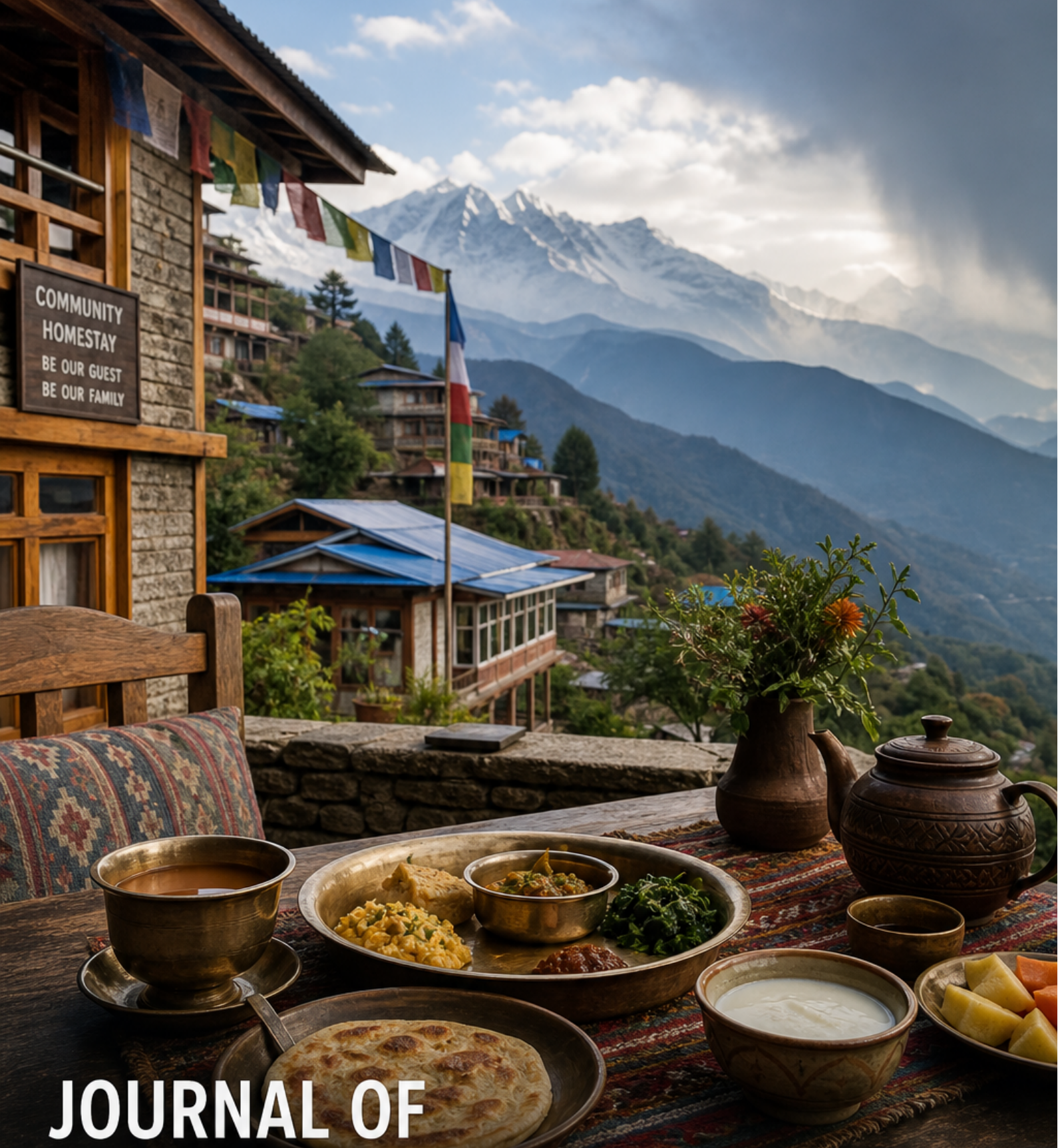




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Sociocultural Sustainability of Small Tourism Enterprises: Observations from Ghalegaon's Community Based Homestays

Baikuntha Prasad Acharya*

Elizabeth Halpenny**

Abstract

Ghalegaon represents one of Nepal's most popular rural community based tourism entrepreneurship initiatives in a form of homestays. This paper explores the sociocultural sustainability of the Ghalegaon homestays. Fourteen individual interviews, five focus group discussions and on-site observations were used to discuss four categories of sociocultural dimension of sustainability: 1) inclusive, 2) collaborative, 3) resilient, and 4) modernizing. The findings revealed a slow impact of tourism with variations in perceptions of the local people. A critical insight to respective stakeholders are offered.

Keywords: Homestay, sociocultural sustainability, small tourism enterprise, Ghalegaon

Introduction

Homestay tourism has become a popular choice of many developing countries where tourism activities are considered to be important tools in achieving poverty reduction and sustained livelihood. In Nepal Himalaya, homestays that have emerged sporadically as an outcome of the Visit Nepal Year 1998 campaign have now been widespread across the nation with the homestay-priority programs of *Nepal Tourism Year 2011*. Given the country's under-resourced infrastructural investment in tourism development, the homestays have been a policy strategy for low-cost product development and entrepreneurship initiatives by capitalizing mainly on natural and cultural resources (Acharya & Halpenny, 2013). Especially, the tourism policy documents and strategies such as *Tourism Policy, 2008* and *Vision 2020* have given significant emphasis on rural tourism development and promotions such as

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homestays. The annual programs of Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoTCA) and Nepal Tourism Board include modest supports to the homestay initiatives.

While the homestay tourism is prioritized and practiced as a driver of tourism communities' sustainability, there is a lack of empirical studies of Nepali homestays. The purpose of this article is to identify social and cultural sustainability aspects of community based homestays and to offer a critical insight to the homestay operators, management committees and respective non/government authorities while contributing to homestay tourism scholarship. Sustainability is a contested notion discussed through different dimensions. This paper will conjointly highlight the social and cultural dimensions of sustainability thus referring to sociocultural sustainability. In this article, homestays are considered as a form of small tourism enterprise (STE) and their sociocultural sustainability is discussed. Nepal's *Homestay Operations Procedures 2010* categorizes two types of homestay accommodations: 1) community based rural homestays, and 2) privately owned rural or urban homestays. This article focuses on the first type of homestay and presents the empirical evidence from key informant interviews, group discussions and observations derived from Ghalegaon, a well-recognized homestay destination in the western region of Nepal.

Sustainability of Homestays

Homestays as small tourism enterprises (STEs)

Homestays are typically alternative accommodation facilities for the tourists at affordable rates and with frequent opportunities to uniquely interact and immerse with the hosts and their lifestyle choices. Some popular other terms used for homestay in literature are 'home-based enterprise' 'commercial home enterprise' and 'commercial home' (Di Domenico & Lynch, 2007; Lynch, 2005; McIntosh, Lynch, & Sweeney, 2011). Kontogeorgopoulos, Churyen, and Duangsaen (2015) discussed the utilization of residential space of one's home for the purpose of homestay business as a commercializing process situating it at a middle ground between a friend or family member's intimate home settings and purely commercial environments in hotels or other conventional lodging facilities. While the homestays in Nepal are tourism products, this paper also considers them as STEs that are modestly work-intensive, noncapital-intensive and are owned and operated by individuals and family and managed by a community based mechanism. Most community based Nepali homestays fall under the STE category described in Nepal's *Industrial Enterprises Act 2049[1992]* that a small business is an enterprise that has a fixed asset up to NRs30,000,000 (approximately USD 300,000).

Homestays share the characteristics of small enterprises, namely, low or no number of employees, informal organization structure, small market share, small annual revenue and turnover, and limited infrastructure and assets (Churhil &

Lewis, 1983). Like other small tourism enterprises, homestays are run part-time, full time or home-based by offering services and products (Getz, Carlsen, & Morrison, 2004). Homestays in Ghalegaon have independent owners/operators who supply the required capital to their enterprises (Scott & Bruce, 1987) and are managed by a community partnership system which relies on social relations of the community members and their networks (Ahmad, Abdurahman, Alik, Khedif, & Bohari, 2014; Peredo & Chrisman, 2006) to support social and economic development of residents (Kimbu & Ngoasong, 2016). Ghalegaon's homestays are operated locally and the owners/managers are in one home community under a community based homestay management committee. Such community based homestays, owing to their operational purpose to seize both economic and social goals simultaneously, are also defined as social entrepreneurship (e.g., Acharya & Halpenny, 2013; Kimbu & Ngoasong, 2016; von der Weppen & Cochrane, 2012).

Sustainability of Homestay STEs

Sustainability is an approach of stewardship where wellbeing is maintained over a long period by bequeathing resources, quality of the environment, and capital to future generations (Kuhlman & Farrington, 2010). Many dimensions of sustainability are discussed by different authors, of which a three-pillar tradition is a popular approach in tourism studies that includes economy, society and environment. The UN-sponsored World Commission of Environment and Development (WCED) report, *Our Common Future* provided a futuristic viewpoint of sustainability based on these pillars advocating for minimum negative impacts on these pillars with a balanced reconciliation of human production and consumption (WCED, 1987). Along with these three, some other dimensions such as cultural, political and technological are also considered in some studies (e.g., Choi & Sirakaya, 2006; Gibson, Hassan, Holtz, Tansey, & Whitelaw, 2013; Park & Yoon, 2011). A few other dimensions such as democratic governance, continued wellbeing along with management systems, service quality, facility, and outcome of facility and services are also used in tourism studies to discuss sustainability (e.g., Kuhlman & Farrington, 2010; Robert & Tribe, 2008). This paper will focus on social and cultural dimensions only and present them jointly to evaluate the sustainability of the Homestay STEs in Ghalegaon.

In most tourist destinations, small businesses are the primary providers of services to tourists and hence are considered the economic lifeblood of tourism sector (Thomas, Shaw, & Page, 2011). The Nepali government has assigned high priority to the small enterprises, specifically those that are rural and community based (MoTCA 2008). The government is seeking premier tourism destination status for Nepal by promoting rural areas, and thereby has encouraged local entrepreneurs to venture into tourism businesses such as homestays (MoTCA, 2008; MoTCA, 2009; MoTCA, 2010). As a result, innumerable homestays have opened across the country

with many of them in rural communities and with host peoples' ardent desires for tourism-induced growth and development. Observations of such homestays across the country have indicated different experiences. In a personal interview, a tourism policy maker with the MoTCA, agreed that many of the host-communities' excitements are fading away as they are struggling to survive while some others are prospering. Sustainability of the homestay STEs is generally a neglected area of study in tourism scholarship. Our attempts to explore previous empirical studies of the STEs' sustainability in Nepal yielded no significant literature except for some annual enterprise reports (e.g., NRB, 2015) and limited empirical studies on Nepali homestays (e.g. Acharya & Halpenny, 2013; Regmi & Walter, 2016). Tourism literature related to pro-poor tourism, sustainable tourism and community/community-based tourism documents the salience of STEs and how they contribute to development in a consistent and incremental manner. These studies outline the nature of the STEs and make many assumptions about the sustainability of such businesses. This paper argues that such assumptions are often overstated and are rarely observed in the reality of less-developed countries' contexts. Nevertheless, academic research on small tourism enterprises has developed slowly, and calls for research in this area have been issued (Thomas et al., 2011). This article intends to contribute to this deficit of knowledge by studying the case of Ghalegaon Homestays in Nepal.

Sociocultural sustainability of homestays

Socio-cultural sustainability incorporates social and cultural values. Some of social issues like welfare, safety, healthy environment, access to education, opportunities to learn, identity, sense of place, and public participation are described under social values in the *Agenda 21* by the Earth Summit (UN, 1992). Later, *Culture 21*, the cultural working group under Rio+20, recommended culture as the 4th pillar of sustainable development as an amendment to the *Agenda 21* and described capabilities such as literacy, creativity, critical knowledge, sense of place, empathy, trust, risk, respect, recognition as cultural components of sustainability (UN, 2012). Additionally, a contemporary outlook of cultural components consists of values of cultural heritage and spaces in terms of practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills, and instruments, objects, artefacts, tradition, identity, diversity, spirituality, and esthetics (Axelsson et al., 2013). Magis (2010) considered change as a constant force in society and argued community resilience, which can be developed by actively building and engaging the local capacity to thrive in changed environment, as an important indicator of social sustainability.

