaya Airways' started operations followed by state owned airline Royal Nepal presently known as

Nepal Airlines in 1958. By late sixties the hippies started to come to Nepal. They followed a radical and liberal anti-war philosophy along with experimentations with drugs and religion in order to discover their inner-self and find peace. By 1973 Nepal declared hashish as illegal and by 1979 the hippies' number began to slow down.

From 1975 to 1999, Nepal was a popular destination for tourists of all categories. Nepal's topography is varied and it contains high mountains, rivers, valleys, national parks, flora and fauna. The holiday makers, adventure seekers and cultural tourist each found something to their taste. The tourist count increased year after year. In 1998 Nepal celebrated "Visit Nepal 98" to strengthen Nepal tourism. There was a brief decline in tourism due to the Maoist movement in Nepal from 1999 to 2006. However it again recuperated by 2015. Figures released by the Ministry of Culture, Tourism & Civil Aviation show that the number of tourists has increased from 602,855 in 2010 – 2011 to 803,092 in 2011 – 2012. The earthquake of 2015 slowed down tourism for some time however it bounced back and registered positive growth and even crossing one million in 2018 and 2019.

As most of the population living in the core area of study are the Newars, the social structure of the native of Bhaktapur is also an important factor to comprehend any aspect for economic and social growth of the city. Newar community is socially divided. In Newari context, individual being the smallest social unit, the household and group being the association of people for a common cause known as Guthi.

The smallest social unit is the household which is coordinated by the senior most male member known as *naya*, who takes the prominent decisions regarding the family. This may include but not limited to, all economy generating activities, educational choices, setting rules for all household members, maintaining discipline and family's religious choice. The female head of the family known as *naki(n)* is responsible for managing the entire housekeeping and also engaging as well as encouraging other members in income generating activities like farming, weaving, painting etc.

Traditionally, most of the natives live in a joint family in a large house having a single head of the family which facilitates to maintain harmony among large number of family members. The Newar joint family (the household unit) has specific characteristics which make it distinct from the normal Hindu joint family. Despite residential and property separation, several joint families act as a single unit among them for purposes of social and ceremonial functions, be it domestic or communal (Levy, 1992).

In spite of being in a large joint family, Newari women enjoy higher social status than non-Newari women. With modern times families have started to separate into nuclear family allowing more freedom to women to lead their lives or pursue their choice of career. One of the key features of Newari social structure is *Guthi* system. It is an association of people formed for various special purposes like maintenance of palaces, temples and religious structures as well as to organize/manage cultural and public ceremonies. In recent times, various new and modern organizations have emerged based on societal needs such as women's associations, youth society, social workers organizations and volunteer associations are some of it (Nepal, 2019). Newari system allows equal and active participation from both sexes which shows liberal outlook of the Newars regarding women.

Tourism in Bhaktapur

As far as Bhaktapur is concerned, tourism is one of the main sectors in the state that contributes to income and employment. The core area of Bhaktapur is dotted with religious monuments that are unique and classified as UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The historical inhabitants of core area of Bhaktapur are the Newars. The social structure of Newars is quite unique and divided among the two major religions of the country, Hinduism and Buddhism. The Newars, constitute a stratified caste-society with the full range of status-groups typical of Hindu societies, but complicated by a vertical division into Hindu and Buddhist groups (Furer-Haimendorf, 1956; in Furer-Haimendorf, 1966, p.14). This religious divide is further segregated according to their hereditary professions. The major population is of Jyapu community who are farmers with large land holdings. The other major caste groups are specialized professionals such as painters, metal and stone smiths, potters etc which cater to the daily lives of the Newars as well as fulfil their ritual and cultural requirements.

Bhaktapur is known as *Khwopa* in local Newari language. It is considered as the cultural capital of Nepal, Bhaktapur's history goes way back to the early 8th century and it used to be the former capital of Nepal from the 12th to the 15th century. Until the early 18th century, the rulers built several temples and palaces with the wealth generated from the trade with Tibet and India and protected the city as an independent country surrounding it with border walls and several city gates. The city finally was annexed into the greater Nepal when the rulers lost the war against the gorkha king Prithvi Narayan Shah in late 18th century.

Bhaktapur is located at 12 km east of Kathmandu city and lies at 1401 meters above sea level. Bhaktapur district spreads over an area of 119 sq. km and the core area of ancient inner city is 6.88 sq. km. Bhaktapur has a population of about 100 thousand people, most of whom are farmers. Out of which about 64 thousand live within the core city area. Others are artists, businessmen, public employees, craftsmen and handicraft manufacturers. Being part of an ancient trade route between Indo- Tibet benefitted Bhaktapur immensely. The local traders, artists and craftsmen generated lot of wealth as a result and this in turn allowed them to invest in temples, rest houses, water sprouts, monasteries and palaces. The rulers thus invested in temples, palaces and monasteries which are today the cultural heritage of the nation. During the construction of the monuments the architects used the influence of Tibetan and North Indian designs along with the traditional Newari architecture as a result, several unique temples were built in the city that are today considered as master pieces and cultural heritage.

The city has several squares such as Dattatreya, Taumadhi, Pottery, Nyatapola and Durbar Square where exquisite and amazing examples of finest architecture can be found. Some of the monuments that can be found in these squares are five-storeyed temple of Siddhilaxmi and Bhairab Nath temple in Nyatapola square, the palace of 55 windows, Taleju temple, the golden gate, Jagannath temple, and Pashupatinath temple in Durbar square, Dattatreya temple and Pujari Math in Dattatreya square.

Apart from the above mentioned monuments the city also has several ponds like Siddha Pokhari, Naag Pokhari, public shelters and Buddhist monasteries. Apart from being known as the city of temples and palaces, it is also famous for *Haku Patasi* (traditional hand woven

black saree with red border for women), *Bhadgaule Topi* (Black tight knitted cap for men), *Juju Dhau* (Royal Yoghurt), handicrafts, thangka paintings, Nepalese *Lokta* paper and pottery.

In recent times, tourism infrastructure as well as manpower has developed in Bhaktapur. According to Bhaktapur Tourism Development Committee, (2021), there are 61 hotels and guest houses in Bhaktapur. Four of them are owned by women who have completed Bachelor level of education. There are 72 skilled women staff in these establishments as receptionists, accountants, marketing & sales officers/executives who have various educational background ranging from S.L.C. to Master level. Similarly, 103 unskilled women staff are working in these institutions as housekeeping staff, sweepers, kitchen helpers and dishwashers whose educational level range from illiterate to S.L.C.

Similarly, there are 82 handicraft shops/outlets in core area of Bhaktapur. 27 of them are owned by women. 68 women are directly involved in these outlets as skilled women who carve, paint, weave etc. and 35 women are unskilled who manage the sales.

There are 82 local guides in Bhaktapur as well out of which 5 are women and 2 are national level guides. Bhaktapur Municipality's tourism department also employs 42 staff out of which 37 are men and 5 are women.

Beside above mentioned income generating activities women are also involved in other income generating businesses like working as vendors, thangka painters, and wood carvers.¹

The city has been collecting tourist entrance fee from every foreign tourist, for visiting the core area of the city since 1993 and the amount is used for preservation of culture, restoration of heritage monuments, cleaning and maintaining the city, building and developing infrastructure, educating and creating skilled manpower as well as ensuring that the city is one of the best tourist destinations in Nepal. The Municipality is also distributing grants for traditional tiles, bricks and timber to encourage the locals to construct their building in traditional manner. The city which was once not clean and tidy, has today become one of the ten cleanest cities of Asia through its cleaning efforts. In admiration of the preservation and restoration efforts of the city, in 1979, Bhaktapur was rightfully enlisted by UNESCO in World Heritage Site.

Tourism and gender enterprise

The concept of entrepreneurship is derived from the French word "entreprendre" which means "undertake" (Carton, Hofer and Meeks, 1998). Shane and Venkataraman (2000) define entrepreneurship as the use of opportunities for the discovery, evaluation and promotion of goods and services provided, forms of organization, markets, processes and raw materials that were not available before. Entrepreneurship has an increasing importance in the tourism sector as in all other sectors (Çalkın and Işık, 2017). The tourism sector is highly dependent on entrepreneurship because its survival is closely linked to entrepreneurial activities and sustainability (Crnogaj, Rebernik, Hojnik and Omerzel Gomezelj, 2014).

Research shows that female employment in tourism and hospitality is both vertically and horizontally segregated, and women employees find employment in subordinated posts

¹ *Thangkas are the traditional paintings of Nepal. They are hand painted on cotton canvas and mostly have a religious theme. Initially only men were involved in thangka painting but presently more and women are engaged in it.*

with low levels of income (Kogovsek & Kogovsek, 2015; Obadic & Maric, 2009). Vertically, in tourism and hospitality businesses, women often hold lower levels of occupations with fewer opportunities with upward mobility (Carvalho, Costa, Lykke, Torres, & Wahl, 2018). On the other hand, horizontally, while women generally work as receptionists, waitresses, travel agency salespersons, cleaners, room attendants, men are typically employed as barmen, gardeners, porters, maintenance staff, and other positions.

Tourism is regarded as leisure travel that generates employment and economic benefits to all. As tourism is based on human relationship and connection it is an equal opportunity employer. From gender perspective, several sections of tourism that focuses on service and care, prioritizes women as potential employees. It is a disproportionately important employment sector for women as there has been a steady increase in their employment in tourism at a global level, largely driven by growth in developing countries (Shah, 2000). Women can find a voice and independence through their involvement in tourism activities- by becoming part of decision-making processes and carving out new roles in their families, homes, communities and within local power structures (see UNED, 1999; ODI, 2000).

However, the development of gender research in tourism enquiry is a complex tale and the key protagonists in the story have been largely (but not exclusively) women (see, e.g. Kinnaird and Hall, 1996). Gender is an erratically represented but an increasing focus in tourism studies. However, currently there is a rising awareness and use of gender perspectives in tourism.

Three issues are central to the conceptual framework for understanding gender in tourism (Kinnaird et al 1994, p.5).

The first issue is that tourism processes are created from gendered societies and systemized by gender relations. Secondly, gender relations over time update and are updated by the interconnected economic, political, social, cultural and environmental dimensions of all societies engaged in tourism development. Lastly control, power and equality issues are expressed through race, class, and gender relations in tourism practices.

It is evident from the three issues above that men and women are involved in a different way in the structure and intake of tourism. Gendered “realities” form tourism marketing, guests’ motivations, and service provider’s actions.

Tourism has long been perceived as a fertile field for entrepreneurial initiatives (Nikraftar & Hosseini, 2016) due to a predominance of small firms and relatively low entry barriers (Williams, Shaw & Greenwood, 1989). These same factors have repeatedly led to tourism entrepreneurship being premised on its potential to empower women (Martinez Caparros, 2018) and it has been identified as providing opportunities specifically for women entrepreneurs (Haugen & Vik, 2008). The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (2019), for example, claims that tourism can empower women through income-generating opportunities in small and larger-scale tourism firms. Martinez Caparros (2018) cautions that whilst tourism is often depicted as an economic sector that holds potential to empower women due to its diverse, dynamic and flexible nature (Peeters & Ateljevic, 2008), it remains a highly gendered activity that reinforces traditional gendered performances by offering temporary and part-time employment in traditionally gendered skills.

In reality, there are disparities in tourism development, and one of the avenues to comprehend the changing dynamics and to promote change toward equality is through the study of gender relations. There is also a vast diversity in tourism experience, and one dimension to concede is gender in, perspectives, knowledge, behaviors and tastes, which is valuable in tourism planning from environmental impacts to marketing strategies. Gender, as ideology and as affiliations between the sexes, is a primary element in human interactions, and is thus an important feature of future tourism.

Women in tourism and hospitality

While women are still struggling for equality at work in several areas, they have stamped their presence and place in catering, hotels and tourism for quite a while now. The most significant change happened during and after World War I (1914 to 1918 C.E.) when most of the men had gone to war leaving women to take charge of the industry. The everlasting impact happened after the Second World War (1939 to 1945 C.E.) when the society was forced to change its attitude and accept the fact that women were equally capable of working outside their home.