Social entrepreneurship such as homestays are recognized in terms of poverty alleviation that they enable the poorest and underprivileged households to prosper (Kimbu & Ngoasong, 2016; Von der Weppen & Cochrane, 2012). Kimbu and Ngoasong (2016) highlighted women and their small tourism firms as social bricoleurs and/

or social constructionists that they act on local opportunities with local resources to offer improvised solutions to locals thus simultaneously combining their social transformational and commercial goals. Acharya and Halpenny (2013) explored social transformations of women homestay operators from housewives to managers of the enterprises and bread winners of the family; these women have also earned their spaces in social and community affairs by slowly overcoming the limitations imposed by male-dominated settings. Through their tourism activities and services in a community, homestays can instigate social changes towards modernizing the communities' life style through host-guest interactions (Harrison, 1992; Sebastian & Rajagopalan, 2009; Sharpley, 1994), create opportunities for women and minorities for their independence and empowerment (Acharya and Halpenny, 2013; Kauppila, Saarinen, & Leinonen, 2009; Urry, 1991), bring communities together for entrepreneurial efforts (Peredo & Chrisman, 2006), conserve traditional values, community pride, and promote quality of life (Ahn, Lee, & Shafer, 2002; Azam & Sarker, 2011; Sarinnen, 2006).

Based on the salience of above discussions, four broad categories of sociocultural sustainability were decided for this study: 1) Inclusive (e.g., class/castes, gender, culture), 2) Collaborative, 3) Resilient (e.g., adaptability, integrity and strong domestic supply chain), and 4) Modernizing (e.g., host-guest relationships, advanced health and education system). Three different consultations with nation's key tourism personnel in Kathmandu verified these categories defined for this study.

Methods

Data Collection

A case study approach (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2009; Simons, 2009; Stake, 2005; Yin, 2014) was chosen as a methodology with interviews, focus groups, observations and secondary sources as methods of data collection. The data was collected during October 2014 to February 2015 by the lead author in Ghalegaon, the case study site. Three different trips were made with at least a week's on-site stay for each visit. The second and third visits were used to understand any changed contexts in the destination and the third visit was also utilized to conduct member-checks with the participants. Prior to the field trips, three in-depth interviews were conducted in Kathmandu to understand the sociocultural issues of small tourism businesses' sustainability at the context. Their views were also solicited to confirm the integrated four categories developed for the sociocultural dimensions of homestays' sustainability in this study. The participants comprised of a high ranking official/expert from MoTCA, an established trekking businessman cum executive of Trekking Agency's Association of Nepal, and a professor of (tourism) entrepreneurship at Tribhuvan University.

Eleven interviewees were purposively selected with the help of mediators and with a snowballing approach to conduct the interviews at the study site. Use of mediators as gate keepers helped the researcher access local participants and key informants (Patton, 2002). Of the eleven participants, five in-depth interviews were conducted with the representatives of: a local tourism management committee (n=1), a local protected area authority (n=1), homestay owners (n=1), local non-elite residents (n=2). These interviews lasted from 45 minutes to 90 minutes. With remaining six interviewees, semi-structured interviews were conducted; the participants were: homestay owners/operators (n=4) and local Dalits (n=2). These interviews lasted from 30 minutes to 45 minutes. Among the interview participants, six were females and five were males. All interviews were conducted at the participants' work/home places. The variation in interview times occurred due to the participants' interest, knowledge and interactive nature.

Five focus group discussions were additionally conducted on-site to enable people consider their own views in milieu of others' views (Patton, 2002). The participants of the focus groups conversed among themselves, questioning, challenging and answering one another. A total 37 people participated in the focus group discussions ranging from minimum 5 to maximum 12 members in each discussion session. The five focus groups consisted of five different cohorts of people with similar lived experiences: long term residents (n=7); local institutions such as youth clubs, etc. (n=5); women's group representatives (n=12); minority castes – Dalits (n=8); and, local officials (n=5). Three of these discussions were conducted at the local community hall and two of them at the office of the local homestay management committee. These discussions lasted 75-90 minutes. Apart from women's group members, two participants each from the youth club and minority caste were females (n=16); all others were male (n=21).

The interview and group discussion participants' education level was diverse – illiterate to well-educated. They were all minimum of 18 years of age. No personal information of the participants and local people were collected. Due to the nature of this data collection process in focus group discussions, anonymity was not possible; however, the collected data was treated in a confidential manner.

On-site observations mainly focused on: physical setting; the participants and their behaviors; activities and programs; and some subtle behaviors such as symbolic and connotative meanings of words, nonverbal communication and unplanned activities (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). An extensive field diary was maintained using an observational protocol (Creswell, 2007). The observations informed the data analysis.

Some other literature consulted during the study were: the periodic surveys and studies done on the local/regional/national levels related to household income,

education, health, employment rate, visitors' arrival rates, conservation area entry fees, tourism revenues, and tourism statistics, etc.

For data analysis, the field notes and transcripts were coded, categorized and themed to ease the process of establishing patterns and overarching themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Charmaz, 2006).

Study sites

Ghalegaon is chosen for this study because it is a popular rural homestay destination mainly for domestic tourists and is also considered by Nepali tourism authorities as exemplar of successful rural tourism community.

Ghalegaon is a clustered settlement of the Ghailes, Gurungs (two indigenous castes) and Dalits (the minority caste) in Uttarkanya village development committee (VDC) inside the Annapurna Conservation Area (ACA) in Lamjung district of western Nepal. Hamlet of Ghalegaon comprises 1, 2 and 3 Wards (the smallest unit of the VDC) of the VDC with 111 households. The entire VDC has a total 281 households with a population of 1574 (CBS, 2011). Ghalegaon is one of the pioneers in homestay tourism in Nepal. The Ghalegoanese teamed up for a homestay initiation in 2001 and collaborated with local and regional tourism agencies to establish the community as a homestay destination. Ghalegaon's main attractions for tourists are opportunities to enjoy a homestay while experiencing spectacular views of mountains and traditions and lifestyles of Ghailes and Gurungs. Out of 111 households, there were 28 registered homestays at the time of data collection with a capacity of approximately 100 beds per night under a community-based body named as Ghalegaon Tourism Development Subcommittee (GTDS). Four other homestays were in process of registration. The GTDS is a local mechanism that manages homestay tourism, complying with the conservation area's guidelines and norms. A total of 23,500 visitations were recorded in Ghalegaon in 2014 as per the GTDS' record. Homestays in Nepal are registered with the MoTCA upon fulfilling criteria outlined in *Homestay Operations Procedures 2010*.

Findings and Discussions

In rural communities with tourism potential, small-scale tourism entrepreneurship such as homestays are encouraged in a community-based model to achieve integrated economic, social and environmental development in a participatory bottom-up approach. The community based tourism enterprises avail opportunities of collaborative engagement of the local people to promote their communitarian structures with commercial system. It provides an alternative to pro-agrarian livelihoods. Nepal government has been prioritizing a pro-poor approach of tourism development by considering small tourism businesses such as homestays to be effective tools to contributing to poverty alleviation in rural destinations (MoTCA, 2008).

Many studies have explained that the modern urban tourists including the Western visitors are interested in the distinct ways of lives and cultures in rural landscape and they aspire to explore the unexplored, exotic and distant communities (Brown & Hall, 2008; George, Mair, & Reid, 2009). The uses and/or consumptions patterns of local resources in tourism explain the overall impacts which discern whether the destination community is sustainable. Although the host-guest trade-offs can positively bring socio-cultural changes to traditional societies by demonstrating “modern” ways of life (Scheyvens, 2011), the modernization impacts on sociocultural and environmental fabrics of destinations can be non-positive and can increase the dependency of peripheral communities on city centers and urban areas. This paper aims to contribute to this discourse and literature by bringing the findings from Ghalegaon that highlight the homestays’ utilization of social and cultural resources and the resultant impacts on local community. Sociocultural sustainability observations are discussed next.

1. Inclusive

Community people in Ghalegaon are both geographically and emotionally close; they are driven by common interests, values and strong social cohesion (Acharya & Halpenny, 2013) because they have inherited a common system of culture and lifestyle choices. Ideally, in community-based enterprising contexts, many domains of potential deprivation that create exclusion are subdued and different ways that promote inclusion are encouraged. Sloan, Legrand, and Simons-Kaufmann (2014) showed social progressions such as improved quality of life, increased income capacities, poverty decline, and better education of indigenous communities by community based hospitality projects’ social inclusive approaches. Ghalegaon homestay is a community-based initiative in a remote mountain hill top with shared quality of life objectives. As confirmed by one of the interviewees who is a local politician, homestay owner and played a major role for homestay initiative “this [homestay] has emerged based on goals of community’s overall wellbeing by bringing the community members towards an equitable benefit sharing system”. Inclusion, in this paper, focuses on involvements of gender, caste and class differences of Ghalegaon community members in homestay operations and tourism benefits sharing.

Typically, the GTDS employees arrange the accommodations of the visitors on rotation basis to keep homestay allocations proportional and equitable. One of the interviewees, an employee at the GTDS, noted that they sometimes consider the visitors’ special requirements and available facility’s quality match while assigning the guests to accommodation facilities but without impacting the fair distribution system. When visitors overflow to the capacity of the existing homestay beds, other non-homestay registrants also receive the guests at their households; the GTDS employees coordinate this. According to the GTDS representative, accommodating

the spill-over visitors, supplying consumable products such as vegetable, chicken, local alcohol, etc. to the homestay operators, and contributing to the cultural shows are the opportunities where all the villagers share the direct benefits of tourism. Later, two other homestay owners also confirmed what the GTDS employee stated but reported that most homestay owners can supply their own farm-products except for local chicken and liquor that they may need to buy occasionally from other community members. There were a couple families who would primarily brew local liquor for this purpose. The two homestay owners and the GTDS employee agreed that the tourism system has not discriminated the Dalits - the Bishwokarmas - and the women in Ghalegaon that they are also equitably involved in benefits sharing.

Surprisingly, interviews with a single-woman homestay operator, a non-elite Gurung woman, and a Dalit male revealed many irreconcilable information to what has been provided by the earlier interviewees. The single-woman homestay operator reported that she was often discriminated against in terms of receiving the guests. According to her, the GTDS perceived her sociocultural boundaries based on her widow status as a limitation for fulfilling many of the logistics arrangements and errands associated with hosting guests. The non-elite Gurung woman interviewee showed her perception of unimportance of tourism to her by quoting an adage '*kaaglai bael pakyō harsha na bismat*' [ripe aegle marmelos gives neither pleasure nor displeasure for a crow] and further resented that her family had received no tourism-induced benefits, which are enjoyed by the rich locals. These views are further supported by a Dalit interviewee's insight that he might have sold less than a dozen chickens and no more than 50 liters of alcohol across his entire life-time to the homestay owners. His agitation was noticeable when he further stated, "these [liquor and chickens] are touchable and they [the homestay operators] use when they need, and we make their furniture and tools and that are also usable, but why are we so untouchable that we cannot have our own homestays?" Participants at a group discussion with the minority caste reflected similar tones that they were discriminated against. Another interviewee, an octogenarian Ghale who was once an active homestay owner in the early years, hinted gradual incremental changes in terms of social and cultural inclusions of the minority castes and the women in the society. This participant explained that the inveterate caste system still exists in the community but both Dalits and non-Dalits have exhibited respect to each other's norms. He said, "non-Dalits still expect the Dalits to not enter into their houses, and the Dalits respect the norm by abstaining from entering". This respondent further remarked about the caste-sensitivity amongst the guests to Ghalegaon homestays that the non-Dalit middle and high class Nepalis, the main market source from across the country, would not prefer to stay overnight at a Dalit's place. This latter opinion was largely confirmed during the group discussions of senior citizens, local officials and local institutions' representatives, whereas the

group discussions with the women and minority caste reflected variations. The women participants of the group discussion reported their additional load of work to their regular chores due to homestay operations for piecemeal benefits and no increase in empowerment within the family unit. One of the participants hinted women's over-utilization saying: "after a strenuous day we old women still have to 'move our waists' [dance] at the cultural shows until midnight and then get up early in the following morning to begin the same cycle again". The Bishwokarmas at the minority caste group discussions complained about Ghale/Gurung hegemony in tourism business ownership and reported being discriminated by not being able to run a homestay; one participant exclaimed: "they [Ghale/Gurung] include our man [a Dalit] in the tourism committee but they do not let us run a hotel [homestay]; they just show off". A Dalit senior citizen from the same group discussion identified a handful of local elites whose permissions are necessary for the Dalits to engage in Homestay enterprising.

While there are variations in the perceptions about operations of homestays depending on the gender, class and sociocultural identity of the participants, it is noteworthy that the rural Nepali communities such as Ghalegaonese are aware of their social and political rights and responsibilities. The roles defined by erstwhile caste system, male dominated norms and elite monopolized economy are gradually waning. Due to lifestyle values that were emerged according to influence of traditional power dynamics based on gender, class, caste and wealth in most such societies, opportunities are less likely to be retrieved equally by all in the short term, even under regulations based on social justice. Font, Garay, and Jones (2016) discussed the influence of traditional values in lifestyle choices and their impacts on sustainability behaviors of small tourism enterprises inside the protected areas. The mindset of the domestic homestay-actors reflects a caste-sensitive Nepali society at all levels. However, a recent update from Ghalegaon that a couple of Dalit households have started homestays represents a milestone in local social inclusion processes. It also appears to be a trial run for the Nepali society in general. Observations during the field trips have found that the women in Ghalegaon were overly busy, but it was also noticed that most males were actively assisting them. All homestays were run by family members and no external employees were hired thus it dismisses the issue of inclusive employment opportunities. However, the age-based distribution of work is uneven at these homestays that mostly older adults (60yrs+), with no young members in their family to assist them, are operating the businesses. It mirrors the contemporary situation of most Nepali rural communities that the youth members are away from their homes to work in overseas in labor markets. At the time when the nation is in process of implementing a new constitution that is reported to be inclusive, the evidence from this study of homestay entrepreneurship in Ghalegaon suggests some progress, but also remnant forms of discrimination.

2. Collaborative

Despite differences in definitions of community based enterprises across the countries and communities, the majority of discussions in the community tourism literature include participation and partnership as integral collaborative characteristics of community based tourism. Many best practices show a fostered collaboration and institutional linkages of the community members and stakeholders groups during exploration, planning, developing and managing of tourism initiatives (Jamal & Getz, 1995; Parker, 1999; Simmons, 1994). Some studies (e.g., Moswete, Thapa, & Child, 2012; Tosun, 199; Yang, Wall, & Smith, 2008) have highlighted pseudo local participations due to deficiency of knowledge and skill, funding agency imposed communications and collaborations modality and over interventions of external donor agencies including government bodies. In this study, the Ghalegaon homestays' collaborative efforts with the community members and external stakeholders were explored. The discussions below explore harmony, engagement, partnership and networking as key features of sociocultural collaborations as seen among homestays in Ghalegaon.

Most group discussions indicated a well-maintained local collaborative system that the community members and small local institutions were regularly consulted and engaged in decision makings about tourism development and homestay management initiatives. This affirmed what a GTDS employee and a homestay owner and executive board member of GTDS had also claimed and emphasized. No participants raised any other negative issue pertaining to uses of local cultural heritages in tourism offerings except for a concern about the influence of modernization and the challenges of keeping cultural authenticity intact. Interviews with the Dalit participants and the discussion with the Dalit group complained that their representations in collaborative processes were insignificant and have remained ineffective. A Dalit participant said: "our representations in the committee and its meetings are just to fulfill the legal requirements of country's reservation system because they [the non-Dalits] do not listen to us; we are just ciphers". Another Dalit, who is also a local school teacher, expressed a different perspective by elaborating on the supposedly ineffective involvement of Dalits in community collaboration:

Due to limitations and restrictions of past ill-practices, members of our caste are less aware and educated than the Ghales/Gurungs and only a few of us have exposures to outer world; this is what is making us less contributing to social affairs. (BA, February 2015).

This participant later explained some examples of slowly decreasing traditional caste-based malpractices. The group discussion with the women group highlighted the roles of women as the most effective in the tourism system. A similar view was held

by the local youth club members that they have been instrumental to help organize the bi-annual *Ghalegaon Mahotsav* [Ghalegaon Festival] to the GTDS. The group discussion with local officials comprising representatives of public school, health post and village development committee affirmed their observations and experiences of effective collaborations within the community members, their respective institutions and the GTDS. The interview with Annapurna Conservation Area's local unit representative highlighted the significant roles of the ACA's project office to overall development of the community. Most interviewees and the participants of group discussions showed less knowledge about the partnership between the local tourism management and external stakeholders at the regional and national levels. The GTDS employee and executive member reported a few calendar-based partnership and sponsorship opportunities offered to them by the district development committee, district chamber of commerce and industry and the regional tourist board such as re-printing information brochures, conducting occasional basic homestay operation trainings and providing a nominal fund to organize the Ghalegaon festival.

However, above discussions reflect an increased level of local engagement and partnership of Ghalegaon homestay, given the twenty years of this venture in the nation's most popular homestay, the collaborative strength of Ghalegaon homestay could have reached to a different height by now. While the local level collaborations appeared to boost social reformations and cultural conservation, the partnerships with external agencies have remained underdeveloped. For example, the nation's tourist board is supporting the GTDS in a very stereotypical fashion by re-publishing an information brochure annually, providing occasional basic cooking/baking trainings and dispersing a nominal funding for the local bi-annual festival. Efforts towards market-based creativity are imperative for any destination development and promotion campaign in the competitive rural tourism market place which has not yet been effectively reflected in the partnership efforts of the tourist board and other immediate tourism agencies.

3. Resilient

Definition of resilience rests on complex adaptive systems theory that it is a notion of maintaining equilibriums of different kinds such as engineering, sociological and ecological, etc. to deal with the future uncertainties (Davoudi et al., 2012; Folke et al., 2010; Holling, 2010). A community's resilience is often looked at through its ability to maintain, renew, reorganize social and cultural system functions (Varghese, Krogman, Beckley, & Nadeau, 2006). Franklin, Newton, and McEntee (2011) further discussed community resilience as both process and outcome that a resilient community is empowered to take control of their own developmental efforts and achieve an accelerated adaptive capacity. The concept of resilience in tourism has mostly focused on economic resilience than on social and cultural or other forms

(Lew, 2014). Farrell and Twing-Ward (2004) suggested enhancement of resilience as an adaptive management approach rather than trying to manage tourism through attempting to maintain equilibrium in the constantly changing and evolving world and its disturbances. Hopkins and Becken (2014) highlighted effects of evolving processes of people and institutions on host communities, cultures and tourists and discussed the degree to which the population can cope with the adverse effects of tourism in terms of resilience.

Resources of sociocultural capitals such as knowledge and belief systems, traditions, customs and rituals and roles of family members and gender and ethnic identity are the influencing factors to Ghalegaon homestays' local supply chain. These factors also affect the homestay enterprises' continuance. In this paper, concept of resilience focuses on how Ghalegaon homestays have been addressing social and cultural changes such as patterns of change in using social and cultural capitals and resultant changes in lifestyle choices to continue their homestay enterprises.

Most interviewees described a topsy-turvy experience of tourism development processes in Ghalegaon and referred to ongoing political instability and transitions in the country as the reason for the tourism volatility. The Maoist insurgency during 1996-2006 was reported as the worst tourism time in Nepali tourism, and the years following signing of the *Comprehensive Peace Accord* on 21 November 2006 have been advantageous years for tourism development. The executive member of GTDS who is also an owner of a homestay emphasized Ghalegaon communities' sense of place ownership, perseverance, agility and local resourcefulness as keys to cope with hard times. He was proud of how they have become able to keep intact their cultural heritages while still bringing gradual reforms in social practices and lifestyles. He said:

While many parts of the country are under ethnicity conflicts and relationship tensions, here in Ghalegaon we have no problem of that kind because we do not want to lose our nationwide fame; we are recognized across the country due to tourism and how rich we are in cultural and natural attractions. (GPB, February, 2015).

Most participants of interviews and group discussions agreed on the community's strength of a robust local supply chain built on social and cultural capitals. However, they highlighted a common concern of possible succession crisis of homestays due to lack of young people engaged in the businesses. Discussion with local institution members, who were all from a local youth club, agreed that the issue of youth relocation (temporary and permanent) from the village to elsewhere was problematic. This group said that the tourism could be more competitively done than typically if there were enough youth and there would be no concern for continuing the entrepreneurship.

The youth group critiqued community members' sluggish adaptability and showed their concern about engrained routines of serving food and showing cultures to the guests by the homestays. Interestingly, a non-elite interviewee showed a concern of deteriorating sense of respect of youth and teens towards local traditions mentioning some of their discourteous demeanors such as smoking marijuana and swearing and imitating non-local cultures.

Above discussions revealed some important aspects of Ghalegaon's resilience. As explained by the members of different group discussions, Ghalegaon homestays could thrive on group travels from school, college and university students and nearby city dwellers at the times when Nepal experienced a huge decline in national and international tourists' arrival. Overcoming the insurgency times and prevailing the homestays epitomize Ghalegaon's resilience. The utilization of social and cultural capitals over time in homestays appears neither impacting Ghalegaon's typicality much nor they are commoditized sophisticatedly and commercially. This inert adaptive process of Ghalegaon homestay on the one hand exhibits its resilience by being able to safeguard and keep intact the local sociocultural resource bases. On the other hand, it reflects a slow process of local development on the aspects such as institutionalizing homestay enterprises, infrastructural advancement, and capacity building and strengthening social bonding of local communities over two decades (Holladay & Powell, 2013). The GTDS should build a good and innovative relationship with tourism stakeholders and assist the community to empower its flexibility to rebound and reorganize when challenges come to maintain the continuity of the homestays (Amir, Ghapar, Jamal, & Ahmad, 2015). A pressing issue is succession of homestay management in future; this is shored with other sectors in Nepal who experience a shortage of youth employees and entrepreneurs. The relocation of youth overseas for foreign employment is a national challenge.

4. Modernizing

Along the development processes and through host-guest interactions (Smith, 1989) tourism promotes modern values, social progress and cultural evolution (Liu, 2003). Telfer (2002) highlighted social transformations in rural destinations by indicating declining values of family and other collectiveness and introducing of modern values and institutions similar to Western societies. In rural tourism contexts, there is an ongoing debate and tension between modernization and development processes and traditionalism. The consumers of rural tourism such as in Ghalegaon homestays are the seekers of exotic and primitive experiences that characterize authentic traditional lifestyles and cultural values of local people, whereas modernizing processes in contrast is an evolution from a traditional society to a modern society through socio-economic development strategies (Schmidt, 1989). While access to better quality health, education and communication services than in the past is a

basic general transformation of modernization in most rural communities, tourism, in addition, promotes modern values, social progress and cultural evolution (Liu, 2003). As such, a possible change in cultural integrity is difficult to reject. This paper reports Ghalegaon homestays' observations on how the modernizing affects and traditional values are maintained and sustained.

The group discussion with Ghalegaon's long-term residents brought out their lived experiences with many gradual developmental changes in the villages such as upgrading of local school, construction of road, access to clean running water and introduction of telephone, cable television, mobile phone, etc. Access to nearby cities, country's capital and overseas for multiple career opportunities of local youths were also reported as a change by this group and other interviewees. A teacher participant who is from elsewhere but has been residing in the community for almost a decade elaborated improved social and political awareness of the locals. Most these changes were explained as a normal outcome of overall development processes, rather than a tourism-specific. However, they considered the role of tourism as positive toward such changes. The homestay owners accounted modernizing of their everyday lifestyle choices including food habits, clothing and home decoration patterns due to operating the homestays. A Dalit uneducated woman interviewee shared her tourism-influenced feeling and also attested what the teacher has outlined about improved awareness by saying: "...now people from outside come and walk around in the village, it is a shame if we keep our yards unclean and let our kids defecate in opens or leave them untidy and uneducated." Most participants' views were similar about overall development processes in the community that a slow and steady positive change was occurring and homestays have somehow contributed to it. However, divergent perceptions were reported on the utilization of traditional heritages by homestays and the impacts thereon. All homestay owners, the executive committee members and the GTDS employee mentioned that the community's sociocultural attributes were carefully used as tourism attractions and were not harmed. These participants claimed that by using local features in tourism they have rather promoted their identity to the outer world and helped strengthen the community's image. Other participants, however, raised concerns regarding the ways the cultural heritages were used; they complained about the cultural shows' fusion with external popular cultures. A participant in the women's group discussion who is also a member in local cultural shows mentioned her dissatisfaction about dressing-up saying, "we (women) completely garb in our ancient attire but the males wear jeans and shirts and wrap around by only *Bhangra* [the Gurung dress] and co-perform". A local non-elite interviewee commented that some of their unique cultural heritages such as *Ghatu* and *Krishnacharitra* which would be performed rarely only during certain auspicious occasions are now haphazardly performed for commercial purposes. The employee

of the GTDS confirmed the random use of such unique heritages in tourism, however he justified that tourism has been instrumental for all developmental changes because such products have been enticing national policy makers, planners and politicians to visit Ghalegaon thus creating a platform to grow relationships with them.