Although a gradual change is trending, the fact that women's needs and requirements have been largely ignored by stakeholders. Decision making and policy makers are mostly men who exclude women from voicing their demands and changes required to formulate policies that are parallel to women's progress and overall growth.

There are very few women working in professional work in Nepal. Limited participation in politics, bureaucracy and judiciary does not stop women from making a remarkable contribution in the decision-making process at the household level. Women serve as decision-makers in farm management, domestic expenditure (food items, clothes and other expenses), the children's education, religious and social travel, household maintenance and also capital transactions.

One of the sectors that offer a great amount of potential and livelihood opportunity to women is tourism and hospitality. This sector has also given opportunities to women of the rural areas as several of them now work as the owner of the lodges, restaurants and trekking agencies.

Other groups of women were those who worked as guides and were better qualified than the porters. They opined that males and females were both equal in all terms but social institutions and laws determined what women were to do in comparison to men. Their argument was that though the trend of gender inequality had been addressed by the government or non-government organizations, the unequal practice was still prevalent (KC, 2012).

Women's tourism businesses lead to women's economic empowerment; tourism education and training promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the sector; Women are leaders in the tourism and hospitality sector and are represented and influential in decision-making spaces; and it empowers women to work collectively for justice and gender equality. Therefore, there is an urgent need to change the policy and make it more women centric to facilitate women so that a healthy gender equality is achieved.

The objectives of the study are: a) To study the correlation between tourism and gender equality. b) To explore different aspects of tourism to determine possibilities for women empowerment in Bhaktapur. c) To assess the contribution of tourism in women empowerment in Bhaktapur.

Methodology

This research is based on qualitative approach. An effective constructionist perspective was adopted to dig out the truth which is the most influential and sophisticated construction (Guba and Lincoln, 1989). The study is based on tourist activities in Bhaktapur district and the involvement of women in tourism and hospitality. This research paper aims at voicing the challenges faced by women in tourism and hospitality industry, to meet this purpose, the data collection was based on Grounded theory, developed by Glaser and Strauss, it commonly practices the subsequent data collection methods: Interviewing participants with open-ended questions along with Participant Observation (fieldwork) and/or focus groups as well as study of articles, texts and artifacts.

Feminist theory has been applied for research as, Feminist theories which attempt to explain the gendered structure of the workforce differ in terms of both the degree of importance which is attached to capitalism and patriarchy, in determining men's and women's role in the workforce and the extent to which the two systems are interrelated (Sinclair, 2005).

To gain diverse insight into finding men's and women's role in workforce, women from different hospitality fields related to tourism were interviewed. To obtain a deeper understanding of women in tourism and hospitality, men and other family members' views were also incorporated.

Theories of gender inequality display that there is a different yardstick for men versus women when it comes to the socio-economic circumstances due to the fact that women are undermined as underprivileged and inferior to men. Nepal is no exception to this as well even though tourism creates a wide range of opportunities for women through the complex value chains it creates in the destination economy (Narayna, 2017).

The field work was carried out by the author of the core area of Bhaktapur. The data collected from different sources and close observation was made during field visit of Bhaktapur city. The author, being part of the tourism industry, is familiar with tourism practices in Nepal. Hence, personal experiences, emotions and observations are reflected in this research. Personal interaction with local women engaged in tourism in Bhaktapur has also been included for reference. During the interaction with local women, two distinctly different views emerged. While, the young women were positive and optimistic about their future while associating with tourism related businesses, elderly women were of the opinion that the young women were neglecting household chores and duties as they were devoting more time to tourism and hospitality industry. However, both the young and elderly women had a common point that the extra income through tourism and hospitality was a welcome relief.

A vast range of literature has been referred to comprehend the relationship between women and the tourism and hospitality industry. The study is based on primary as well as secondary data. Data has been collected from the Bhaktapur Municipality and Bhaktapur

Tourism Development Committee. The research area were different historical squares of Bhaktapur namely Dattatreya, Taumadhi, Pottery and Durbar Square.

Apart from data collection, interview with different stakeholders, mostly women (hotel and restaurant owners, shopkeepers, street vendors, local guides, and municipality of Bhaktapur) was conducted from September 1st to September 15th in core tourist area (Durbar, Dattatreya, Nyatapola, Taumadhi & Pottery squares) with the objective to understand the challenges and connection of tourism and hospitality industry with women. Interview was conducted on approximately 40 tourists (domestic as well as foreign), 40 men (mostly who were related to women in tourism), 40 women (directly/indirectly connected to tourism) as well as municipality staff.

Simple statistics like simple average and percentage of employment has been used in the present study to examine the involvement of women in tourism and hospitality industry. The total percentage share of employment, gender wise, has been used to highlight the present status of women's employment in tourism and hospitality in the city. In-addition, objective analysis has been made to study the role of women in tourism and hospitality industry. Therefore, the present study is analytical and explanatory in nature. By using interview method, it searches for both clarification and elaboration on the answer given and record qualitative information regarding the topic.

Literature Review

The concept of women in tourism and hospitality industry was considered strange till the early 20th century. However, the industry has gone through substantial change in the last fifty years. The global expansion and development of the industry has provided opportunities for women to enjoy an active and rewarding role which ranges from cleaning and kitchen staff to front line customer service employees to senior managers, C.E.Os and owners.

Boniface (2003) expressed that cultural tourism is to stay and grow with the help of best conducts and best characterizations possible. The author analyzes the various needs of cultural tourism and its significance, he also shows the obligations and benefits of cultural tourism while defining it based on its prominence. It expresses the work of principal needs in tourism. It includes various site presentations and examples for a better view of quality cultural tourism and its managing ways.

Byrne Swain (1995) mentions that gender is often implied as an assumed, vague term without referring to the common feminist literature. While it is clearly a theoretical standpoint, the concept is not expounded in the similar way that various definitions of tourism are assessed. The authors stress on tourism development progressions as indicators of social change and embodiments of social norms. International and domestic tourism industries continue to multiply in response to growing markets encouraged by consumers' increased leisure time and wealth. Thus, tourism as a means of economic development is ready for gender analysis, following the lead of the literature on development and gender.

Cole (2018) claims that there is no definite or natural relationship between women's employment and empowerment, also the policies do not support it. Programmes to change gender inequalities need to focus on social and traditional areas too. For example, the dual

load for women of working in tourism sector while playing a role of a homemaker as an unpaid and domestic care worker should no longer be overlooked by development policies and projects. This means, women's voices are essential in decision making and policy at every step. Finally, international organizations that are key role players as tourism thought frontrunners have been largely a failure in monitoring change. The international community needs to create parameters and raise awareness, follow up on recommendations, monitor and assess progress.

Figuerola-Domecq and Segovia-Perez (2020) have mentioned that the use of a gender perspective in the assessment of tourism has revealed noteworthy differences in all areas (consumption, entrepreneurship and employment) between both sexes, as an outcome of social structure and roles of gender. Therefore, it is evident that application of gender perspective in tourism research helps to distinguish, comprehend and offer differences and, where ever appropriate, diminish inequality.

Grimshaw, Holmes and Lake (2001) analyze the dilemma central to women's struggles over the last two centuries. It also talks about gender stereotypes and norms and also expresses the importance of locating political struggles and subjective contexts that are in accordance to women and their rights. The book also shows how women scholar or feminist scholars have emphasized on women's rights throughout the world. Women's Rights and Human Rights, the title of this collection, signals dilemmas central to women's struggles over the last two centuries. As they fought for legal, civil and political rights women have faced the challenge of discovering ways to claim equal rights with men while also defining women's specific rights, and to join with men in their struggles for human rights, while not forfeiting their interests and power as women. There are different definitions of human rights and women's rights in historical perspectives.

KC (2012) mentions that how women in tourism face challenges based on the roles they perform. Furthermore, her roles are determined by different factors such as family background, education, language, physical condition and the aptitude to set one's own criteria.

Shrestha, Maharjan and Raj Bhandari (2015) claim that the involvement of Jyapu women in domestic and community levels play an important role in conservation processes in Bhaktapur. Jyapu women do not usually play a major role in decision making processes, due to their low educational level. They strongly believe that in the recent years their engagement in economic activities has improved, which positively affects their ability to take part in various decision making processes.

Upadhyay (2006) has made an attempt to identify important events regarding tourism activities in Nepal since 1848 under the chapter chronological highlights on tourism in Nepal. He has projected the clear picture of the state of tourist arrival and tourism in Nepal before and during the Rana regime and how it took pace forward after the restoration of democracy in 1950. Whereas, the book has failed to include the policy of the government on tourism before and after 1950.

Upadhaya and Upreti (2008) have mentioned that several organizations and institutions have now emerged to raise awareness and to encourage active participation of women in

Nepal. A number of organizations like National Trust for Nature Conservation⁴ (NTC), International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Program (TRPAP), Kathmandu Environment Education Project (KEEP), Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP), Mother's Club Central Committee (MCCC), Women Entrepreneurs Association of Nepal (WEAN), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Labor Organization (ILO), Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hospitality Management (NATHAM) and 3 Sisters Adventure Trekking (P) Ltd. etc. are found to be involved in enhancing women's participation in mountain tourism. These organizations through their continuous efforts in past and present periods have been creating awareness about local women's potentials in tourism, empowering them by offering training and capacity building activities and helping to increase their involvements in mountain tourism.

The research aims to answer the following questions: a) What are the key factors for women empowerment in Bhaktapur? b) What is the contribution of tourism industry to elevate life style of women in Bhaktapur? c) How tourism can facilitate gender equality?

Findings

In Bhaktapur there are several interesting sites to visit but the maximum number of tourists do not miss the opportunity to visit the four major squares of the city. They are Durbar square, Taumadhi square, Pottery square and Dattatreya square. The study shows different income generating activities involving women in the above mentioned four squares.

Bhaktapur is one of the most popular tourist sites in Nepal, almost every tourist in Kathmandu valley will visit it. The tourists also believe that Bhaktapur is a city of artists and craftsmen, a lot of them like to buy souvenirs and gifts in Bhaktapur. All kind of souvenirs are found in Bhaktapur including low priced ones often sold by vendors. There are around 55 vendors in the inner city of Bhaktapur. Around 30 of them are women. They are mostly working in the above mentioned four major squares of the city.

While conducting interview, Participant A was asked "What challenges they had to face to come out of their home and become street vendor?" They stated that:

"At the beginning I had to face some objection from my family for becoming a street vendor but later when I brought home extra income, the objection changed to encouragement."

Bhaktapur manufactures a lot of handicrafts which includes Nepalese paper products, masks, puppets etc. There are 36 handicraft shops in the four main squares of Bhaktapur. They employ 72 people as sales person. Among them 22 are women. During the interview, a rare life story emerged where a father encouraged his daughter to join family business.

Participant B was asked "How did you end up managing the family shop?" They said:

"I was encouraged to join the family business by my father who has been running a handicraft shop for over 20 years. Although I attribute this encouragement to the fact that my family has only two sisters and I am the eldest."

There are 24 thangka shops in the four major squares of Bhaktapur. They employ about 144 thangka painters and sales persons. Out of the total number 43 are women.

While having an informal chat with Participant C, they were asked "what made you

choose thangka painting?" they casually mentioned:

"I have always been interested in thangka painting since childhood and my biggest inspiration was my grandfather who was a well-known thangka painter. In spite of being born in a thangka painter's family, I had a hard time to convince my father to teach me painting as he believed that it was only meant for men."

One of the traditional crafts of Bhaktapur is statue making. Traditionally, the statues made locally have been sold in China, India and Bhutan but now a days several European, North American and Asian countries buy them. There are 36 shops of metal and stone statue shops in the four major squares of the city. They engage 108 people as sales persons and carvers. Among them 32 are women.

The interview with Participant D revealed an interesting story of hard work and determination. When they were asked, "How did you end up in this career mostly dominated by men?" They stated:

"My father's profitable metal statue workshop collapsed overnight due to a sudden paralysis attack on my father that left him bed ridden. My two elder brothers decided to go abroad to work and that left me with no option but to learn the technique of metal statue making from my maternal uncle and my father's workers. Initially, I had a hard time convincing my father's customer's to buy my products but once they saw the quality of my work several of them continued to buy from me."