Many aspects of gradual progression and a modernizing tendency of Ghalegaon can be realized in above discussions. The tardy development course therein simply portrays national tendency of overall development process. The discrepancy between perceptions on uses of cultural heritages in Ghalegaon tourism exemplifies the ongoing discourse of modernization versus traditionalism and/or authenticity versus commoditization in rural tourism literature. A clear distinction of perception between the tourism related and non-related locals is also noticed in that the homestay owners and the members associated with GTDS were considering tourism as a promotor of their sociocultural richness whereas others were critical. Finding perceived differences is normal, and parallels the many tourism studies that argue residents' positive and/or negative perceptions are determined based on the social exchange defined by cost-benefit analysis and tourism-induced impacts (Byrd, Bosley, & Dronberger, 2009; Choi & Murray, 2010; Gursoy, Jurowski, & Uysal, 2002; Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012; Perdue, Long, & Allen, 1990). However, the case of Ghalegaon reasserts the importance of how rural tourism should be developed and modernized but offer traditional experiences to the visitors.

Mbaiwa (2011) explored declined traditional livelihood activities replaced by modern cash economy of a rural community in Botswana caused by tourism development. The study however also highlighted a sense of insecurity of tourism-induced livelihood and lifestyle transformations among the community members (Mbaiwa, 2011). Liu (2003) argued it unfair to keep the less developed world its traditional culture for the sake of the tourists who wish to seek exotic and primitive experiences. In the case of Ghalegaon, where tourism appears to offer socioeconomic opportunities and remains auxiliary to many positive changes, commoditizing of the sociocultural features without eroding their original indigenous meanings and essences could be a wise strategy. To operationalize this innovatively and effectively, the GTDS has to use the indigenous knowledge and input and professional market-based strategies in close collaboration with key tourism agencies.

Conclusion

This paper discussed Ghalegaon homestays' sustainability by focusing on how the homestays have utilized and impacted social and cultural aspects of the local communities. Because the homestays are community based enterprises aiming to contribute to communities' wellbeing, how these businesses have kept abreast of this goal while mostly relying on local sociocultural resources was shown. The four

categories of sociocultural sustainability showed some positive shifts in sociocultural aspects of the traditional rural village. Homestay tourism was generally reported as a key catalyst for Ghalegaon's overall development. Particularly, increased sense of cultural identity, diminishing caste-based practices, empowered women's state and enhanced local supply-base appear to be promoted by homestay enterprise. A gradual and steady shift of Ghalegaon's traditional lifestyle patterns to modern lifestyle choices illustrated achievements towards improved livelihood, poverty reduction and rural rejuvenation through tourism entrepreneurship (Harrison & Schipani, 2007; Harris, 2009; UNWTO, 2012).

Ghalegaon homestays were observed to have maintained no written record of daily incomes, expenditures and guest numbers and demographics, etc. They were confused about the succession management of homestays for future. Their perplexity was also apparent towards partnership and engagement with tourism stakeholders and they did not have formal plan about marketing and promotion of their destination and developing a reliable market-base. Arguably, individual local entrepreneurs and a community based management system such as of GTDS may possess strong understanding of local phenomena and can operate, act and adapt according to contemporary market situations and they may not necessarily need to have good grasp of theory of business sustainability (Robert & Tribe, 2008). Rural STEs are small in size and are easy to conceptualize, operationalize and then to strategically manage with commitments of a core team (Man, Lau, & Chan, 2002). They are flexible in financial, operational, strategic and structural aspects that help make such enterprises sustainable. While this notion is true of the supply side of rural enterprises management, its demand side has a complicated scope that the market for such business is broad and non-local (Scott & Bruce, 1987) and that the tourism offerings are developed commoditizing and negotiating with the local supply chain - natural and cultural resources. Also, lack of formal relations and communications of GTDS with regional and national level tourism associations appear to hinder their resilience when new competitive destinations emerge and interests of market change. Rural destinations such as Ghalegaon are largely dependent on internal tourism market dynamics that are determined by larger tourism enterprises in Kathmandu and Pokhara, and more formal relations and communications with such stakeholders are necessary to build a strong market-base (Murillo and Lozano, 2006; Russo and Tencati, 2009).

Lack of expertise, resources and innovation and less knowledge of market requirements and opportunities are other challenges of most rural tourism operators which can be improved by collaborating with other stakeholders. Innovations in product, process, enterprises operation and marketing are the opportunities for Ghalegaon to achieve through partnering with external collaborators. Ruiz-Ballesteros and Herná'ndez-Ramírez (2010) highlighted an empowered state of

marketing, commodification, objectification and appropriation of tourism products through collaborations with stakeholders. Using the collaborative approach, the trainings and skills development endeavors can be tailored focusing innovative and engaging educational practices to facilitate sustainability practices in Ghalegaon homestays (Condon, 2004).

The idea of community based homestays in general seems a top-down injection of development hopes in Nepali villages; this was largely agreed by the three key tourism personnel consulted in this study. They also confirmed some of the examples of Nepali homestays that have struggled to survive or collapsed after a temporary eminence due to inadequate infrastructure, insufficient economic resources, and less skilled tourism personnel. Lack of sustainable partnerships with government and other stakeholders and shortage of innovative programs for Ghalegaon homestays' promotions reveal the nation's tourism promotion body's stereotypical marketing tools and homogeneous products development approach. Ineffective tourism authorities muddled in corruption and dysfunctional administration of Nepal appear to be exacerbating these issues rather than addressing them. This paper argues that sustainability of the communities is possible only if the small tourism businesses, the basal component of rural tourism initiatives, are sustainable. Looking at the nation's homestay champion's (i.e. Ghalegaon's) story, it is argued that such initiatives should be taken with a long-term bottom-up plan than haphazardly. Entrepreneurship innovations that are designed based on local resources of Ghalegaon and policies that are centered to the communities' social welfare will boost up social inclusion processes also (Hall, Matos, Sheehan, & Silvestre, 2012). Further studies that cover different types of small tourism enterprises (e.g., lodges, guest houses, restaurants, cafes, gift shops, tea houses, etc.) consisting of community based and privately owned homestays from different parts of the nation including other dimensions of sustainability are recommended to validate the findings of this study.

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Climate Change and its Impact on Tourism in Nepal

Anup K.C.*

Abstract

Climate change is a burning issue which had affected different sectors of the environment. It is observed in Nepal in the form of increased frequency of natural disasters, rise in temperature and change in rainfall patterns, shifting of tree line and unfavorable weather change phenomena. It had affected agriculture, hydropower, tourism and livelihood of people in Nepal. Tourism is a travel to a place for the purpose of business, vacation and other activities. It generates enterprise and employment, increases income and helps in sustaining livelihood of local people. There is a close relationship between climate and tourism in ecosystem tourism, coastal tourism, mountain tourism and nature-based tourism. Climate change brings more risks than opportunities by causing regional and seasonal shifts in tourist flows. This paper is based on the review of researches on climate change and tourism. Climate change had caused shift in destination choice of tourists. It had reduced barrier of winter tourism in Nepal in short term. But, unfavorable weather change phenomena had taken lives of many tourists in Nepal and had caused discomfort in transportation in mountain regions. It would decrease the flow of tourists in long term and decrease the income from tourism. It will further cause adverse impact on livelihood of tourism dependent people. To minimize the adverse impact of climate change on tourism, appropriate preventive measures, rescue measures and early warning systems should be implemented in mountain tourism in Nepal.

Keywords: Climate change, tourism, methodological issues, Nepal

1. Introduction

1.1 Climate Change

Climate change is a burning issue throughout the world which had affected different sectors of the environment. It had been observed from historical past and is growing rapidly due to emission of greenhouse gases (K. C., Bhandari, Joshi, & Aryal, 2013; K.C. & Ghimire, 2015; K.C., Joshi, & Aryal, 2014). It is observed mainly

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in the form of decrease in number of cold days and nights, increase in number of warm days and nights, change in rainfall pattern and change in extreme weather and climate events. Temperature of earth increases by 0.85°C (0.65°C to 1.06°C) from 1880 to 2012 but the increase in temperature of the past 15 years (1998–2012) is 0.05°C (-0.05°C to 0.15°C) per decade (IPCC, 2014; K.C., 2015). Environmental resources, climatic systems, biodiversity and tourism sectors might be destroyed by 2°C rise in earth temperature. It might cause change in rainfall pattern, scarcity of drinking water, melting of glacier, rise of sea level, destruction of forest, tree line shift, decrease in biodiversity and destruction of high altitude ecosystem (Dawson & Scott, 2013).

1.2 Climate Change in Nepal

Climate change had been observed more severely in Hindu Kush Himalayan region including Nepal due to the high altitudinal variation and fragile geographic structures (K. C., et al., 2013; K.C. & Ghimire, 2015). It had been observed in Nepal in the form of increase in frequency of natural hazards, rise in temperature, change in rainfall patterns, shifting of tree line and unfavorable weather change phenomena (Eugenio-Martin & Campos-Soria, 2010; K.C. & Ghimire, 2015). Impacts of climate change is worsen by geographical location, rugged topography, social condition, political influence, lack of skilled manpower, illiteracy and economic prosperity, nature dependent livelihood and poverty (Gurung & Bhandari, 2009; K. C., et al., 2013). With reference to global Climate Change Vulnerability Index (CCVI), Nepal is fourth most vulnerable country to climate change impacts in the world (CCNN, 2011; MoSTE, 2015).

Temperature of Nepal is rising at the annual rate of $0.04 - 0.06^{\circ}\text{C}$ per year which is more than global rate (Shivakoti, Lopez-Casero, Kataoka, & Shrestha, 2015). But the analysis of temperature data from 1975 to 2005 shows increase in average temperature by $0.04^{\circ}\text{C}/\text{year}$. Temperature was increasing across the whole country with higher rate of increase in high altitude and urban areas. Annual rate of increase in temperature of Kathmandu was 0.05°C with increasing trend of seasonal and decadal temperature (Baidya, Regmi, & Shrestha, 2007). The rate of change in temperature was higher in winter season compared to other seasons (Agrawala et al., 2003; Baidya, et al., 2007). Winter season is getting cooler while summer season is getting warmer (Eugenio-Martin & Campos-Soria, 2010). Number of warm days and nights has increased while number of cold days and cold nights has decreased (Baidya, et al., 2007; Shivakoti, et al., 2015). Temperature predictions by different models show increase in future temperature by 1.2°C till 2050 and 3°C till 2100 (Agrawala, et al., 2003). Few models predict rise in temperature of 1.4°C by 2030, 2.8°C by 2060 and 4.7°C by 2090 (GWP Nepal, 2015; NCVST, 2009).

Analysis of rainfall data from 1971 to 2005 shows change in annual and seasonal rainfall pattern with overall increase in annual average rainfall by 2.08 mm. There was increase in number of heavy rainfall events and decrease in number of rainy days (Baidya, et al., 2007). Rainfall is in decreasing trend in central and western Terai and increasing trend in western and northern mountains (FAO, 2010). There is prediction of increase in rainfall amount, heavy rainfall events and droughts in the future (GWP Nepal, 2014; NCVST, 2009).

1.3 Impacts of Climate Change

Climate change had affected agriculture, hydropower, tourism and livelihood of local people in Nepal (Sharma, 2009). These sectors are highly affected by decrease in snow fall and snow cover and change in temperature pattern in mountain region (K.C. & Thapa Parajuli, 2014a, 2014b). Floods, droughts, landslides and soil erosion have increased due to sudden change in rainfall pattern (FAO, 2010; K. C., et al., 2013). Increase in temperature had caused melting of snow and glacier retreat, modification of hydrology and increase in glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs) (ADB, 2015; FAO, 2010). It had also altered ecosystem facilities, crop diversity and production cycles (GWP Nepal, 2015; MoSTE, 2015). Climate change had adversely affected female, children, disadvantaged people, poor, marginalized and smallholder farmers due to the lack of coping capacity (Shivakoti, et al., 2015). It had resulted in shifting of dominant species of lower region to higher region and disturbing the balance of environment (K.C. & Ghimire, 2015).

1.4 Tourism

Tourism means travelling and staying away from home to a different place for the purpose of business, vacation and other activities. It is a main source of income for sustaining livelihood in most of the developed and developing countries of the world. It has impact on environment, economy, culture, traditions and physical infrastructure. Mountaineering and trekking are major tourism activities in mountain areas that have helped to uplift the livelihood of local people. Tourism generates employment for youths as mountain guides and porters and helps in generating income for their living (K.C. & Thapa Parajuli, 2014b). It has also created opportunities for enterprise generation through the operation of gift shops, groceries, tea houses and lodges along the trails (Sherpa, 2006).

Tourists throughout the world spend their vacation in mountain areas for trekking and mountaineering, ocean beach for recreational activities and watching diversity of flora and fauna. Tourists travelling in colder climates benefit more from increasing temperature than those travelling to warmer climates (Eugenio-Martin & Campos-Soria, 2010). They are attracted to the glaciers of mountain region of western North America (D. Scott, Jones, & Konopek, 2007). Adventurous tourism in Snowy

Mountain, trekking and mountaineering in higher altitudes, recreational activities near the sea and oceans, religious tours in religious areas and site visit to a naturally and ecologically rich place is the main source of revenue collection for local and national authority (K.C., 2017). About 10% of Gross Development Products (GDP) was spent in tourism in the world and this revenue has great impact on livelihood of developing economies. It increases income of park management and enhances economy of nearby gateway communities (D. Scott, et al., 2007).

1.5 Tourism in Nepal

Nepal has an area of 147,181 sq. km. with diversity of physiography, landscape, climate, topography, ecosystem, cultural heritage and natural resources (K.C., 2016). There are many mountains, protected areas, religions, castes, traditions, religious places and adventurous places (Bhusal, 2007; K.C., 2016). Tourists are attracted to the mountain ranges, cultural heritages, trekking routes and ecotourism sites (K.C., 2016). National as well as international tourists visit the mountain areas of Nepal for trekking and mountaineering. They enjoy indigenous culture, scenic view of different Himalayan ranges and scenic beauty of natural resource. Tourism is helping to increase biological diversity and use of renewable energy, maintaining peace and social security and enhancing income and livelihood of tourism dependent people of mountain region of Nepal (K.C., Rijal, & Sapkota, 2015).

1.6 Climate Change and Tourism

There is a close relationship between climate and tourism in ecosystem tourism, coastal tourism, mountain tourism and nature-based tourism (K.C. & Thapa Parajuli, 2014a). Climate change increases stress on environmental systems of different locations. It causes sea level rise on small island states, increases the risk of illness in tropical countries and discourages tourism. More frequent periods of extreme heat will cause discomfort in trekking (Viner & Agnew, 1999). Climate change brings more risks than opportunities by causing regional and seasonal shifts in tourist flows. It adversely affects those climate sensitive countries who are highly dependent on tourism (Ehmer & Heymann, 2008). Most of the nature-based tourism activities in the Himalayas are weather-sensitive so rain and foggy conditions significantly decrease the quality of the trekking experience in the Himalaya. Tourists can opt for change in destination if weather continues to disappoint them (Rayamajhi, 2012).

Weather and climate affects tourist demand, comfort, satisfaction, tourism industries and natural resources important to the tourism industry. Climate change can influence climate sensitive and economically important tourism sector (Dawson & Scott, 2013). It had affected tourism in many countries of the world (D. Scott, et al., 2007; Wyss, Abegg, & Luthe, 2014). It affects specific recreation and tourism activities, demand of tourism and quality of tourism activities (D. Scott, et al., 2007).

Climate has a great role in destination choice of tourists as sunny day is more favorable than a cloudy or a rainy day (Berrittella, Bigano, Roson, & Tol, 2006). It can attract more tourists in some place while it can decrease the tourist flow in few places. Few tourists would like to spend their holiday in their own home instead of travelling abroad due to unfavorable weather change phenomena. There will be less impacts of climate change on Zimbabwe as it is the coolest country in the region (Berrittella, et al., 2006).

Climate change affects physical resources and indirectly affects tourism (D. Scott, et al., 2007). It causes phenological change in the ecosystem which in turn affects leaf viewing tourism (Ge, Dai, Liu, Zhong, & Liu, 2013). It also affects forest fire in mountain regions which in turn affects regeneration rate of plants (D. Scott, et al., 2007). Increase in lake and river temperature affects biological resources of lake and decreases tourist visiting the lake (D. Scott, et al., 2007).

There is a change in temperature by 0.65°C while moving every 100 m elevation in mountain areas which has made tourism more climate sensitive in the area (Dawson & Scott, 2013). Retreating glaciers due to climate change affects tourism in mountain peaks (D. Scott, et al., 2007). It had more impact on mountain tourism throughout the world (Wyss, et al., 2014). Warmer climate could increase visitors in national parks of mountain region of Canada and United States (D. Scott, et al., 2007).

Visitors of Scandinavian and north-European countries visit other countries during winter months while residents of Mediterranean countries travel to other countries during summer. Tourism demands of any place depend on the socioeconomic characteristics of the household and attractive recreational place of residence (Eugenio-Martin & Campos-Soria, 2010). Climate change plays a great role in destination selection of tourists. Mediterranean region get more benefits due to cool and rainy season (Bigano, Bosello, Roson, & Tol, 2008).

Impacts of climate change on tourism are both direct and indirect which are also associated with GHG emissions. Tourism sector advocates inclusion of climate change issues into national policy formulation but could not make significant account of climate change impacts on tourism (Becken & Clapcott, 2011). To adapt from climate change, ski resorts are built at higher elevations creating skiing atmosphere. Also, investment is done in all-season resorts and non-snow-based tourism activities to adapt from climate change. Recent strategies of snowmaking and advanced adaptation techniques are unable to minimize impact of climate change on tourism in ski areas (Dawson & Scott, 2013). Climate change had variable impacts at a variable scale which should be addressed through national policy making. Relevant climate change policies should be developed by national governments with appropriate local specifications (Becken & Clapcott, 2011).

2. Methodological Issues of Climate Change and Tourism Researches

Different researches are conducted by researchers throughout the world to assess the impact of climate change on tourism. They have applied different methodologies to find the relationship between climate change and tourism. This section provides detail review of methodological issues pertaining to the research topic. It would help researchers to identify the appropriate research paper and appropriate methodology for their research.

This paper is based on the review of available research papers and review papers related to climate change and tourism. Different internet sources and published papers were reviewed for preparing this paper. Research conducted in international and national level was reviewed with special focus on national level research of Nepal in this paper.

2.1 Global Scenario

With an aim to identify the risk of climate change on health and vulnerable populations of mountainous regions of Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) region, Ebi et al (2007) reviewed documents related to consequences of climate change on tourism and health in mountain regions. Research conducted in different parts of the world was reviewed for preparing this paper.

Becken and Clapcott, (2011) conducted a study in Fiji and New Zealand in policy level. They conducted a research to prepare appropriate policy to cope with impact of climate change. Stakeholders of climate change, tourism and both the field were involved for policy making process. The case studies focused on development of strong leadership, commitment and sufficient resource on tourism sector to cope with climate change.

Braun et al. (1999) conducted a pilot study in German Coast at the North and Baltaic Seas to develop a method to measure the sensitivity of destination choice of visitors to changing climatic scenario. Also, psychological experimental approach was applied to assess socio-economic impacts of climate change on tourism.

With the help of scoring model, Ehmer & Heymann (2008) observed the positive or negative effects of climate change in tourism. Direct climatic effects, substitution effects, regulatory burdens and its substitution effects and adaptation to climatic effects were the four main parameters of the model. To assess differentiations between countries, different weightage was given by dividing the score into different subcategories.

With an objective to assess adaptation practices of tourist resorts to climate change and to assess their potential to reduce climate change by decreasing carbon dioxide emission, Becken (2005) conducted a study in Fiji. The data was collected

by interviewing stakeholders and experts, tourist operators and accommodation operators. Informal discussion was done with the stakeholders and experts and notes were taken. Background information and results was obtained from interview with industry operator and accommodation survey. Interview with private sector were conducted at the resorts during field visit with the help of semi-structured questionnaire. Operator's attitude towards climate change, adaptation, and mitigation measures was assessed during interview. Information related to energy consumption, climate change and environmental management was assessed through questionnaire survey. The support was taken from Department of Energy and the Ministry of Tourism while questionnaire survey was done with all tourism accommodation providers in Suva, the Coral Coast, the Mamanuca Islands, and Nadi.

Impact of climate change on tourism and sea level was assessed by Bigano et al (2008) by applying Global Vulnerability Analysis. It focuses on the economic assessment of climate change impacts on sea-level rise and changes in tourism flows with the help of Computable General Equilibrium model.

Berritella et al (2006) studied the impact of climate change in destination choice of tourists. Partial equilibrium analysis was done to assess the distribution of income of tourism in different region. To study the systemic general equilibrium impacts of global warming and climate change, computable general equilibrium model was used. A computable general equilibrium model provides detailed description of an economic system, trade linkages between industries, regions and markets. It simulates and assesses structural adjustments, economic systems, technology, preferences and economic policy. It also simulates impact of exogenous changes in demand patterns and available income in different countries induced by variations in tourism flows.

Empirical analysis and social network analysis technique was used for analysis of interdependence between different factors in mountain tourism region of Alps. To get information from different stakeholders, focus group discussions were carried out. Focus group discussions helped to assess the perception of tourism operators towards impact of climate change in tourism and adaptation measures of tourism towards climate change (Wyss, et al., 2014).

Scott, et al. (2007) conducted a study in Rocky Mountain national parks of western North America to assess the impact of climate change in nature-based tourism. It also assesses the influence of climate change in park tourism of Rocky Mountain region. It focuses on direct and indirect impacts of climate change in visitation to Waterton Lakes National Park (WLNP) (Alberta, Canada). It focuses on empirical assessment of response of visitor towards future climate and its impacts on visitation rate in the Canadian Rocky Mountains. For this, statistical model of monthly visitation and

climate was prepared to examine the direct impact of climate change on visitation rate of tourists. To test the regression-based climate–visitation models, a multi-year data set of monthly observed visitation were used to assess the impact of climate change on the timing and number of annual visitors to WLNP. Visitor survey was also used to explore the impact of climate change to WLNP's natural landscape and future visitation.

Eugenio-Martin and Campos-Soria (2010) assess the impact of climate on choice of holiday destination of tourists and tourism demand of a place. They use bivariate probit model which uses new regional climate index based on a double-hurdle model of temperature and rainfall. The methodology utilizes number of months of a year having good climate for tourism purposes. Information about socioeconomic characteristics of European households, region of residence and climate was taken for the analysis. For collecting socioeconomic information, household survey was conducted with the help of stratified weighted survey of 16183 households in 1997. Information from Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, Netherland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom was taken from household survey. They use GIS and nonparametric techniques for estimating probabilities related to climate and tourism.

Dawson and Scott (2013) examined the combined regional impacts of climate change on tourism in US Northeast region by modeling local-level impacts at all 103-ski areas. Vulnerabilities caused by variable climate change in ski tourism were assessed. To calibrate the change in temperature of higher elevation of ski area, available snowmaking technologies and generic lapse rates were used. Future climate change scenarios and the baseline period were derived from gridded climate data of Northeast Climate Impact Assessment. Six climate change scenarios and three different Global Climate Models were used in the study. Average results of three Global Climate Models were used for lower and higher emission scenarios of three future time periods.

2.2 National Scenario

Nepal and Nepal, (2004) conducted a study on Sagarmatha (Mt. Everest) National Park, Nepal to assess the impact of visitors on different environmental components of trail. For this study, 90 kilometers distance of 7 trails and 208 trail segments was taken for analysis. To assess the status of trail, four-class rating system was used. Spatial analysis of impacts was done with the help of Arc/Info and Arc/View geographic information system (GIS). Ecological impacts were well established on camp sites and trails with the help of standard qualitative techniques replicable in different ecological settings. Trail survey manual was prepared with the help of qualitative and quantitative data and data analysis techniques.

Rayamajhi (2012) studied the impact of climate change and tourism in Annapurna Conservation Area of Nepal. The study was conducted with the help of perception analysis of the stakeholders in the tourism sector. Mainly the lodge-owners, guides and tourists in the Annapurna Trekking Trail were interviewed and their perception related to climate change and tourism was assessed.

To assess the impact of climate change on tourism, K.C. & Thapa Parajuli (2014a) conducted a study in Manaslu Conservation Area of Gorkha District in central Nepal. The field study was conducted in the month of April and May in 2012 in hilly and mountain region of Nepal. The study was done with the help of 5 KIIs, 3 FGDs and 76 questionnaire surveys with local people and secondary data of climate and tourism. Clustered random sampling was done with the help of semi-structured questionnaire in Nepali language. Relationship between climate change and tourism was studied with the help of graphical and correlation analysis.

3.1 Climate Change and Its Impact on Tourism in Global Scenario

Climate change could affect selection of destination for vacations which may have either positive or negative impacts. In North German coastal region, climate change had negative impact as a choice of vacation destination of tourist. International visitors are less willing to travel there so local and regional tourism stakeholders should apply appropriate steps to reduce the adverse impacts (Braun, et al., 1999).

Climate change had increased stresses on environmental systems of different tourist destinations. Rise in sea level had adverse impacts on popular tourist destination of small island states such as Maldives. Increasing risk of illness in different tourist destinations is discouraging tourism. Increase in temperature causes discomfort in resorts of the Eastern Mediterranean. Decrease in cloud cover in Australia will increase exposure to the sun's harmful rays. Emergence of malaria in Spain will affect tourism in long run. Less snowfall may cause shorter skiing seasons in winter season in Alps. Sunshine, heat and warmer climate will enhance benefit of holiday destinations in UK by attracting international, national and local visitors (Viner & Agnew, 1999).