Bhaktapur is famous for wood carving. The local wood carvers have travelled not only in Nepal but to other countries too renovating, restoring monuments and building new ones. There are 38 wood carving shops in the four squares of Bhaktapur. They engage about 152 people as wood carvers and sales persons. Out of the total number of employees 46 are women.

An interview with Participant E showed how every crisis creates opportunity. Upon being asked, "How they are coping with life?" They replied:

"After the earthquake of April 2015, several temples, palaces and heritage monuments were damaged and required renovation and repair. As my entire family of 6 (my parents along with 4 children) were woodcarvers, they were all employed by the local authority to renovate several monuments which gave us employment for several years."

The interviews above reveal that although the families were hesitant initially to encourage women to learn skilled techniques or to run businesses, it resulted in the upliftment of the family's economic status as well as boosted self-esteem of the women concerned. This in turn reflects the social mindset of the people regarding women and their role or status in society. However, with the advent of Tourism and Hospitality industry, women are breaking the glass ceiling and emerging as independent and strong characters.

Generally, the employment of women is relatively low compared to men in the tourism and hospitality industry. This may be due to several factors like social reservation regarding women, family obligations, and lack of technical skill. If proper technical skill is provided to women, it can definitely not only increase the sales and profit but also increase the rate of women's employment.

For any form of development equal participation from both genders is essential. The industries, shops, hotels and restaurants must become gender friendly and accept that women have dual roles to play in Nepalese society as housewives and career women. As women are regarded as more emotional and caring, their participation in tourism and hospitality industry is invaluable. Therefore, it is imperative that policy makers, local and central government authorities should create suitable environment so that the number of women employees increase and more of them see tourism and hospitality industry as a favorable sector for employment.

It is clear that tourism and hospitality industry has generated substantial wealth in Bhaktapur. As a result, it has provided significant contribution in other sectors too. The revenue collected from tourism has helped to open six educational institutions of different levels in Bhaktapur.

Discussion

In the core area of Bhaktapur, most of the women are from Newar community. They mostly live in a joint family and have social duties as housewives as well as daughters. Most of them have to perform household chores and the married women have additional responsibility to take care of their children which leaves them very little time to work and bring in additional income to the household. Almost all the women employed have mentioned that time management and balancing the house and work is the key issue. If the other members of the family come out to support and share the household duties, this issue can be resolved easily.

Apart from the family constraints, few women have had to face harassment at work and they have been paid less than male counterpart in spite of putting in the same number of working hours.

Traditionally women in Bhaktapur are perceived as responsible for household chores, bringing up the children, cooking and cleaning of the house. Many women are also engaged in agriculture as well as in other income generating activities including tourism and hospitality. Although traditionally their main occupation was farming, they are now also engaged as artists, craftsmen, potters and other crafts. This shows that the general concept of women as housewives is gradually changing in Bhaktapur. In the past the women of Bhaktapur, like the rest of the country, had less access to education, knowledge, skill and opportunity as it wasn't considered important but now-a-days girls are sent to school and many have become professionals in different fields. At present, women serve as decision-makers in farm management, domestic expenditure (food items, clothes and other expenses), the children's education, religious and social travel, household maintenance and also capital transactions.

There are two major religions in Bhaktapur, Hinduism and Buddhism. Both groups worship the same deities although they may have two different names, both have similar social structure and speak the same language. This is natural as they are both part of the same society since centuries.

The Newars have several religious and cultural festivities and functions, many cater to girls and women specifically and they project the way Newari society perceives women in general.

Almost all of the socio-religious festivals and customs are women-oriented hence they require their time, energy, focus and effort. Some of the unique traditions like Ihi (the tradition of getting the girls married to the Sun god), Gufa (the religious ceremony when a girl reaches puberty) and Kumari (venerating a pre-puberty girl as the living reincarnation of the goddess Taleju) are all women centric that demand effort and consume their energy leaving little or no time to focus on economic activity including Tourism and Hospitality trade. Although these ceremonies and customs reflect how in a Newari society, women were respected and sheltered from harm through religious practices, it does not influence them to be socio-economically independent and become a key contributor to household income. However, a healthy balance between religious and economic roles has been more visible compared to past few decades. This may be due to the fact that social view regarding role, capability and importance of women is changing in Nepalese society.

Conclusion

Tourism and hospitality industry is one of the biggest global industries that creates employment and opportunities pushing economic growth. Although Nepal is a male dominated society, tourism and hospitality industry can become a suitable tool for Nepalese women to liberate themselves. Along with it, tourism and hospitality industry is the perfect tool for Nepal to foster development by generating employment and earning foreign currency as well as provide platform for Nepalese women to uplift their socio-economical status. Bhaktapur, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is one of the prime tourists destinations of Nepal and has several cultural and heritage monuments that attract a large number of tourists. Tourism and hospitality is one of the major sources of income of Bhaktapur that employs a lot of people. Although women of Bhaktapur engage in this industry to generate extra income, their number is low compared to men. Although there is a lot of potential for women of Bhaktapur to uplift their socio-economic status through tourism and hospitality industry, because of traditional and conservative constraints they are unable to exploit the benefits of this industry to the fullest. But as the whole world is transforming, this sector needs to be equipped for the demands of future. It is important and essential to recruit and encourage talented women for technical as well as top managerial positions in the tourism and hospitality industry to meet future demands. This will prove to be a practical move as more women are travelling for vacation and business, they have become a higher percentage of a hotel's clientele, it is necessary to strive for gender equality in the recruitment of personnel. If the women are provided education along with technical training to sharpen their skills and get family support, they can do wonders in the field of tourism and hospitality. This will allow them to play a greater economic role and make them independent. However, socio-economic empowerment alone will not bring women to the frontline of decision making process unless policy makers come out with pro women policies and planning; along with it a radical awareness programme and a woman centric dynamic education system is essential as well.

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A Study of Pilgrimage Tourism in Halesi, Khotang, Nepal

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Who is a “real” pilgrim, and who is “just a tourist”? (Hinmon, 2002)

“a tourist is half a pilgrim, if a pilgrim is half a tourist”. (Turner & Turner 1978, p.20; in Kunwar, 2017, p.323)

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Abstract

Halesi is one of the most important pilgrimage tourism destinations of eastern Nepal. The purpose of this study is to highlight the culture, religion, belief, ritual, pilgrims' behavior, 'metempsychosis' (story, legend and myth) and heritage of the Hindu, Tibetan Buddhist and Kirati (Rai) communities through the traditions (great and little tradition or textual, oral and transcendental cultural tradition) that play an important role for shaping the universe of power, place and people. Apart from these aspects of culture in Halesi, this research investigates how pilgrimage site has been commoditized into tourism destination which is what pilgrimage tourism talks about. This is a preliminary study of pilgrimage tourism in Halesi, Khotang, Nepal and provides room for further exploration. This study uses qualitative grounded theory to analyze pilgrimage tourism in Halesi, Khotang, which is a polyethnic pilgrimage place for three diverse groups with the respective religious beliefs executing holy rituals in accordance with their own customs. In order to

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carry out the research, a field work was done for 38 days in Halesi. Data were gathered from different respondents including key informants, locals, hoteliers, priests, lamas, pilgrims, and visitors. The major data sources were open-ended inquiries and informal conversations. Halesi is found gradually transforming on several infrastructural development both in religion and tourism and is becoming a destination for pilgrims as well as non-pilgrims (secular tourists). As a result, the holy site attracted more numbers of pilgrims, thereby improving the economic situation of the local communities who were involved in the tourism industry which began to attract the attention of different stakeholders when they were able to know the significance of Halesi as a polyethnic pilgrimage tourism destination. It is noteworthy to quote “a tourist is half a pilgrim, if a pilgrim is half a tourist”.

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to highlight the culture, religion, belief, ritual, pilgrims' behavior, metempsychosis and metempsychosis (specific cultural tour guided by the religious texts, story, history, myth, legends) (Seaton, 2002; Seaton, 2013, pp. 19-27), heritage of the Hindu, Tibetan Buddhist and Kirati (Rai) communities through the traditions (great and little) that play an important role for shaping the universe of power, place and people. Apart from these aspects of culture in Halesi, this research investigates how pilgrimage site has been commodified into tourism destination which is what pilgrimage tourism talks about. A pilgrimage is described as a journey made for religious purposes, both physically and mentally to a holy place for spiritual aspirations and understanding. One of the earliest and most important forms of population movement connected to human civilization is a pilgrimage, which always had and still has substantial religious, cultural, and spiritual motive. Eliade defines pilgrimage as “a religiously motivated journey to a symbolic center of the world – axis mundi, or its representation, i.e., a very sacred place, a place of the sacred, separated from profane zone” (Eliade, 1969; in Liro, Solijan & Wodecka, 2018, p. 6).

Throughout history, religious observance has been a prerequisite for both a person's physical and psychological well-being (Smith, 1992). There are a number of ways to connect with the divine, and individuals seek these connections for a variety of reasons (Sindhe, 2020). They do this through making pilgrimages to well-known holy places in order to forge these bonds. Some of the most common ones are seeking or obtaining spiritual enlightenment or rebirth, asking for forgiveness and salvation after committing a mistake, and praying for divine intervention to settle personal concerns.

Halesi is popular not only for Hindus but also for Tibetan Buddhists who often visit it as their Buddhist sacred center. Hence, it is very important to know how Tibetans define what Tibetan pilgrimage is. Tibetan Buddhist pilgrimages involve the

practice of circumbulation. Circumambulation or *korra* of sites brings the pilgrim into relation with the energy and focal point of the site. “*Korra* is usually performed clockwise around an image—a chorten [stupa], a temple, a gumpa [monastery], or a sacred mountain or lake—while some *korra* embrace a unity of power-places that can take days or weeks to circumambulate” (Dowman 1988, 5-6; in Parker, 2004, p.21). A pilgrim is defined as a *ngas skor ba*-- “one who goes around a sacred place” --by the rite he must perform at the end of his travels (Buffetrille, 2013, p.25). According to Huber (1994c; in McKay, 2013, FN.13), *Gnas* is generally translated as meaning “place” in the sense of “sacred” or “power” place, hence *gnas-skor*: pilgrimage or literally “going around a place”. But, Morinis (1984; in McKay, 2013, FN.3) states that it is a “journey from home to shrine” (p.22). Thus, defining him by the rite he performs at the end of his journey (Buffetrille, 2020) Tibetan pilgrimage is much more than the mere act of traveling to a sacred place. It is associated with a great many ritual activities and religious teachings, and it has sociological, cultural, economic, and literary dimensions. In this regard, Buffetrille (2020) has recently developed a typology of Tibetan pilgrimage, meaning and concept of pilgrims and pilgrimage on the basis of Tibetan language. There are three kinds of Tibetan Buddhist pilgrimages: natural sites (mountains, lakes and caves), man-made cities (city, monasteries and temples), and hidden lands (or *beyul*). A fourth type of pilgrimage must also be mentioned as the author further adds, pilgrimage to pay respects to a holy person in such instances being considered a *né*. Tibetans also go on pilgrimage outside the land of snow—a common Tibetan designation for the Tibetan plateau that refers to the many snowy mountains—particularly to Nepal and India. These different kinds of sites attract both Buddhists and Bonpos (the adepts of the religion that coexists with Buddhism (Buffetrille, 2020)).

In Hindu life world, pilgrimage, (*tirthayatra*) is an act “to cross” an active seeking of transformation. Literally, the profane to the sacred realm, from humanity to divinity, from this world to another world. Naturally, the purpose is to make contact with the divine and with these super objective human beings make arduous journey to remote places—usually a mountain, or hill top where the divinities supposedly live. Such geographical locales are considered to be the abode of divinities. In short, pilgrimage is to cross to be transformed. In this sacred journey, each stage is imbued with sacred significance the inherent message and meaning (Singh, 2013, p.128-129; Vecchione, 2008).

Important pilgrim sites are often closely connected with the lives of saints, ascetics, and important historical figures. In many cases, these shrines began as simple retreat caves or hermitages inhabited by renowned yoginis. The most important are places frequented by the Buddha in his travels and the caves used for meditation by Guru Rinpoche (Padmasambhava), the Indian tantric master who was the first to suppress

the Bon spirits and made them accept Buddhism in the 8th century. Most of the latter are located in hard-to-reach places, at the top of isolated valleys or near the summit of a mountain (Chan, 1994, p. 37).

Depending on their location, tourists can engage in a wide range of tourism activities, and pilgrimage travel is one of the activities they engage in. Since pilgrimage has been regarded as its earliest form, the relationship with tourism has long been recognized (Eliade, 1969; Fleischer, 2000; Smith, 1992; in Kim, Kim & King, 2019). pilgrimage often takes place on foot, is an older form of tourism with deep religious roots, and involves tours, trips, visits to various locations and sightseen under specific circumstances, travel by air or sea, etc., as well as the purchase of regional memorabilia (Gupta, 1991, p.91; Kunwar 2017, p. 327). Collins-Kreiner (2018) argues that the term “pilgrimage” must be used liberally to refer to both historically religious and contemporary secular excursions. Tourist can experience different forms of tourism depending on their destination and pilgrimage tourism is also one of the forms of tourism practiced by religious and spiritual traveler.

Pilgrimage destinations are like any other tourist destinations, in terms of products (accommodation and tours) with numerous attributes that can satisfy the needs of both religious pilgrims and other holidaymakers (Bond, et al., 2014, Rinschede, 1992; in Linda & Nzama, 2022, p.269). Religious pilgrimages and pilgrimage destinations are often turned into visitor attractions to bring socio-economic benefits to local communities while creating the necessary financial resources to preserve and restore cultural heritage with companies dedicated to hospitality services (Martin Martin, Guaita Martinez & Salinas Fernandez, 2018; Ashley, & Haysom, 2006; in Linda & Nzama, 2022, p. 269). This fact makes religious pilgrimages a modality of tourism with a notable impact on local economies (Pereiro, 2019; Fernandes et al., 2012; Alecu, 2011; in Linda & Nzama, 2022, p. 269). This economic injection has a potential of expanding the supply of tourism infrastructure that is purposefully created by provincial tourism entities (Hampton, Jeyacheya & Long, 2018; Rogerson, 2015; in Linda & Nzama, 2022, p. 269).

Studies attest that religious pilgrimages are the fastest growing industry in various parts of the world (Tarlow, 2010; Patel & Fellow, 2010; in Linda & Nzama, 2022, p. 270). According to Tarlow (2010; in Linda & Nzama, 2022, p. 270) in USA alone, some 24% of travelers are interested in religious-based tourism and further alludes that worldwide, religious pilgrimages are one of the fastest growing segments of the industry, with an estimated value of US\$1.8 billion (in 2010; in Christou & Fotiadis, 2022, p. 270) and 300million travelers. These assertions clearly indicate that religious tourism like other sectors of tourism is a big business. In India, religious tourism is regarded as the largest socio-economic sector since 70% of domestic tourists travel for religious purposes and in 2010 alone it generated 20% of the revenue (Patel &

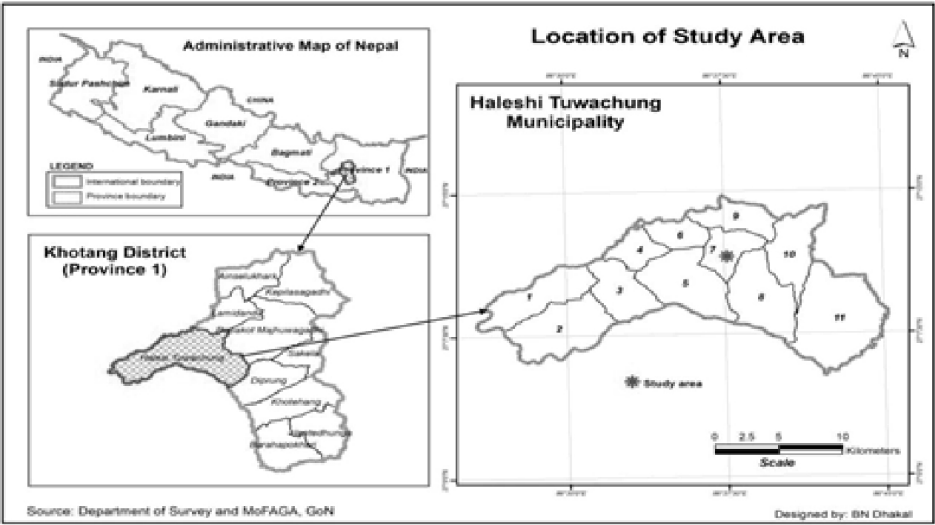
Fellow, 2010; in Christou & Fotiadis, 2022, p. 270). The tourism industry of which the religious pilgrimages are part which employs the largest work force (Tarlow, 2010; in Linda & Nzama, 2022, p. 270).

Nepal is a well-known pilgrimage travel destination. Since, the country is the destination for Hindu and Buddhist pilgrims. Lumbini, the birth place of Lord Buddha, as well as other temples like Pashupatinath where Lord Shiva is worshipped, Janakpur dham with the significance of Janaki Temple, likewise other pilgrimage sites such as Chhinamasta in Saptari, Godawari in Kailali, Labchi in Dolakha, Pathivara in Taplejung, Barahachettra in Sunsari with their own significance and beliefs. Accordingly, it is believed that pilgrimage activities in Nepal were practiced from very early times and how important the country's pilgrimage sites are and which is still continuing the age old tradition that enhance the researchers to study on pilgrimage tourism in Halesi. Ulak (2022) added Policymakers have not yet investigated and promoted many of Nepal's pilgrimage sites. There are numerous pilgrimage sites in Nepal's rural areas where accommodations are scarce and access is difficult, but there has been a slow improvement in infrastructure, as evidenced by the Manakamana cable car from Kurintar, Chitwan to the temple in Gorkha, the Kalinchowk cable car from Kuri to the shrine, and the road system to Pathivara Temple in Taplejung and Halesi Mahadev, Khotang, which have made the holy pilgrimage secure and practical for all age groups.

Halesi

Halesi, as one of the pilgrimage sites in Nepal, is situated in Ward 7 of the Halesi Tuwachung Municipality in Khotang district in Province 1 of Eastern Nepal. It is 215 kilometers east of Kathmandu Valley and is situated at 86° 37' 19" East longitude and 27° 11' 31" North latitude. It is situated at an altitude of around 1370 meters above sea level. The site is accessible via a partially completed road that connects Halesi and Kathmandu, as well as other eastern hills and Terai towns like Katari that lead to the Indian border region. Lamidanda is the closest airport from Kathmandu, and it takes 35 minutes to fly from there to Halesi, which is located below the Mount Everest and Gauri Shankar Mountain ranges. It is said that the deities of three main religions like Hindu, Tibetan Buddhist, and Kirat (Rai) reside in this revered location.

Figure 1: Location of the study area



Halesi is an amalgamation of Hindu, Buddhist and Kirati (Rai). It is well known and renowned spiritual power center for various groups as discussed in the following table:

Table 1: Faith based belief of three heterogeneous groups

Hindus	The presence of the ‘Mahadev’, in the form of ‘Linga’, the ‘phallus’, symbolic stone status of ‘Parvati’, the ‘Vasha’ and the bull as a carrier of Mahadev make Halesi a scared site for Hindus.
Tibetan Buddhist	In Tibetan Buddhist community, it is known as ‘Halesi-Maratika’, they see the site as ‘Padmasambhava’ earthly home, go there over their lifetimes to honor the saint, gain merit, seek longer lifespan and eventually nirvana or salvation.
Kirats	As local residents of the region and the surrounding areas, passionate devotees of Shiva ‘Paruhang’ and Parvati ‘Sumnima’. Claiming as their place of origin, Himalayas resident have strong intimacy with the Halesi temple.

Source: Adapted and modified from Khattry & Shrestha (2014)

It is one of the sanctuaries dedicated to the Hindu god Mahadev, the second Buddha Padmasambhava, on the one hand Manjushree, Vajrapani and Awaloketesvara have allblessed this cave. This holy place is situated between the sacred places. After the cave shrine was discovered in the ancient past, the remarkable form of the cave drew

the attention of the audience from all over, Hindus, Buddhists and Kiratis beliefs glorified the site even more, presenting it as a spiritual power center as a result Halesi Mahadev became known as a god who fulfilled prayers of worshippers. It has now become a hallowed site where people of many religious origins, both from inside the country and from outside, gather to mark significant cultural events throughout the year. There are two means of travel, roads and airways that are used to visit Halesi Mahadev by the pilgrims. It takes around 5-6 hours by hiking to reach the scared place from the nearest airport 'Lamidanda' as well as private helicopter, jeep, bus and local vehicle helps to get access towards destinations. Roadways/Motorway is accessible means of transport to reach Halesi. Halesi is connected by Pushpa Lal Lokmarga (Madhya Pahadi Lokmarga) together with the access of four airports like Lamidanda, Khanidanda, Diktel and Rumjatar. People from Terai-Madhes may choose the shortest way to visit to Halesi, only 100 km away from Mirchaiya of Siraha district. If we follow the way from Bardibas through Sindhuligadi, it is less than 150 km. Halesi can be reached from the places like Bhojpur and Sankhuwasabha by bus.

Recently, Wangchung (2016) has described the historicity of Halesi. According to him, the great site is blessed by the three assemblies of deities of longevity, where Padmasambhava accomplished the vajra body together with princess Mandarava. Where the site is surrounded by the mountain with five peaks, where the Manjushri adobe surrounds the location, lies east of Jambudvipa. To the south lies the mountain Potala, the adobe of Avalokiteshvara. In the west is Oddiyana, the home of the *dakinis*. To the north stands Shambhala, the palace of the noble ones. In the middle is Vajrasana, the ultimate dwelling place of the Buddhas [the thousand enlightened Ones of the Good Kalpa]. The excellent Maratika Cave, (Haleshen) also known as Halesi Cave in the local language, is situated southwest of the mountain Potala and north of Vajrasana. The practices of circumambulation prostration offering, recitation of mantra and meditation keep the pilgrims engaged in a level of concentration that alters their state of mind and experience of place clasping hands over their forehead they bring folded hands to the crown (body), the throat (speech) and the heart (mind) before lowering themselves to their knees and stretching out full length on the ground (Parker, 2004).

The main cave where Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati are worshipped is the Halesi cave, along with the Basha cave (Akash Dekhney Cave). Buddhists think that the guru "Padmasambhava" stayed and meditated there, and to this day the Buddhists are meditating in the cave. This activity in the cave exemplifies interfaith harmony and tolerance. When a pilgrim's desire is granted, a golden bell, calf, and trishul (trident) are presented as a "bhakal" (commitment). Pigeons also fly through the cave. More numbers of religious places for Hindus, Kiratis, and Buddhists are located close to the Halesi cave. This site is also very important for the Rai, a strongly Hindu

indigenous community of which one group, the Chamling Rai, live in this region. In fact, all the traditions agree in saying that it was a Rai hunter, in pursuit of a deer, who discovered the caves (Buffetrille, 2012). It only takes a short stroll of a few minutes or an hour to visit these beautiful and revered structures. There are many sites that has religious and historical significance nearby area like *Manjushree cave*, *Mandarava cave*, *Kakanidevimandir*, *Tarakhasecave*, *Tuwachung Jayejum*, *Naagcave*, *Satyaswor Mahadev in Mangaltar* and other various religious destination nearby the *holysite*. As such, it is said that Halesi area is heavenly located by virtue of its natural, cultural and historical occurrences beautified more by Halesigadhi, Chyasmigadhi, and Khamtelgadhi.