Up to 2030, there would be negative effects of higher temperatures in the Mediterranean region, France, Italy and Austria but there will be positive impacts in Switzerland. Climate change causes more problems and burden to the poorer countries who are taking tourism as a main driver of development. Also, Canada, New Zealand and USA will be benefited from climate change (Ehmer & Heymann, 2008).

Moore (2011) had assessed the impacts of climate change on tourism from economic perspectives in Barbados. Climate change policies may reduce tourism mobility in few areas of the country. Recent policies of United Kingdom has increased price of flights to Barbados which may affect tourism in Barbados.

Simpson et al. (2011) observed that Caribbean destinations may be too hot for tourists during some seasons. During summer, there will be intolerable heat in few locations. Increase in temperature will cause competition of tourism in Mediterranean and Caribbean region. Climate change increases operation costs of tourism operators in insurance, heating costs, cooling costs, pest management and water supply for drinking and irrigation. Annual losses from wind, storm surge, and inland flooding have increased. Rise in sea level of 1 meter will increase the risk of inundation in 266 out of 906 tourism resorts and 26 out of 73 airports in Caribbean region.

Scott (2012) observed that climate change shifts travel patterns, increases tourism cost in temperate regions and decreases tourism costs in warmer region. Climate change had also shifted tourism from Northern part of Europe to Mediterranean and the Caribbean, North America to the Caribbean. Increase in income from tourism and reduction of carbon footprint is occurring due to increase in length of stay.

Fall foliage season is an important time for sightseeing activity in the world. Climate change had caused delay of timing of fall foliage vacation season. Increase in 1°C will cause delayed beginning by 5.3 days, delayed best date by 3.5 days and the end of fall foliage vacation by 3.7 days. Start of fall foliage season was delayed in 1990s, best date of fall foliage vacation was delayed in early 2000s and 1990s and end of fall foliage vacation season was delayed in early 2000s. It has adversely affected tourists and the tourism industry by changing the timing of vacation trips and their promotion (Ge, et al., 2013).

There is need of information about impact of climate change on tourism. It is necessary to include climate change in tertiary education syllabus of different subjects such as tourism, resource management engineering and architecture. Mapping of all tourism infrastructure and health hazards of different locations need to be carried out for implementing nation-wide risk management strategy for tourism and climate change (Becken, 2005).

Warmer countries will have more disadvantages while countries of higher latitudes have more advantages in tourism from climate change. Rise of sea level will increase loss of land by 0.839% in South East Asia, 0.396% in South Asia and 0.167% in rest of the World. Rise in sea level by 25 cm till 2050 will cause loss of GDP by 0.1% in South East Asia, 0.0004% in Canada and gain in GDP of Australia, New Zealand, Western Europe, Middle East and South Asia (Bigano, et al., 2008).

Ebi et al (2007) observed that the main climate-related risks in the Hindu Kush Himalayan region were expansion of vector-borne diseases, expansion of diarrheal diseases and increase in rainfall events leading to floods, landslides, death and injuries. Glacial lake outburst flood may cause substantial destruction and loss of life while rapid snowmelt reduce freshwater in upland regions and downstream countries.

There are milder winters and longer growing seasons of crops and vegetation in mountain regions which may lead to adverse impact on public health of local people in the area.

The study concluded that tourism agencies need to enhance their skill and capacity to address climate change. Also, climate change and tourism sector requires a strong policy framework led by a government agency to convert private ownership into public ownership and global flow of resource into local flow of resource (Becken & Clapcott, 2011).

Tourism is a resilient sector as there is capacity to attract new ideas and avoid the traditional practices. Effect of climate change on tourism was felt differently by different people. Participants of focus group discussion were not sure about the winners and losers from climate change. Climate change enhances product innovation and tourism rearrangements in tourism sector. Rapid melting of glacier and permafrost in alpine region will have negative impact on tourism sector associated with climate change phenomena. Local tourism stakeholders had a great role in implementing climate change adaptation measures for adapting toward adverse changing scenario (Wyss, et al., 2014).

Impact of climate change on global economy is negligible in 2010 while climate change may alters GDP by -0.3% to +0.5% till 2050 and may lead to negligible global loss. The main losers will be Western Europe, energy exporting countries, Caribbean and The Mediterranean. Caribbean will be too hot and less pleasant for tourist. Tropical nations will be less popular due to global warming and unpleasant weather. Energy exporting countries will lose a lot due to fall in energy demand. There will be positive impact of climate change in tourism in Eastern Europe, North America, Japan, Australasia and Russia while there will be neutral effects on China and India (Berrittella, et al., 2006).

Scott et al (2007) projected that there will be increase in annual visitation between 6 percent to 10 percent in the 2020s and it will increase by 10 percent to 36 percent in the 2050s. Environmental change scenarios shows minimal impact on visitation rate of tourists from 2020s to 2050s but there will be negative impact on visitation rate of tourist for the 2080s scenarios by increase in temperature. More than 19% respondents would not visit the park and 37% would less often visit the park due to increase in temperature. Climate-visitation model shows that all the climate change scenarios would increase annual visitation to Waterton Lakes National Park (WLNP) (Alberta, Canada).

About 76% of the Danish people, 72.52% of Dutch people, 70.13% of Swedish people, 67.09% of Finnish people and 34.66% of Portuguese people visit other places in a year. It may be due to the financial status of these citizens. The frequency of travel of Finnish citizen is most (1.34) while that of Portugese citizen is the least (0.40).

Finnish citizen visit three times more than Portuguese in any year due to difference in gross domestic product, financial constraints, labour condition and family matter. If the community of residence is large, people will visit to any destination. Coastal people like domestic visit than visit to abroad. Construction of national airport has a positive impact on domestic tourism and negative impact on international tourism while construction of international airports has a negative impact on domestic tourism and a positive impact on international tourism. High rate of hotel prices in the place of residence does not affect domestic visit but increases international visit. The climate index has great role in tourism as better climate in the place of residence increases domestic visit and decreases international visit. Visit of people to a new place will change in relation to climate. Zero climate index causes 18% chances of domestic visit and 45% chances of international visit. Climate index value of 3 indicates 25% chances in both types of visit (domestic and international). Climate of a place is a strong indicator for selecting holiday destination of people. They showed that residents in regions with better climate indices have a higher probability of travelling domestically and a lower probability of travelling abroad (Eugenio-Martin & Campos-Soria, 2010).

Climate change had increased risk of individual ski operations in climatically and geographically disadvantaged regions. Ski tourism resorts at higher elevation having access to large urban markets are least affected by climate change. Climate change will cause historic contraction and consolidation of ski industry. But those industries which can adapt from climate change and which can develop new technologies would get benefit from stable tourism revenue. Climate change is the main factor which can affect ski industry (Dawson & Scott, 2013).

3.2 Climate Change and Its Impact on Tourism in National Scenario

Different studies related to climate change and tourism is carried in different region of Nepal. Most of these studies are focused in mountain areas of Nepal where trekking and mountaineering is the main occupation and main source of income of the local people. The tourism in this area is climate sensitive so climate change had impact on tourism in this region of Nepal.

In Lower Mustang of Nepal, people perceived warm and dry winter, decrease in water availability and draught as a result of climate change. It has promoted tourism by reducing barrier for trekking tourism in winter season but has increased the loss of natural scenic beauty of the place. Natural scenic beauty of mountains was reduced due to less snowfall in winter with thin cover of snow. Hotel owners were affected badly due to water scarcity in Muktinath, Kagbeni, Puthang, Marpha and Lete. Decrease in sources of drinking water in the existing spring had increased burden of bringing water from the new source (Lama, 2010).

Subedi & Chapagain (2011) observed decrease in number of tourists from 2002 to 2006 in Manang valley of Nepal. Tourists in Annapurna, Everest and Langtang region has decreased drastically from about 100,000 in 2001 to 67,000 in 2006. It might be due to political instability, climate change impacts and other reasons in the country. After 2007, the number of trekkers in Upper Manang had increased and reached more than 14,192 in 2007.

Rayamajhi (2012) observed that 69% of the tourism stakeholders perceived changes in the tourism season but 49% perceived impact of climate change in their work. About 63% tourist had increased in the region despite the change in climate and shift in tourism seasons. About 83% lodge owners and guides believed that climate change would have an impact on tourism. Rise in temperature had not caused any discomfort to the tourist but instable rainfall pattern had caused discomfort to the tourists. Increased intensity of rainfall, landslides, floods and other natural disasters may affect flow of tourist in the future.

In Manaslu Conservation Area of Gorkha, there was increase in annual maximum temperature and mean temperature by 0.10 and 0.02°C/year, decrease in annual minimum temperature by 0.06°C/year and increase in average annual rainfall by 3.19 mm/year. About 93% people have perceived change in climate, 36% people perceived the most significant impact of climate change on rainfall and water supply and 82% people perceived unfavorable weather change. People had perceived rise in temperature, rapid melting of snow, increase in rainfall amount in lower belt, decrease in snowfall in higher belt and unfavorable weather change phenomena. From the people perception, 96.10% respondents felt that number of tourist was increasing in Manaslu Conservation Area. People felt the increasing trend as a result of climate change and tourism promotional activities. In the long term, climate changes will have more severe adverse impact on tourism affecting their livelihood. All the key informants felt that the climate change had positive significant impact on tourism currently but in long run, increase in temperature, change in rainfall pattern and water availability and unfavorable weather change might cause adverse impact on tourism in the future. (K.C. & Thapa Parajuli, 2014a).

Due to the unfavorable climate change phenomena, there is impact on trekking and mountaineering tourism in Nepal. Untimely and high intense rainfall and snowfall had caused serious threat to the mountaineers, trekkers and travelers. It is difficult to complete the visit in a target time for the tourist as that happened in November 2010 in Mt. Everest (Sagarmatha) region of eastern Nepal. Bad weather had stopped flights for several days and caused economic and other social problems to the tourists. More than 1000 tourists were stranded in Lukla region (altitude of 2500m above sea level) due to the cancellation of flight by thick fog generation and wind. Few tourists had chosen alternative route of trekking to Jiri

from Lukla region while many tourists had waited for several days for aircraft (Sangraula, 2010).

In October 2014, more than 32 people were killed by sudden snowstorm in Annapurna Conservation Area of western Nepal. Hundreds of trekkers were trapped at more than 5000m altitude from sea level in Thorong La Pass area. Tourists were rescued with the help of helicopters and soldiers in the area. Many tourists were trapped by similar weather change phenomena in Manaslu Conservation Area in same time as reported by the authorities. Appropriate early warning system in the region would minimize the impact of disaster in the region (Burke & Walker, 2014).

In April 2015, devastating earthquake in Nepal had caused snow avalanches in Mt. Everest region at about 7000m altitude from mean sea level. More than 17 people had died and 61 were injured. More than 100 mountaineers were safe in Camp 1 and 2. It was the second incidence in 2 years period as 16 Sherpas were killed in an avalanches and icefall last year (2014) in Mt. Everest region (Beaumont, 2015). At the same time in 2015, devastating earthquake causes avalanches in Langtang region. It buried 116 houses, killed 308 people (176 local residents, 80 foreigners, and 10 army personnels) (Callaghan & Thapa, 2015).

Climate change had reduced the barrier of snow in winter season and had increased the number of tourists in short term. In the long term, it will have adverse impacts on tourism. Increase in temperature will cause rapid melting of snow and ice in the mountains and destruction of flora and fauna. It will decrease natural scenic beauty of hills and mountains of Nepal. Visitors will select alternative tourism location and better destination for trekking and mountaineering. Tourists will be demotivated to travel due to the adverse climate change phenomena in Nepal. Also impact on tourism industry might affect the livelihood pattern of the local people who depend on tourism for survival. It is necessary to apply mitigation and adaptation strategies to combat climate change. To decrease the death of tourists from unfavorable weather phenomena, early warning system should be installed in trekking and mountaineering route of Nepal. Apart from these, rescue Centre for tourists should be established in different trekking routes of Nepal. To solve the problem of delayed flight due to bad weather, alternative route of trekking should be enhanced.