Halesi Mahadev temple has a tradition of priests from a specific lineage belonging to the Giri community who performs daily rituals i.e., The morning and evening rituals are performed by Bal pujari (child priest) and regular pilgrim rites are performed by the main priest. The Bal pujari performs temple ceremonies, while other rituals are carried out by the priest chosen by the mandir bikash samiti (temple management committee), from the Giri family. It is believed that during the 7-8 century, a priest called Kathur-Mathur passed over the responsibility of performing regular ceremonies and the sacred performances to the Giri's when, King Gribhan Bikram Shah handed the red seal copper plate in 1804 A.D., and the first Giri priest known as Manohar Giri was brought from Ramechhap to perform the rites.

"Bal pujari" performs the morning devotion in Halesi, Khotang at 5:30 AM. Additionally, visitors are allowed to worship the deities, and present their oblation items. "Bal Pujari" also leads evening worship carrying out rites and prayers in a manner similar to that of morning worship. In the case of Maratika Taktencholing monastery (commonly known as Gumba in Nepali), this monastery was first constructed in 1980 and reconstructed in 2016 (Giri, 2020, p.44). The monastery was founded by Nawang Chhophel Gyachhyo who was born in 1922, and brought up in Mahakulung of Solukhumbu district for the first time he went Halesi in 1978 and permanently resided there after the demise of Nawang Chhopel in 1996 the monastery has been looked after by Nawang Jidgal Chhyoki Wangchhyuk (Karma Sherpa) as an abbot of this monastery. It is evident that the previous Lama got reincarnation in 2000, and is addressed by Tulku Tenzin Chhogyal (Giri, 2020, p. 44).

During fieldwork, the researcher counted 74 stalls which have become the source of income for temple management committee. Slaughtering and animal sacrifice is strictly prohibited in and around Halesi. Besides this, every year, people celebrate hundreds of festivals which retain social norms, religious beliefs, art-tradition, and the economic status of the society and reflect unique tradition. The major festival calendar where high number of pilgrims visit to holy site are as follows:

Table 2: Festival calendar

Festival	Month	Duration	Religion
Ubhauli	April/May	1 day	Kirat
Buddha Jayanti	April/May	1 day	Buddhist
Bolbam	July/August	1 month	Hindu
Haribodani Ekadashi	October/November	1 day	Hindu
Teej	August/September	1 day	Hindu
Lohsar	February	1 day	Buddhist
Udhauli	November/December	1 day	Kirat
Balachaturdashi	November/December	10 days	Hindu
Bishwo shanti puja	January/February	1 month	Buddhist
Shivaratri	February	1 week	Hindu
Ram-Navami mela	March/April	10-15 days	Hindu

Macdonald (1985) describes, at this site, there is a mela (fair) at Shivaratri, at Ram Navami as well as at Teej and at Balachaturdashi (a festival where people throw away the grains in the name of the dead). The mela at the time of Shivaratri is quite big. During the time of *Bolbam*, a difficult journey dedicated to Shiva, the devotees sprinkle the holy water taken from the River of Ganga in India in the sacred complex of Halesi (Khatry & Shrestha, 2013, p.23). In Halesi, different festivals are observed throughout the year in course of celebrating festivals the Hindus observe three important festivals where temples are open for 24 hours and the Parvati – Thaan (temple of goddess Parvati) and Shivalinga (*phallus*) are decked with the ornaments by the child priest i.e., Bal pujari with the sound of the Naumati Baja along with *damha* and *jhynta* played by the musical masters on the other side. Similarly, Buddhists also celebrate Buddha Jayanti, Lohsar and Biswo shanti pooja whereas, Kirati celebrate Udhauli and Ubhauli. Basically, Saturdays and off days there could be seen a greater number of pilgrims visiting the destination.

This study sheds light on why has Halesi become an important pilgrimage site for multiple religious groups? How is Halesi going to be commoditized as pilgrimage tourism destination? The objective of this study is to show the interrelationship between pilgrimage and tourism on one side and host guest relationships on the other.

Review of literature

The information for the current study was gathered in stages. At the beginning, four keywords were selected to search for religious tourism-related articles: “pilgrimage”, “religion”, “pilgrimage tourism” and “religious tourism”. Second, the identified

keywords were utilized to search existing journal articles on Google Scholar (<http://scholar.google.com>), the most well-known search engine for academic journal articles.

Until the 1970s, historians, sociologists, and anthropologists were the primary researchers on pilgrimages and pilgrimage sites, and they mostly employed Eliade's (1999) and Turner's theories (1978). Following that, geographic research gained popularity. From the perspectives of geography, economy, tourism, and culture, geographers analyze the places of pilgrimages. Studies on pilgrimages and the world's major pilgrimage sites were undertaken by Park (1994) and Jackowski (1999), and in studies of urban geography and tourism, particular focus has been placed on the roles of sanctuary centers in urban space (Sorre, 1952; Shwarz, 1959; Beaujeu-Garnier & Chabot, 1971; in Liro, Solijan & Wodecka, 2018, p. 7).

The contrast between tourism and pilgrimage started to develop in the 1970s, when MacCannell (1973) said that the tourist as pilgrim was seeking for something novel and real, as quoted in (Kreiner, 2010, p. 442). Later on, Grabun (1977) described travel as a ritual, suggesting that parallel processes happen in both organized pilgrimage and travel that may be considered a "holy trip". According to him, the purpose of these journeys is to alter oneself via encounters with the strange or divine while also gaining knowledge and status.

Pfaffenberger (1983), who studied tourists and pilgrims in Sri Lanka, discovered that there are differences in the languages of symbols provided by cultures: religion for the pilgrim, and potentially leisure or a love of nature for the tourist. Comparing the tourism-related activities here, Pfaffenberger applied the findings of Boorstin, MacCannell, Cohen, and other scholars who studied pilgrimage and tourism in order to compare the tourism activities at three well-known religious sites in Sri Lanka and argued that the mass tourism activities in the religious sites have changed the traditional pilgrimage activities where pilgrims traveled to the holy sites in search of authenticity with religious faiths. Given the widely accepted idea that the tourist phenomenon is complex, Pfaffenberger (1983) early efforts employed a socio-anthropological method, distinguishing between religious pilgrims and fun-seeking tourists, at a pilgrimage site in Sri Lanka. Visitors and pilgrims therefore have distinct motivations.

The sacred complex as a concept was first introduced by Vidyarthi (1961). Later on, this study was followed by Jha (1971) and the same kind of study was carried out by Vidyarthi, Saraswati & Jha (1981). In the context of Nepal, Pandey (2000), Giri (2008) and Khatry & Shrestha (2014) conducted research in Ruru-ksetra of Gulmi, Lumbini and Halesi respectively but, pilgrimage tourism as an area remained unarticulated.

The great and little tradition of Indian civilization (Redfield, 1955, 1956) gave birth to other three traditions (e.g., textual, oral and transcendental cultural traditions also include asceticism) invented by Indian anthropologists in 1970s (Saraswati, 1978).

These traditions portray all about Hindu, Buddhists and tribal cultural groups and their cultural, religious, ritualistic behavioural patterns are based on those three traditions directed by the priests, texts and memorization also called literate and proliferate culture. All these features are found and attached with pilgrimage traditions of Nepal. This is a different perspective of studying pilgrimage practices in Nepal.

Messerschmidt (1989; De Jong & Grit, 2019) was the first to investigate pilgrimages in Nepal where focus was on the Hindu pilgrimage to Muktinath and looked at “various features of the sacred area” there and also in the surrounding area. Bleie (2003) researched on pilgrim tourism in the middle Himalayas, and commended that there is a need to develop plans strategically on marketing initiatives for the Manakamana shrine. Kunwar and Ghimire’s (2012) study, “Lumbini as an International Pilgrimage Destination: Authenticity and Significance,” establishes that authenticity is crucial for the growth of the tourism industry where the study was based on tourists’ experiences at pilgrimage sites. Focus and Locus of Pilgrimage Tourism at Santaneshwor Mahadev Temple by Khadka (2018) describes the opportunities and challenges of pilgrimage tourism at Santaneshwor Mahadev temple in Godavari Municipality, Lalitpur. The study placed particular emphasis on the development of infrastructure, including a tourist center, modern restrooms, clean drinking water, restaurants, and lodging options (Kunwar & Thapaliya, 2021; in Ulak, 2022); the study carried out by Kunwar & Thapaliya (2021) is an early investigation on pilgrimage tourism in Barahachhetra, Nepal, focusing on providing comprehensive data based on the major characteristics of the local pilgrimage system. They are Macdonald (1990), Chan (1994), Huber (1997), and again Huber (2006) who has carried out research on pilgrimage of Labchi located in Dolakha district of Nepal. Kunwar (1999) also highlighted on Labchi regarding the importance of this pilgrimage but in a nutshell.

Gautam (2014), who wrote a book on *Tirtha Paryatan*, provides an overview of various pilgrimages in three different countries, which includes 137 pilgrimage sites in Nepal that also focuses on pilgrimage site Halesi, Khotang providing a peripheral overview of the holy site. There aren’t many studies in Nepal that focus on pilgrimage tourism because the majority of those studies focus on nature, adventure, sustainable development, implications of COVID-19, sustainable development, and opportunities for homestays (Kunwar & Thapaliya, 2021).

For the first time Macdonald came to know about the existence of Halesi in 1961 while he was in Solu, through the abbot, named Sange Tenji Lama, of Serlo monastery of Solu Junbesi in 1983. He not only explained about the importance of Halesi but also showed him a copy of manuscript guide-book to Halesi which was written in Tibetan language and later on, he carried out his fieldwork at Halesi in 1983. Before this, it was Barbara Aziz who mentioned about Halesi in 1978. Likewise,

K. Dowman has also mentioned about the “Maratika Cave at Heileshe cave in Nepal (Near Lamidanda) east of Okhaldhunga” (Macdonald, 1985, p. 11). Similarly, Prindle (1983) who also studied in eastern Nepal particularly in the Brahmin communities, has very briefly notified the attendance of the shamans at Halesi. Even before this, the government gazetteer of Nepal in Nepali, *Mechidekhi Mahakali*, part-1, which was translated into English by Macdonald in 1985 talks about Halesi as an important Hindu pilgrimage of eastern Nepal. According to him, it is a place of Mahadev located in the thum of Halesi as pilgrimage not only for people of the district but also for those from the surrounding areas (1985, p.5). Buffetrille (1994, 2012, 2013) and Macdonald (1985) both authors mostly concentrated on Tibetan Buddhism practices in Halesi as an important pilgrimage of Nepal even the name Halesi as Halase is from the view point of Tibetan Buddhist text. Subindra Giri from Halesi has written a book entitled *Halesi Ko Serophero* (Halesi: Its Premises) it is not theoretically grounded it just provides insights of Halesi (Giri, 2020).

In the context of pilgrimage in Tibet, Hinmon's (2002) study is based on intersecting cultures, multicultural interactions in sacred space and pilgrimage site as potentially microcosmic manifestations of the larger global political arena... that involved Tibetan Buddhist, westerners and other Asian tourist and a pilgrim... interactions between Tibetan pilgrims and non-Tibetan pilgrims.

As far as Tibetan pilgrimage is concerned, she is Buffetrille who carried out detail studies in Halesi and highlighted pilgrimage as Tibetan Buddhist civilization and a culture, but these studies are silent on the prospects of pilgrimage tourism because when they were doing fieldwork in Halesi at that time pilgrimage was not commodified rather it was completely a sacred complex.

There are few concepts which seem to be quite applicable in the context of studying the origin of Halesi. It is Margaret Rodman who coined the term like “multilocality” in developing her argument that it is time to recognize that place. The places like voices, are local and multiple “observing that” for each inhabitant, a place has a unique reality, one in which meaning is shared with other people and places,” and that the links in these chains of experienced places are forged of culture and history” (1992, p. 643; Owens, 2002, p. 272). For Rodman, the concept of multilocality refers to the experience of places and has four dimensions: it “assumes decentered analysis,” “and can refer to the polysemic meanings of place for different users” (1992, p. 646-647; Owens, 2002). This theory seems to be applicable in the context of pilgrimage studies of Halesi because the Hindus, Tibetan Buddhist and Kiratis have their own voices on the origin of Halesi for example, the Lama in his guide book shows that exoterically, it is the place where Siva and Umadevi take pleasure. Esoterically, it is the great palace of Chakrasamvara. Secretly, it is the palace of the deities of immortality, and even more secretly, it is the paradise of Great Felicity, Sphere of the Absolute, Akanistha (Buffetrille, 1994, p. 58).

The nativistic (kiratis) approach is based on ancestral origination but, all those different approaches uphold the heritage with due respect to its peace and harmony.

There comes another universal concept that is Geomancy, or the art of divination by means of geographical features, plays a vital role in determining Tibet's pilgrimage places. The sanctity of a site is largely derived from its special natural and physical attributes, rather than from the shrine erected there. The image consecrated in a monastery is of course important and pilgrims have a natural wish to pay homage to it. However, for the most significant sites, it is the geomantic and metaphysical character of the place that makes it worthy of worship (Chan, 1994, p. 36). Halesi could be seen through its lens. Geomancy plays a very important role influencing the power of the places. In this regard van Spengen writes, "from a geographer point of view, mountains, lakes, rivers, caves, and passes-all geographical features revered by Tibetans-together with the flows of pilgrims they generate, constitute the geographicity of the Tibetan pilgrim world" (2013, p. 40). For the Tibetan pilgrim, the locational and physical qualities of a place possess an inherent meaning anchored in its specific geomagnetic characteristics. According to Chan (1994, p. 36), there can be no doubt that 'geomancy, the art of divination by geographical features, plays a vital role in determining a place of pilgrimage in Tibet. Dowman (1988) and Bubriski and Dowman (1995) too, see places of pilgrimage as "focal points of energy" or "power place". In the words of latter, the pilgrim's destination is always a special point of the earth's surface endowed with a powerful mystique (van Spengen, 2013).

Research methodology

This descriptive research has some exploratory quality. The respondents were interviewed in depth to learn about their first-hand experiences. The results of this stage usually serve as the foundation for future studies so proper precautions must be taken. A qualitative method is appropriate when a subject or phenomena has to be explored since there hasn't been much study done on it. When a researcher is unsure of the crucial variable to look at, exploratory qualitative research is helpful (Creswell, 2002).

Authors such as Glaser and Strauss (1967), Yin (1988), Elanhardt (1989), Miles and Huberman (1994), and Goulding (2002), as cited by Castellanos-Verdugo, Caro - Gonzalez and Oviiedo-Garcia (2010), indicate that the grounded theory methodology is appropriate when studying a contemporary phenomenon in the context of real life and when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clear. Grounded theory is a systematic methodology that has been largely applied to qualitative research conducted by social scientists. Non-probability convenience sampling was used to collect the data, the key informants were selected on the basis of their knowledge regarding Halesi. The respondents were from hotels, priest, local tourism authority, local residents, pilgrims, transportation authorities, stalls, local

leaders, advisors, experts and local guides etc., where open ended questions were developed to collect more related data for the study. Informal discussions with visitors, local people, shopkeepers, saints etc., as well as in-depth interviews, focus groups discussions, unstructured interviews and semi structured interviews were adopted.

The field was visited by second author who carried out fieldwork in Halesi. A total number of 38 days were spent in the research site in two phases: 7th Nov 2021 to 16th Nov 2021 (10 days in the first phase), and from 20th March 2022 to 16th April 2022 in the second phase in the field where all the required information was collected accordingly. This was studied for the purpose of preparing Master's Dissertation based on the convenience of the researcher and the fieldwork. After the submission of dissertation, we (the research supervisor and the researcher) decided to work on pilgrimage tourism at Halesi which is totally revised form of dissertation including new perspectives of the study.

Findings & discussions

Myths associated with Halesi

There are myriads of myths related to the site of Halesi. Different groups of people believe different things related to the origin and importance of this place. Mainly, three dominant forms of myths are significant. Religiously and culturally people are attracted, scientifically it is said that it's a volcanic eruption starting from human era and thirdly it is assumed that people used to stay in cave and spent their life as usual as per the respondent Tawarung Rai (Pseudo nym). This research unearthed different mythologies related to Hindu, Buddhist and Kirat mythologies. The following section presents the myths related to this place.

According to Kirati myth, in this place Kirati (Rai) originated and started from hunter gatherer society i.e., the people observed sprouts of crops from the grains that were found inside the stomach of preyed dove and from that the members of hunter gatherer society knew about germination of seeds giving rise to initial form of agriculture and the society was gradually changed into initial form of civilization. The kirati population believes that Halesi is their place of ancestors i.e., place of origin.

It is also believed that the human civilization started from here where people used to stay in cave and dark places i.e., bukto also known as khim (ghar). Kirati (Rai) worship Paruhang (Mahadev) and sumnima (Parvati). It is also believed that the pair of dogs of hunter Bagh Bansi Rai from gairigoth, chased the deer, while chasing the pair of dog entered the cave and Bagh Bansi Rai could not enter the cave searching his dogs that day there, so he returned to the same place with his brothers the next day and he was not able to find the dogs but while searching they found that there was a snake wrapped around the

stone which symbolizes Mahadev i.e. Paruhang the appearance of Mahadev in the form of kirati culture.

As per Buddhist myth, Guru Padmasambhava, one of the bodhisatwo (buddha ko doshrorup), travelled from Oddiyanato Maratika cave for meditation and achieved longevity followed the path from Halesi to Tibet where he focused on expanding Buddhism. Sherpas, lamas and other Buddhist who visits the holy site for meditating purpose aims for longevity and it is also believed that the result of meditation has led 100 years of longevity.

Padmasambhava the second buddha and Great Acharya from Oddiyana acquired “Vidyadhara immortality” in union with the consort while in the large and exceptionally superior place known as Maratika. Amitayus revealed his face at this moment, and Padmasambhava gained a vajra body devoid of birth, death, aging, and withering. This greatest place was entitled Maratika, or that which puts an end to death, since it is recognized for releasing people from death (Pema, 2019). Further, Pema writes and mentions as “Maratika-the cave that puts an end to death” in The Precious Garland of Vaidurya, a biography of one hundred treasure-revealers [tertons].

As per Hindu myth, Bhasmasur the devil was attracted towards goddess Parvati and performed penance or strict meditation, and pleased by his devotion Lord Shiva gave a bardan (granted a boon) to Bhasmasur that is, if he kept his hand on anyone's forehead then he would be turned to ashes i.e. Bhasma. No sooner lord Shiva gave his assent 'tathastu', to try out this boon Bhasmasur ran after lord Shiva himself. Shiva escaped from Bhasmasur and reached to Halesi. After knowing that Mahadev was in trouble, lord Vishnu disguised himself as Parvati who performed a dance and Bhasmasur imitated her, while dancing she placed her hand over her forehead and Bhasmasur did the same and he was turned to ashes. Thus, this demon was killed.

Halesi: Polyethnic pilgrimage

Halesi is a polyethnic destination attracting pilgrims mainly from the three faiths namely Hinduism, Buddhism and Kirat. Hindu pilgrims believe this place as the sacred place of Mahadev and Parvati. Similarly, for the Buddhist pilgrims this place has high regards since Guru Padmasambhava meditated along with his disciple Mandarava. For Kirats, Halesi holds even more important position since they believe the Kirati Civilization originated and evolved from this place itself.

Here, broader view of pilgrims have been obtained after the interviews conducted during the field research that clearly showed that a vast majority of pilgrimage tourist pay a visit to the sacred sites and other nearby sites in Halesi for fulfilling the vow and commitment: “Most of the pilgrims converged that they visit Halesi to gain peace and to heal their soul” (Source?!).

The Kiratis has long association with Halesi even before the place was known publicly. They believe that they have been living in Halesi from decades. The place Tuwachung which is situated a bit above or near Halesi cave has its own importance i.e., the story begins with the two sisters *Tyoma* and *Khaima* weaving the looms. It is also believed that agriculture started in this area. One of the respondents stated:

They take Halesi cave as Makhim (Mang= ancestral parents, Khim=house/residence) since it was a sacred place of their ancestors and as well that the two Kirati priests named Mathur and Kathur used to worship in Halesi for 215 years ago, even today at Halesi cave, the Kirati people perform their Sakela Sili, a cultural dance on this special occasions

Different caste of Kirati (Rai) is found in Khotang and they are “*Chamling, Sampang, Thulung rai, Koi, Bantawa rai, Khaling, Doomi, Ambule rai, Puma rai* are residing in Khotang” (source?).

One of the six holy sites for Vajrayana Buddhists across the globe is Halesi. Acharya Padmasambhava is thought to have meditated at the holy site and attained enlightenment. It is also believed that the Tibetan ministers are thought to have travelled to Nepal (Kathmandu) during the time of King Thisong Deuchan via the Maratika route. According to Dudujoyo Rinpoche, Padmasambhava performed a penance at Halesi. The Main Guru who visited Halesi Maratika are Thulsik Rinpoche, Khenche Rinpoche, Dijum Rinpoche and Shakya Khoma Rinpoche.

Religious discipline of pilgrims

Some of the common practices practiced by pilgrims at almost every important tirthas are holy bath, vows, prayers, gift and charity. The gods and goddess of Tirtha are to be propitiated by chanting their names, remembering their sanctity by cultivating devotion and by performing puja (worship) and arti (burning lamp) to them (Jha, 1985; Kunwar & Thapaliya, 2021, p.146)

Group of Hindu pilgrims (Female) visited on Thursday from Chitwan were in the cave shrine and explained:

We had fasting for the day and we were seated inside the cave shrine praying to the god for long time observing, connected to the site. They explained that they had made a commitment that they would again visit Halesi. They further stated that it was a miracle that god stayed in this place.

The tradition of priest

Halesi has a tradition of the priest belonging to a Hindu community from particular lineage mentioned earlier. Accordingly, the regular rituals in Taktencholing Gumba are practiced by the lamas which includes morning and the evening rituals and other lamas are also seen inside the cave practicing mantras and prayers.

Halesi from route to road

In order to preserve the cultural and natural importance of Halesi. The Halesi master-plan has been developed and is focused on the sustainability aspect which restricts the infrastructural activities that are likely to damage the scenic and natural beauty of Halesi. In this regard, local leader, Mayor Rai further illustrated:

Halesi was not much popular among the common people in the past because people didn't have easy access to visit the site which is located in a complex geographical space despite having its incomparable religious importance. As time passed, infrastructures have been developed and a large number of pilgrims pay their holy visits to the site representing different religions. This has also benefitted the place to have sound socio-economic prosperity.

Pilgrims' motivation, experiences & perceived importance

From the study it was found that mainly pilgrims visit the holy site and its surroundings with different motivations, both religious and spiritual. Following sections provide an overview of pilgrims' motivation, experiences and perceived importance, here are some statements made by pilgrims about Halesi, Khotang:

My ultimate intention of the trip to Halesi Mahadev is to escape from daily hectic life and spent some time with the nature and perform religious and cultural activities" i.e., connect spiritually to the destination.

Halesi has been a pilgrimage site for heterogenous groups i.e., Hindu, Tibetan Buddhist and Kirati (Rai). One Buddhist pilgrim from Bulgaria spent three months of time in Halesi and other nearby sites. She explained her motivation in following words:

I visited the religious site of Halesi for meditation. I visited nearby sites with cultural significance such as Kakani temple, Garuda, Mandarava cave, Manjushree cave etc. to observe the faith of number of pilgrims both, domestic as well as international visitors towards their respective deities." She further added "Guru Padmasambhava meditated in the holy place and achieved immortality and hence Buddhist pilgrims' visit and pray for longevity.

A group from Tharu community visited Halesi, and were enjoying sacred performances inside the cave, the main leader answered that it's his third visit to the holy site and they all are the friends and relatives from same community. He further explained:

Main importance of this place is religious and cultural, where a number of deities can be prayed at a time and is located in natural setting with the aim to fulfill one's commitment and vow made to the god. Other members of the same group also stated that 8 years old was suffering from leukemia and the community had a vow to pray to the god (Mahadev) for her recovery.

It is believed that one of the very important and well-established reasons for believers to go on pilgrimages is fear of illness and desire for healing (in Jongmeewasin, 2016). The most common experiences from the pilgrims interviewed during the research related to the feeling of peace, satisfaction, bliss, and positive thoughts.