4. Conclusions

Climate has a great role in influencing tourism demand and destination choice of holidays of tourists. Tropical countries will have unpleasant weather for tourists than temperate areas from increasing temperature scenario. Tourist will change their holiday destination from unpleasant weather to fine weather location. The developing and developed countries which depend on tourism as a major source of income will be affected from the changing climatic scenario. Trekking and mountaineering

tourism of Nepal is highly climate sensitive tourism. Unfavorable weather change phenomena had caused unpleasant situation for the trekkers and mountaineers. Sudden climatic disasters had taken lives of many tourists in the past. In the short term, barrier of snow in winter is reduced due to increase in temperature. In the long term, climate change will have adverse impact on tourism. Less snow in mountains and less greenery in the hills will decrease the scenic beauty of trekking routes. It will not attract tourist in the future as tourist will choose other better alternative place for spending holidays. The people who are highly dependent on tourism for income generation will be affected badly. It will cause adverse impact on livelihood of local people of trekking and mountaineering route. There is need of advanced early warning system, adequate rescue measures and alternative tourism route for minimizing the impact of climate change on tourism in Nepal.

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Hotel Attributes Influencing International Tourists' Satisfaction and Loyalty

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Abstract

This study investigates the influence of hotel attributes on satisfaction of 119 international tourists visiting to Nepal. It further analyzes the effect of satisfaction from hotels on revisit intention and recommendations by international tourists. 119 international tourists visiting to Nepal participated in the study. Correlation and multiple regression analyses were conducted to test hypotheses. Our result shows that among various hotel attributes, service quality and room & front desks plays significant role in satisfaction of international tourists. The other attributes like security, business facility, value, food and recreation and security were found to be insignificant. Furthermore, satisfaction was found to be significant predictor of both attitudinal loyalty i.e. intentional loyalty and behavioral loyalty i.e. revisit intention. There are lots of practical and research implications of the findings like it's a lesson for Nepal Tourism Board, Hotel Association Of Nepal and other related stakeholders. It guides them as where to focus their energy in terms of generating satisfaction and loyalty from international tourists in case of hotel service.

Keywords: Hotel, Attributes, International, Tourists, Satisfaction, Loyalty, Purchase Intention, Revisit Intention.

Introduction

The importance of tourism to Nepal is unquestionably high as a key industry, up to the level that it can be considered third prominent religion in Nepal following Hinduism and Buddhism (Thapa, 2004). Nepal is witnessing increase in both international and domestic tourism in recent development. Gifted with an unmatched combination of natural, cultural and historical attractions, Nepal has been one of the common tourist destinations in the global tourist market and has been proposing distinctive tourist

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activities like mountaineering, adventure and soft trekking and cultural tours, jungle safari, wilderness trek and other various sports and adventure tourist undertakings (Sedai, 2013). Given the increase in international visitors and heightened interest in domestic tourism, Nepal holds the enormous potential to expand this sector to generate more income, employment etc. The government of Nepal rely on tourists' arrival to deal with its badly needed foreign exchange, and in due course hopes to generate more income, employment, and tax revenues (Thapa, 2004).

There is plethora of literatures that present tourism as a realistic economic option for local community development. However, literature fails to portray specific roles of tourist hotels to local communities' development, which in fact is the core element for promoting a feasible tourism industry in a destination (Muganda et al., 2010). Even though, the inclusion of local community in tourism development is considered significant, yet their role is equivocal. According to Godfrey & Clarke (2000) the local inhabitants form a basic foundation in modern tourism, as they play pivotal role for the supply of accommodation, catering, information, transport facilities and services. Following this, in the second half of the twentieth century, the world witnessed emergence of whole service sector like hotels, lodges, and rest houses as a major source of employment amidst decline of the industries (Cole, 2006).

The ripple effect of this was world evolution of other service sectors and companies, including railways, shipping, airlines and banking (Blake et al., 2008). Particularly, published research illustrates hotel industries have long history of development from 43 A.D to the early 21st century (Kisembo, 2008). In the case of developed countries hotel industries have become an important economic sector with growth as predicted earlier by the International Monetary Fund. However, developing countries witnessed unevenly distributed growth (6.4 and 2.2 %) in advanced nations during 2010 (Ateljevic et al., 2008). All these indicated to the fact that hotels and restaurant are one of the sources of economic growth and can be considered pillars of tourism.

The tourism industry in Nepal has been prospering and blooming predominantly due to its unmatched and second to none tourist attractions regardless of having very basic and even scanty accommodation, accessibility and other ancillary facilities and services (Sedai, 2013). This indicates tourism in Nepal is mainly due to its richness in nature, culture and heritage, but the infrastructural arrangement has not paced up to meet the requirements. Referring back to the history, the conventional growth of accommodation facilities in Nepal commenced with the establishment of 'Royal Hotel' by a Russian national, Mr Boris Lissanevitch, in February 1955 (Satyal, 2004). However, in 1956 with the starting of the first five-year plan (1956-1961 AD) and following establishment of Tourist Development Board in 1957 under the Department of Industry (DoI), the real planned development and growth of tourism started in Nepal (Sedai, 2013).

As touristic places become more popular, businesses try to cash in by offering various services in those areas creating crowd, and thus the excessive supply of these services ensures service provider face unparalleled competitive challenges. Accommodation is one of the important requirements during travel. Thus in highly competitive hotel industry, only those hoteliers with clear idea about guests' needs will survive and prosper. Dolnicar and Otter (2003) states that due to the high costs that are typically involved with investments in the hotel industry, it makes a lot of sense to study, which product components travelers appreciate. In addition to their statement, this study also believes that an inclusive understanding of driving factors affecting tourists' accommodation selection is essential for determining hotel guest satisfaction.

Furthermore, understanding guests' needs above all necessitates an understanding of how they choose a hotel. Given that hotel choice behavior involves a decision process and choice criteria are central to the process. A plethora of past research investigated how customers have made decisions regarding hotel/resort selection. The purpose of this study is to identify the important factors of hotel/resort selection for international travelers of Nepal. In the highly competitive marketing environment in the hospitality industry, it is essential that companies understand consumers and their decision- making as they seek to gain a competitive advantage. Nepal offering its own distinct destination attributes, attracts all kind of international tourists, however there has never been any study to understand their choices of accommodation like hotels, resorts etc. and reasons behind them.

Literature Review

The consumer decision-making process (CDP) model stated that consumers undergo three stages before they elect to purchase a good or service: need identification, search for information and evaluation of alternatives (Blackwell, Miniard, & Engel, 2006). In right sense, these three stages are recognized as a cognitive function, which lead consumers through the purchase decision. A topic of interest here is the tourist's decision at selecting accommodation, more specifically a hotel, which follows similar decision-making process.

While making best possible hotel development decision, it helps knowing about important traits or features that govern accommodation choice. Those hotels attributes which tourists care about are pivotal for any hotel operators to make best possible hotel offering decision. Hotel attributes play a big role in guests' minds while determining to choose accommodation options. Those hotels that offer favorable attributes are likely to fall in consideration set of customers, and performing even better in critical aspect will certainly win customer's mind and heart.

Customers get influence by some special elements in products and thus end up purchasing in corresponding to their needs and preferences. These hotel attributes

can be either intangible or tangible, and tangible comprise of two main parts of hotel attributes (Chang & Wong, 2005). Tangible characteristics or physical attributes for a hotel are those elements that can be seen such as price, the form of facilities, the location, the existence of choices, word of mouth communication, and advertising, a familiar name and past experience. Intangible for a hotel can be characteristics such as security, dependability, service quality, reputation and staff behavior.

Hotels as Important Component in Tourism Sector

A hotel can be understood as a place that provides accommodation, meals and refreshment for allocated periods of time for those who may book their accommodation either in advance or on the premises. Hotel is defined in several ways: "*A place which supplies board and lodging*" or "*A place for the entertainment of the travellers*" (Bhatia, 2006). A hotel is an institution where travellers are provided lodging, meals and other services. Furthermore, a hotel is a fixed immobile installation that provides lots of amenities like television and facilities, room services, laundry services, shops, auto rentals, airline ticketing, reservation, and banking. It is an open and unique system where the tourist moves in, consumes the product and returns with an intangible product (Bhatia, 2006).

Tourism infrastructure is not fulfilled without consideration of accommodation, thus accommodation acts as a vital foundation to development of tourism. In fact, accommodation is responsible for creating feeling of home away from home to tourists. Coming to current context, hotel industry has become a sophisticated industry. The importance of accommodation, both traditional (hotel, motel) and supplementary (camps, youth hostels and so on) as stimulant to international tourism has been well acknowledged by The United Conference on International Travel and Tourism organized in 1963. Many countries have identified the vital role that accommodation industry play in developing their tourism, and they have come forward to coordinate their activities by placing big incentives and concessions to the hoteliers (Bhatia, 2006).

Factors Determining Customer Selection/Satisfaction of Hotel

In current scenario, anywhere hotel industry has advanced, there is tremendous competition going on. Like for any other industry, customer satisfaction for hotel industry is critical. And without a doubt, hotel attributes are important determinant of customer satisfaction. In this entry, there are many studies built on customer's views of various hotel attributes such as room quality, reputation of hotel, helpfulness of staff for evaluating hotel's performance (Cadotte & Turgeon, 1988). Hotel attributes are indeed deciding factors. Similarly, Barsky & Labagh (1992) conducted study unraveling satisfaction issue by asking respondents to judge the hotel performance based on different hotel features. Also, 21 various studies that took place during 1984

to 2000 were reviewed focusing on hotel attributes by Dolnicar and Otter (2003). The study resulted in identifying 173 hotel attributes such as Image, Service, Price/Value, Hotel, Room, Food and Beverage, Security and others. Thus, various hotel attributes have emerged as important attributes.

In a number of research projects that had been conducted, Callan (1996) recapitulated that the standard of cleanliness was given the highest rating in the selection of accommodation by customers. Lockyer (2002) confirmed to this finding that cleanliness has high importance for customers. Furthermore, other researches have shown that being a hospitality industry, customer satisfaction is greatly influenced by, the quality of interpersonal interaction between the customer and the contact employee (Lovelock, 1996). In another study, Knutson (1988) and Cadotte and Turgeon (1988) identified that clean, comfortable, well-maintained rooms, convenient locations, a safe environment, prompt and courteous services are crucial components of customer satisfaction. In other study, it showed that customer satisfaction is affected by the availability of customer services (Berry and Parasuraman, 1991). These various studies depict that tourists prefer various attributes without confirming to one single or similar features of accommodation facility.

Satisfaction is always measured as an outcome variable, which stands as an integral part of an attempt to improve product quality with ultimate goal of establishing and sustaining company's competitive advantage (Cravens et al., 1988; Garvin, 1991). This study intends to measure satisfaction and its determinants.

Perceptions of hotel service and facilities

In any tourism industry, it is evident that both business travelers and leisure travelers comprise major segments, which are served by hotels. To understand both their preferences and likings is critical to hotel's success. There had been numerous studies in the past that analyzed hotel selection behavior and related issues of both business travelers and leisure travelers. Taking into consideration Knutson's (1988) comprehensive study, both business and leisure travelers deemed friendly service, clean, comfortable, well maintained rooms, convenient locations, prompt and convenience service, safe and secure environment as the drivers of selecting hotel for the first time as well as for repeated visits.

The data collected from the members of American Hotel and Motel Association stated that helpful employees, cleanliness and neatness of establishment, quality of service and employee knowledge of service were critical considerations for guests (Cadotte & Turgeon, 1988). In another study, Atkinson (1988) mentioned key attributes for the travelers were the cleanliness, security, value for money, courtesy and helpfulness of staff. Also, travelers significantly judge personal service, physical attractiveness, relaxation opportunities, service standard, appealing image, and value

for money (Wilensky & Buttle, 1988). In the study conducted among members and non members of frequent guest program, the result showed that the highest attention drawing factors from the travellers were convenience of location and overall services (Rivers et al.,1991). In another study, when travelers were asked to rate the importance of 57 hotel attributes critical in making hotel choice decisions, price and quality came at the top, followed by security and convenience location related attributes (Ananth et al.,1992). Furthermore, in Barsky and Labagh's (1992) study, employee attitudes, location and rooms stood out as the predominant ones to impact hotel selection decision of both business and leisure travelers.

In other studies of leisure travelers, Clow et al., (1994), Lewis (1984) and Marshall (1993), found that security, personal interactions and room rates were considered salient. In a different angle, according to Choi & Chu (2001) staff service quality, room quality and value were the most impactful factors in determining travelers' overall satisfaction levels and their likelihood of returning to the same hotel. In another entry, Yavas & Babkus (2005) found three attributes general amenities, core services and convenience dimensions to be important attributes creating impact on both business travelers and leisure travelers' hotel choice decisions. All these studies conducted in past showed both commonalities and differences among factors of tourists' choice of accommodation.

This study aims to explore importance of hotel attributes for international travelers in Nepal, and this can help improve management's understanding of customer needs, and which could ultimately lead to customer satisfaction and repeat businesses (Atkinson, 1988). The theory of consumer behavior states that both customer's buying behaviors and levels of satisfaction are influenced by the customer's background, characteristics, and external stimuli (Engel et al.,1990). Thus, this study will reveal the requirements of international tourists who are particularly visiting Nepal.