The holy site attracts me due to religious and cultural harmony between heterogeneous groups, so time and again I visit this holy place. This place is also easily accessible, it's just 7-8 hours of drive from Bhaktapur to the destination and the local people and their behaviors have also influenced me to travel time and again.

The feelings and connection to the place comes from inner instinct and I am amazed after seeing the cave shrine it makes me perceive that the god and goddesses are still in the cave blessing us, the cave itself is a miracle.

The group of Buddhist pilgrims were in Halesi with Rinpoche for conducting Pooja and they explained the following:

Every year we visit from Gumba to perform aayu (for longevity) puja here in Taktencholing Maratika Gumba. Since, 2 years we were not able to come for pooja due to pandemic now we are here and stay for 4 nights and for 3 days we are conducting the pooja.

Accommodation and other facilities

Accommodation and other infrastructures have been well systematized at present to let pilgrims visit the site comfortably compared to the past, however there are some inconveniences felt during the time of fair and some other special occasions. We can take the reference of quotes as follows:

There is different provision of facilities to the pilgrims like public transportation services through the means of roadways and airways to the destination. On the other hand, local guest house and mid-range hotel which are focused on providing lodging and fooding facilities to the pilgrims visiting the destination with the provision of clean and comfortable trip to sacred place as per the standard. (Ward Chair Person)

Tourism development committee spokesperson admitted that the basic provisions in any sites where numbers of visitors visit the place should focus on following:

Tourist help desk, assurance of safety to pilgrims, banking service and hygienic foods and healthy living facilities.

Pilgrimage and economy

The economic activities of Halesi area have improved to great extent in recent time due to increasing number of pilgrims on the site which has contributed local and national economy significantly.

Basically, pilgrims travel in group with families, friends, relatives and very few are solo travelers so they book rooms contacting through telephone and some pilgrims directly visit hotel for the accommodation and food facilities without prior bookings. (a local resident)

Following are some statements made by a local entrepreneur regarding the influence of Halesi in local and national economy:

Pilgrims have contributed a lot to boost up local economy together with national economy as they buy the local products for performing rites. Moreover, hospitality business has well been benefitted by the pilgrims resulting the exchange of culture and better economy. (A group of stall grocers Infront of Halesi Maratika cave).

Donations

Mainly revenue of Gumba and Temple is dependent on the pilgrim's donations and offerings in temple i.e., *dan*, *dakchina*, *bheti*, *sahayog* (donations). Gopal Giri, main priest, discussed about the donations and financial offerings made by pilgrims as follow:

Since Hindu, Buddhist and Kirati (Rai) they all visit Halesi Maratika cave to pray and perform sacred rituals to their respective deities and overall donations are collected in box until it gets full enough and the boxes and premises inside the temple are monitored by CCTV around the area and counting are made by each representative with police representative in temple management building so transparency is maintained. "Fee from poojas are the sources of financial aspect for the temple and monasteries and it has created employment generation, infrastructure management, information desk, help desk, emergency services, social services as well.

Donations made in Gumba are one of the sources for operating the Gumba Mrs. Doma Sherpa who take cares of Gumba (monastery) explained the followings:

It is operated by the management committee of monastery itself and the donation and other funds are managed by "Taktencholing Maratika Gumba" which is yet enough for entire management of monastery itself and 50 students studying inside.

Pilgrimage and environment

The major concern in today's date is sustainability in relation to environmental aspect and is one of the crucial phenomena to carry out in tourism destination. The Halesi cave itself is found in natural setting and other sites nearby is also associated with nature so for sustainable tourism practices, environment should be preserved and conserved with values. Halesi Tuwachung ward office explained the followings:

All the efforts are being made by different concerns in order to conserve the environment around including waste management, drainage, sewage, plantation etc. Moreover, awareness of pilgrims and restrictions imposed by local and

central government on touristic activities have been contributing a lot to develop sustainable tourism in the site.

Future prospects of Halesi

Pilgrimage tourism has been active and quite vibrant in recent years because people are being aware of its cultural and religious value. The traditional and religious prospect for the pilgrims is high and with the development of infrastructure, this place can progress in the coming future. According to Rotherham (2007), "Tourism related with religions, places, and pilgrimages is acknowledged as ever more essential for both religious reasons and economic benefits," as cited in (Jongmeewasin, 2016, p. 18). Underlying this study, the polyethnic pilgrimage destination has immense possibility with the number of increased pilgrims in compare to past years.

As Per Hari Sharan Rai (Pseudo nym) addressed and presumed the following in the context of the future of Halesi:

Earlier, pilgrims were seen in major events and festivals but nowadays a greater number of pilgrims are seen in weekend and holidays too who spent overnight worship to respective deities and travel back to their own place. Due to expansion of roadways and improved transportation services as well as upgraded accommodations services the destination has been a day travel to the pilgrims to experience the cultural harmony, natural landscape, perform sacred rituals, pray, worship and get free from daily hectic schedule.

Another respondent Chewang Sherpa (Pseudo nym) added the view focusing the increased number of pilgrims:

It is estimated that more visitors are seen which directly increase the demand of ritual offerings and other associated products but the number of stalls is also increasing so there is competitive scenario in stall sellers and these stall sellers need to work in weekdays and get ready for weekend as well as in holidays and in fairs and festivals stall sellers should be prepared with product due to more frequency of pilgrims all around.

Halesi Tuwaching Municipality has implemented short- and long-term plan to conserve the area and develop sustainable pilgrimage tourism. We can take some examples of effects of the interventions made by local authority as follows:

Reduced corruption in the temple and improved accountability and transparency of all the financial transactions of the temple, Built the road and better walkway and entrance to the temple as it was a difficult path previously, Built meditation spaces with proper lighting and other facilities, CCTV cameras are installed in the temple property and around to minimize theft and robbery cases around the touristic destination, Created an information desk to help, manage and promote

the tourists who came to visit this place for their ease and convenience, Building the surrounding and mismanaged temples with marbles and terracotta, building the three taps outside the temple for drinking water facilities in collaboration with khanepani sansthan. Together with this, electricity, drinking water and sewage and garbage management have been given due priority by local authority.

Destination effectiveness

The parameters such as attractions, amenities, accessibility, image, price, human resources were examined during the research and the responses from the Halesi Tuwachung Municipality have been stated below:

Attractions: The focus of visitor attention is on the holy site (Halesi Maratika) itself which attract pilgrims from Hindu, Tibetan and Buddhist communities and motivate them for travelling to the destination.

Amenities: Various services and facilities which add to the pilgrim's experience visiting the holy site are:

Halesi has the provision of basic infrastructure such as utilities, as well as direct visitor services such as lodging, visitor information, recreation facilities, guides, operators catering and grocery facilities.

Accessibility: In order to facilitate the visitors for travelling to Halesi, one can have easy access either through roadways or airways.

Image: A unique character or destination image is crucial in attracting visitors to the destination i.e., religious harmony and tolerance:

Halesi is creating an image as one of the holy sites, where 3 heterogeneous groups are sharing the cultural and religious harmony which has created a positive image of the destination itself and is one of the spots for Hindu, Tibetan Buddhist and Kirati (Rai). It is not sufficient to have a good range of attractions and amenities if potential visitors are not aware of this. Therefore, Various means can be used to promote the destinations image (e.g., marketing and branding, travel media, e- marketing). The image of the destination includes uniqueness, sights, scenes, environmental quality, safety, service levels, and the friendliness of people.

Price: Pricing of accommodation, food and other services are cost effective in Halesi area which has also contributed to promote Halesi as one of the major attractions for pilgrims in Nepal.

Human resources: Halesi a place with polyethnic significance where all the provisions of basic facilities are available to the pilgrims:

Well-trained tourism workforce and citizens who are equipped and aware of the benefits and responsibilities associated with growth of number of visitors accordingly for the positive and effective continuity to make Halesi as a polyethnic pilgrimage destination requirement of skilled as well semi-skilled manpower is a crucial factor but in present context it lacks human resources who are the actors transferring a site as a pilgrimage destination with its potentialities.

Therefore, the indispensable elements for the pilgrimage destination like Halesi Maratika need to be managed in accordance with the destination plans and strategies.

Problems and challenges

During the study, numbers of respondents were interviewed and majority of respondents highlighted the following problems and challenges in the polyethnic pilgrimage tourism site Halesi, Khotang:

The major problem is the problem of water. Accordingly, majority of the respondents explained, 'there is severe scarcity of water in Halesi. The scarcity of water has created myriad of problems and some of these problems are exacerbated due to the scarcity of water. The scarcity of water has created problem to operate the accommodation, food service and agriculture.

Based on the interviews with locals, the study has found out some other issues and problems as follows:

This respondent illustrated the problems of electricity together with poor infrastructure as well as political and social ignorance which have resulted in social unrest and lack of harmony among local people. Electricity, being the foremost factor to development and quality life, has tremendous roles in service and hospitality sector but in the context of Halesi area, irregular supply of it has made negative impacts in multiple aspects including problem of quality foods. Furthermore, it is affected by poor infrastructure. Likewise, according to Chiange Rai (Pseudonym), the problem of brain drain and complex topography have been a serious concern at present as there is lack of youth force to carry out social interventions and topographic complexity on top, has raised the concerns of safety for pilgrims. Nevertheless, all such issues are under the serious priority of local government so as to develop Halesi area as a safe destination for pilgrimage.

Discussions

One of the important polyethnic pilgrimage sites in Nepal which is situated in Khotang district comprises historical, mythical, cultural, religious, archaeological and geological significance due to which pilgrims and visitors are directly motivated towards the holy site and its nearby places which is attracting numbers of domestic

as well as international pilgrims and non-pilgrims. Halesi is one of the holy sites visited by pilgrims that required preservation and conservation of heritage. Since the establishment of Guthi (As quoted by Buffetrille (2012), Guthi means a system of land grants for the benefit of temples and monasteries to finance the religious activities), the preservation and conservation of Halesi was continuing and now its responsibility has been shifted to Halesi Tuwachung Municipality

Pilgrims motivations

Pilgrims' motivations of Hindus align with the idea of Bhardwaj (1983; in Buzinde et al., 2014, p. 14). On the contrary, the Tibetan Buddhist pilgrims' motivation depends on consultation with Buddhist pilgrimage guidebooks. There are three pilgrimage guide-books known as *dkar-chag*, *gnas-yig* and *lam-yig* to holy places that one can appreciate - names apart- the originality of any one guide-book (Macdonald, 1985, p.4). In the context of Hindu motives, Bhardwaj classified the motives in two categories. The first motive is related to "mundane existence" and may entail a request to a particular deity or "expiation of a ritual impurity that an individual may have acquired" similarly the second motive deals with acquiring "spiritual merit", which may entail the sacred performances in the holy site. Discussing principal motivating factor associated with first motive is the 'deity' whereas the 'pilgrimage' is the key element in the second motive. Here, linking with the Halesi Maratika the first motive relates with the spiritual connectivity where pilgrims leave their ordinary lives behind and embark on spiritual journey and believe that the divine power cleans their sins and second motives connects to the spiritual knowledge attainment, which focuses on attaining religious discourses valued for their ability to offer spiritual direction. On the other side, the Tibetan Buddhists pay homage to Halesi because according to their belief, Guru Padmasambhava and Mandarava are said to have obtained their supreme mastery of immortality at the time of the Tibetan new year according to a local oral tradition (Buffetrille, 2012)

Pilgrimage tourism in Halesi

Both, local as well as international pilgrims, from home and abroad i.e., nations such as China, Singapore, Vietnam, Malaysia, Russia, Taiwan, Indonesia, Bhutan, India, Tibet, Ukraine, as well as European countries, Canada are found visiting the holy place. A greater number of Buddhist pilgrims travel from China, Taiwan, Tibet, and other countries. Hindu pilgrims primarily come from the South Asian region. Firstly, for any region to prosper, there must be efficient and effective management of both human and natural resources, which aids in economic growth as well as sustainable environmental practices. There are no homestays in the region; however, if proper guidance, training, and motivation are provided, the area can have a good prospect of homestay. According to the information provided by the ward office, currently all

locals are operating guest houses and hotels with inadequate facilities, maintenance, and cleaning whereas well facilitated hotels are mostly owned and operated by the outsiders with standard tariff. Local business seems to have ignored local productions to serve the guests because of low productivity due to lack of effective water supply and tough topography. Hence, agricultural output is relatively low. All raw materials are brought from surrounding Terai regions and maintained for market sale.

Tourism is a labor-intensive industry offering employment to skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled manpower. The problem of unemployment is more acute in the developing countries. It employs large number of people and provides wide range of jobs, therefore increasing number of visitors, facilities and services can provide visitors/pilgrims to at least select the available facilities as per their convenience. Apart from this, a large number of human resources get employment opportunities. Vocational training and development should be prioritized at the local level with an emphasis on empowering, motivating, and energizing people to improve their knowledge, skills, and abilities, resulting in productivity and development, i.e., attempting to make them more capable of finding the best decisions to improve their living standards by taking initiative in different opportunities and prospects that are suitable and have more possibility in return.

It is believed that *Tyoma* and *Khaima* started to cultivate and process cotton and made clothes (handloom). Similarly, Cotton farming should be prioritized which has both historical and mythical significance in protecting and promoting local knowledge. The basic infrastructure of tourism i.e., roads, public awareness, sanitation, communications, transportation, water supply, airport, public utilities and accommodation units provide jobs for thousands of workers. The promotion of tourism can be a great encouragement to economic development. Halesi, being a polyethnic pilgrimage destination, can attract thousands of Hindus, Buddhist and Kirat (Rai) pilgrims for performing sacred rituals. Master plan of Halesi has focused on many physical, cultural, natural and architectural perspectives to promote foreign participation to increase the number of pilgrims/visitors which seems to be a positive sign of prosperous Halesi.

Other forms of tourism

Pilgrimage is the beginning of tourism in every country (Bhatia, 1994; Ulak, 2022, p.2). Nowadays, visitors are practicing and experiencing different forms of tourism based on the purpose of their visit. Travelling to places like Halesi which has own significance i.e., natural, religious and cultural can be travelled and experienced by the visitors as per their purpose. Basically, more numbers of visitors are the pilgrims in the holy site today but the destination has the attributes accompanying other forms of tourism with a greater number of sites in nearby destination.

The motivation of spiritual journey is multifaceted and multilayered concurrently. Even where religion is the main motive, other motives can come into play as explained by Blackwell (2007, in Jongmeewasin, 2016) where study of travelers to the holy land were underpinned by religious motives, they were also seen as opportunities for adventure, advancement and wealth creation. Moreover, given the intensity of motivation needed for spiritual journey, expectations will be higher than for religious tourist. Accordingly, secular and religious significance coexist in religious sites because these places attract those with an interest in heritage, culture, history and general sightseeing as well as devotees (Wong, Ryan et al., 2013; B. Kim et al., 2019). Similarly, Halesi has its unique history, culture, heritage, environment, sceneries, sociality, and other aspects since it is a place where three different groups live together in harmony. Therefore, different forms of tourism can be practiced enhancing following activities;

- So, to increase the visitor's length of stay there are other potential and adventurous sites if known to the visitors they might spend some time exploring other sites which can result in increased length of stay and increased spending pattern too so the sites like rock garden, Tuwachuung jayejum, Kakanidevi, Duksili etc. are to be marketed to the visitors visiting the place
- There are no recreational facilities to the visitors who stay overnight and spend their evening around the holy site so, different engaging activities like Sakela, Maruni, Balan, Sangini etc., should be promoted which reflect the culture and local flavors to the tourist.
- Tour guides and local guides should be made available to the visitors so as to organize visitors' activities.
- Clean and green practices are also to be adopted
- Province government and Diktal Majuwagadhi Municipality are in the process of finalizing Yalambar park, Bhulbhule, Bagaretal, Rupakot, Majhuwagadhi, Devithan, Tamke, Barahatal and other touristic places which also focuses on enhancing tourism in Diktal, one of the major cities of Himalayan area.

Pilgrimage tourism conflict, peace and harmony

Smith (1992), addressed that wish-fulfillment is the powerful and jointly shared motive that provides the impetus for individuals to travel. It is a truism, as Vukonic (this issue) states, that the human species, although endowed with its enlarged brain and associations areas, regularly faces problems irresolvable by human means. "Hope" lies in the appeal to and dispensation from some form of the "super natural" (greater than the normal "laws of nature" such as God, spirits, magic and other anthropological synonyms). Similarly, there are conflicts because of cultural variations, linguistic characters of the groups misconceptions, for identity as well as for other various

reasons but all groups try to be together i.e., and practice performances on their own way which results in cultural harmony among heterogeneous groups of believers in Halesi Maratika performing sacred rituals, celebrating festivals as per their own faith which is regarded as the element of peace in context to pilgrimage to Halesi.

Pfaffenberger (1983, p.62), highlighted that Buddhist pilgrims have had ample opportunity to learn Hindu styles of devotional religion, which was indicated as the innovation in pilgrim behaviors visiting the religious site Sri pada and Kataragama in Sri Lanka (Obeyesekere, 1978; in Pfaffenberger, 1983, p. 62). Similarly, the pilgrims visiting Halesi also gain the experience of innovations and gains opportunity to learn and participate in diverse religious activities. In the same way there is found Hindu pilgrims, temple management committee and other local stakeholders showing their compassion towards Buddhist institutions located in Halesi. Rural cosmopolitanism, peace, harmony, composite culture and reciprocity are the best example of power places of Halesi and its neighboring areas.

Preservation and conservation

Due to more numbers of pilgrims from different countries visiting Halesi Maratika having historical, cultural, religious significance, it is also believed that in *satyayug* lord Bishnu, *tretayug* God Ram and in *Dwaparyug* Balaram visited and prayed in the site. Different festivals are celebrated as well as holidays and weekends are also a time of celebration where the crowd of visitors are seen performing sacred rituals in the holy site and there is the tradition that during fairs and festivals, mela (gatherings of pilgrims) are organized. Realizing the importance of pilgrimage to economic prosperity of Halesi area, local authority has been working with priority with Master Plan coordinating with multiple stakeholders and central government.

Tourism preservation and conservation initiative to be undertaken by master plan:

- For physical development, first there should be full facilitated market, water, electricity, dharamsala, hotel, resort, Health, communication, peace and harmony, security provisions etc. these are the facilities that are required for flourishing tourism activities.
- Activities like Halesi Mahotsav are to be organized time and again for enhancing domestic tourism
- Secondary level syllabus comprising of the course related to “Halesi” should be included in curriculum.
- Brochures, books, media and documents related to the holy site
- Immediate efforts for waste management and cleaning should be focused.
- Concrete infrastructures are also a matter to be considered for preserving and conserving the identity of the holy site.

- Local products are to be prioritized by local entrepreneurs.
- Activities around the site that might deteriorate the aesthetic beauty of the site should be prevented.

Impact of Covid-19

Covid had an impact on the world's tourism business. The term "pandemic" refers to a dangerous infectious illness that strikes simultaneously not only in one country but also throughout the entire variety of crises, including terrorism, armed conflict, pandemics, and environmental (Hawker, 2005; Crowther, 1998; Sulkowski, 2020; in Kunwar, Adhikari & Kunwar, 2022, pp.115). Accordingly, The COVID-19 outbreak had an impact on the holy site of Halesi, which is well-known for its past, mythology, and religious beliefs. COVID-19, has decreased the number of visitors. Tourism was perhaps the most affected. Halesi Maratika Cave was also shut down during the pandemic. No tourists were permitted to travel there, and locals were also prohibited from entering the temple; only the priest could perform the regular rituals there. As a result, the majority of the stakeholders were negatively impacted and lost their jobs as a result of the pandemic.

Halesi master plan

Nepal is a country having cultural and historical diversities. It is estimated that visitors in Halesi are in increasing numbers and the physical infrastructures and services are still insufficient and up to the mark, so all the responsible stakeholders are aware about the situation and needs of pilgrims. Besides the foreseeable higher prospects of pilgrimage and other related forms of tourism, the holy site and the destination is still lacking proper plans, policies, forecasting etc.

Halesi Master Plan has come into existence in a participatory manner as representative from different political parties, different levels of government, advisors, Priests, local residents, local entrepreneurs, female and other related stakeholders participated in separate discussions and meetings in order to collect the opinions and views of people from multiple levels and thereby include them under the main stream of overall pilgrimage development. Halesi Masterplan focuses on the development of the holy site and the plan focuses extensively on three tiers of planning like Short-term, Mid-term and long-term plan along with an ultimate focus on the religious, cultural, dignity, environmental conservation and the foremost focus on the economic sustainability which increases the living standard of the residing locals. There are always two concepts in development i.e., physical development and spiritual development, Physical development directly relates to infrastructure similarly spiritual development relates to religious faiths, beliefs as well as practices.

Conclusion

Pilgrimage tourism is the subset of cultural tourism. According to Seaton (2013), as mentioned earlier, metempsychosis is ...a journey undertaken...as the replication of, and a comparator to, a previous one made by a historical or mythical figure or group, in which the subject to some extent adopts the persona of the original traveller (p.20).

Metempsychosis is exclusively and specifically a cultural tourism form, but metempsychosis affects all tourism, though it has particular importance for the culture tourist both involve transient performances. The word metempsychosis came from religious texts (e.g. Buddhist and Hindu), mythology (Eliade, 1984), folklore and fairy stories (Propp, 1971) (Seaton, 2013, p.19). The study of pilgrimage tourism in Halesi is directly or indirectly related to story, legend, myth and texts of Hindus, Buddhists and native people (the Kiratis). Therefore, metempsychosis as a concept fits in this study.

Pfaffenberger (1983, p. 62) highlighted that Buddhist pilgrims have had ample opportunity to learn Hindu styles of devotional religion, which was indicated as the innovation in pilgrim behaviors visiting the religious site Sri pada and Kataragama in Sri Lanka (Obeyesekere, 1978; in Pfaffenberger, 1983, p.62). Similarly, the pilgrims visiting Halesi also gain the experience of innovations and opportunity to learn and participate in diverse religious activities. In the same way Hindu pilgrims, temple management committee and other local stakeholders are found showing their compassion towards Buddhist institutions located in Halesi. Rural cosmopolitanism, peace, harmony, composite culture and reciprocity are the best example of power places of Halesi and its neighboring areas.

Morinis (1994; in Hinmon, 2002) states that in most cultures, pilgrims tend to be self-labelling as such. Length of journey or the nature of the destination are lesser factors compared with the individual's view of the activity he sees himself to be undertaking (Morinis, 1994, p.7) "it is a kind of personal pilgrimage" or "it is a pilgrimage of sorts." Halesi is emerging as one of the major centers of attraction for the pilgrims all over the world which can be justified by examining the data of visitors every year. With such entire reality, pilgrimage tourism has well developed in Halesi area which significantly emphasize on the sociocultural and economic prosperity and strengthens locals' standard of living, sparking interest in ensuring the area's history and identity and promoting sustainable tourism activities which focuses on maintaining destination image to global audiences seeking to experience pilgrimage tourism visiting Halesi. Interconnected factors such as the locations visited and the activities engaged in by the pilgrims, influence the search for authentic experiences during trips to the holy sites. The components of authentic experiences may thus be related by looking at the interaction between place, belief and action.

Halesi is the same place for different people, culture, religion, ritual, and belief. The three traditions (textual, oral and ascetic) have shaped the existence of Halesi as permanent pilgrimage tourist destination. The motorable road has connected to Halesi from everywhere within Nepal. On the way to Halesi, the pilgrims enjoy a lot with the natural scenery, human habitation, new faces and new places, rivers etc. to what Urry (2002) calls spectatorial gaze, environmental gaze and anthropological gaze. The hotels including restaurants have also facilitated the pilgrims/tourists to stay at Halesi comfortably. Thus Halesi is becoming very popular tourist destination for both domestic and international tourists.

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