Tourist satisfaction – intentional loyalty relationships

There is positive relationship between satisfaction and loyalty. In past most studies agree that satisfaction with a tourist experience benefits positively to loyalty (Pritchard & Howard, 1997; Oppermann, 2000; Alexandris et al., 2006; Yuksel, 2007; Chi & Qu, 2008). Although satisfaction does not confirm loyalty among the customers, it is equally true that loyal customers are satisfied (Jones & Sasser, 1995). This study also explores the relationship between satisfaction, intention to revisit and recommendation by international tourists about hotels.

Furthermore, satisfaction and loyalty are measured by two main things – one is revisit or by recommendation to other customers who can be family or friends that have potent of being future tourists.(Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Past empirical research shows that tourist satisfaction leads to intention to revisit and recommendations to

others (Yoon & Uysal, 2005; San Martin et al., 2008). There are other varied effects of satisfaction like willingness to pay more (Bigne et al., 2008) and a very strong evidence of generating positive word of mouth (Macintosh, 2007).

Looking at these positive effects of satisfaction and loyalty, companies strive for attaining them. Thus, since, both satisfaction and loyalty are answers to long-term sustenance (Nicholls et al., 1998), and also are future desires of any tourism products and services (Gursoy et al., 2003, 2007), tourism business should always strive for it. Finally, several studies in the area of services show loyalty is the outcome of satisfaction (Mattila, 2001), and hotel business is no exception.

Theoretical Framework And Research Hypotheses

From numerous studies exploring hotel attributes responsible for satisfaction leading to intentional loyalty and intention to revisit, a theoretical model was developed.

The theoretical framework of the study is presented in Figure 1.

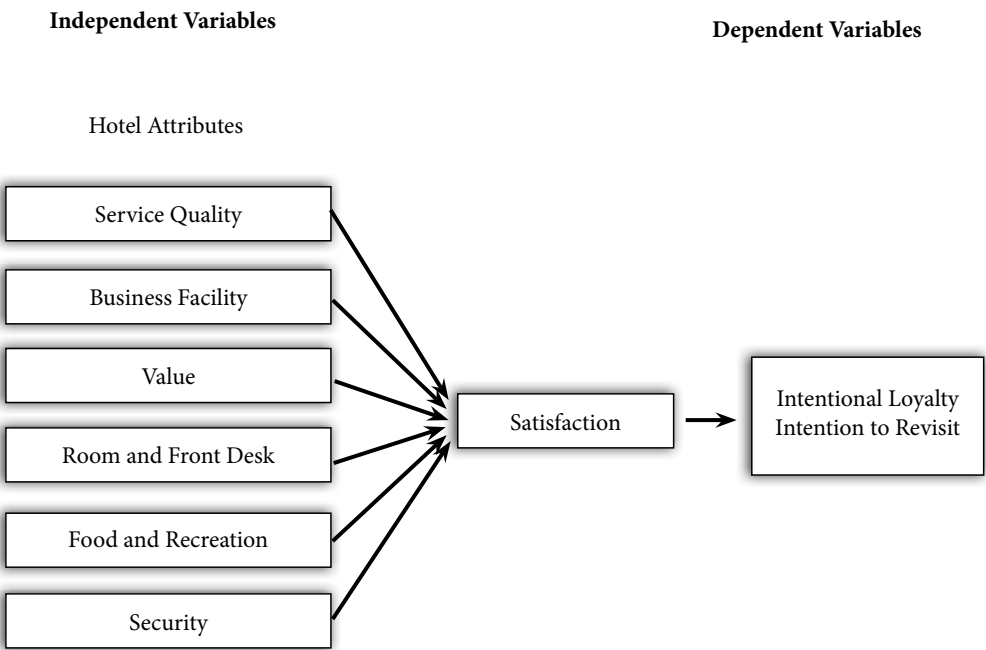


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

Research Hypotheses

This study proposed following hypotheses:

- H1a: Service Quality is positively related to tourist satisfaction.
- H1b: Business facility is positively related to tourist satisfaction.
- H1c: Value is positively related to tourist satisfaction.
- H1d: Room and Front Desk is positively related to tourist satisfaction.
- H1e: Food and Recreation is positively related to tourist satisfaction.
- H1f: Security is positively related to tourist satisfaction.
- H2a: Tourist satisfaction is positively related to tourists' intentional loyalty.
- H2b: Tourist satisfaction is positively related to tourists' intention to revisit.

Method

Sample and procedure

A self-administered survey questionnaire was created to relationship of various attributes of hotel with satisfaction and satisfaction with intentional loyalty and intention to revisit. The target population of this study was international tourists visiting Nepal. The survey instrument was developed mainly with an aim to investigating the relationship between hotel attributes and tourist satisfaction, and tourist satisfaction and tourist loyalty. A convenience sampling approach was employed to collect data in October 2016 at different tourist locations but mainly focused in Pokhara, as Pokhara is main tourist destination within Nepal with high number of tourist inflow. Among 150 self-administered questionnaires distributed, a total of 119 usable questionnaires were obtained representing 79% of response rate.

This study made use of a self-administered survey with four distinct parts gathering information on distinct travel characteristics and demographic variables of the international tourists, tourist's attitudes and perception of service quality of hotels, hotel attributes and tourists' satisfaction, intentional loyalty and revisit intention. The first part posed respondents' background; the demographic profiles included age, gender, nationality, income, occupation and nationality. In the second part, respondents were asked to express travel behavior like travel pattern and frequency, hotel booking methods. In the third part of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with statements describing the various attributes of the hotel. In the fourth part, respondents were asked to express their satisfaction, intentional loyalty and intention to revisit. The hotel attribute items, satisfaction, intentional loyalty and revisit intentions were assessed, using a 5-point Likert scale from 5= strongly agree to 1= strongly disagree.

First, the findings were profiled by travel characteristics. Second, a scale reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha was run to identify underlying internal consistency among the statement of constructs as they were borrowed from other studies. Thirdly, correlation and regression analysis were carried out to investigate the relationship between dependent and independent variables of the study. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the reliability of each scale. The alpha coefficient of the scales ranged from .58 (FR) to .93 (IR).

Results

Before moving into the detailed analysis, the travel behavior is shown in table below:

Table 1:Travel Behavior

Variable	%	Variable	%
Who organized your travel?		How did you book hotel?	
Travel Agency	4.2	Hotel reservation/website	9.2
Self	84.0	Online Travel Agents	23.5
Other	11.8	Travel Agencies	3.4
		Others	
Have you ever visited online booking sites for hotel such as booking.com or tripadvisor.com to compare hotels?		What as the most important source of information that influenced in your decision to chose th hotel?	
Yes	74.8	Hotel reservation/website	
No	25.2	Online information	8.8
		Travel Agencies	17.2
Have you ever booked a hotel online?		Television	.9
Yes	73.9	Magazine	.9
No	26.1	Friends/relatives	37.7
		Others	24.6
What is the size of the group you are travelling with including yourself?			
4 or less	85.7		

5 – 9	10.9
10 or more	3.4

Approximately, how much you spend on residence during your trip?

Less than USD 1000	77.1
USD 1001 – 5000	22.9

Mean, standard deviation, Pearson correlation coefficients between study variables as well as their mean, standard deviation, and internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha) are shown in the Table 2.

Table 2: Hotel Attributes, Satisfaction, Intentional Loyalty and Intention to Revisit - Mean, Standard Deviation, Correlation matrix, and Cronbach's alpha

		Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	SQ	4.05	.52	.75								
2	BF	2.74	.94	.15	n/a							
3	VL	4.00	.49	.44**	.26**	.61						
4	RF	4.01	.55	.52**	.24**	.61**	.66					
5	FR	3.22	.71	.24**	.47**	.31**	.42**	.58				
6	SE	3.64	.99	.32**	.44**	.35**	.42**	.43**	n/a			
7	SF	4.20	.55	.52**	.06	.41**	.46**	.13**	.14**	.80		
8	IL	4.12	.65	.61**	.08	.36**	.48**	.23**	.21**	.76**	.92	
9	IR	3.63	.92	.43**	-.01	.29**	.24*	.13	.18	.43**	.55**	.93

Note: ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

SQ – Service Quality, BF – Business Facilities, VL – Value, RF – Room and Front desk, FR – Food and Recreation, SE – Security, SF – Satisfaction, IL – Intentional Loyalty and IR – Intention to revisit

Cronbach's alpha shown in diagonal

The above result indicates most of the relationships between different study variables are significant and in the expected directions.

Building Predictive Models

Table 3: Relationship between hotel attributes factors and tourist satisfaction with hotel

<i>Predictor Variable (Tourist Satisfaction)</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>Constant</i>	1.948	.450		2.886	.005
<i>Service Quality</i>	.415	.103	.394	4.014	.000
<i>Business Facility</i>	-.031	.061	-.024	-.239	.811
<i>Value</i>	.164	.144	.127	1.142	.256
<i>Room & Front Desk</i>	.236	.112	.237	2.106	.038
<i>Food and Recreation</i>	-.071	.080	-.092	-.895	.373
<i>Security</i>	-.024	.057	-.014	-.418	.677

Multiple regression analysis was used to test if the hotel attributes (namely, service quality, business facility, value, room and front desk, food and recreation and security) significantly predicted tourist satisfaction of hotel. The outcome of the regression analysis showed the five predictors elucidated 34.3% of the variance in tourist's satisfaction of hotel. ($R^2 = .343$, $F = 8.5$, $p < .01$). It was found that service quality ($\beta = .39$, $p < .01$) and friendly room & front desk ($\beta = .24$, $p < .05$) significantly predicted tourist's satisfaction of hotels, whereas business facility, value, food and recreation and security did not. The results show that the revisit intentions of international tourists' satisfaction with hotels has significant positive relationships with service quality and room and front desks, however there is no relationships between satisfaction and business facility, value, food recreation and security. This indicates that service quality and front desk and rooms are significant predictor of international tourist' hotel satisfaction.

Table 3: Relationship between Satisfaction and Intentional Loyalty

<i>Predictor Variable (Intentional Loyalty)</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>Constant</i>	.448	.308		1.452	.149
<i>Satisfaction</i>	.792	.073	.755	12.019	.000

Multiple regression analysis was used to test if tourist's satisfaction with hotel significantly predicted intentional loyalty of international tourist. The results of the regression indicated the satisfaction explained 57% of the variance ($R^2 = .570$, $F = 144.44$, $p < .01$). It was found that tourist's satisfaction with hotels significantly predicted intentional loyalty (i.e. word of mouth, recommendation etc.). The result shows that intentional loyalty for hotels among international tourists have significant

positive relationships with satisfaction that they gain from the hotels. This indicates that satisfaction is significant predictor of international tourist' intentional loyalty.

Table 4: Relationship between Satisfaction and Revisit Intentions

Predictor Variable (Revisit Intentions)	B	SE B	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>Constant</i>	.773	.591		1.309	.193
<i>Satisfaction</i>	.683	.140	.425	4.876	.000

Multiple regression analysis was used to test if tourist's satisfaction significantly predicted international tourist' revisit intention to hotels. The results of the regression indicated the two predictors explained 18% of the variance ($R^2=.180$, $F=23.779$, $p<.01$). It was found that satisfaction significantly predicted revisit intentions ($\beta = .425$, $p<.01$). The result shows that revisit intention to a hotel has significant positive relationships with tourist's satisfaction from hotel. This indicates that tourist's satisfaction to hotel is significant predictor of international tourist' revisit intention to hotels.

Discussion

This study has grouped 18 hotel attributes into six hotel selection factors: Service Quality, Business Facilities, Value, Room and Front Desk, Food and Recreation, and Security. The main purpose of this study is to find how international tourists of Nepal evaluate the quality of different facets or attributes of a hotel, how satisfied they are with hotel, loyalty intention to revisit and willingness to recommend hotel to others. The study contributes to overall understanding of why international tourists choose a particular hotel and stay loyal to it.

In further analysis, the list of hotel attributes together predicted the satisfaction of international tourists with hotel, however only service quality and room and front desk were found to be significant. Conclusively, we could say that international tourists are motivated to stay in a hotel by its two main attributes i.e. service quality and room/front desk. The findings stand as a significant contribution to tourist hotel's satisfaction and loyalty studies. The results, which were devised on the basis of multiple regression analysis, show the imperative constituents with significant positive influence on the tourists' satisfaction, recommendations and revisit intention to hotels.

Undeviating from the previous studies that guest satisfaction is the highest priority for hotels competing with hundreds of others, and service quality is at the top of the travellers' list of the most important things when considering a hotel to stay in (Wipoosattaya, 2001), this study presents a congruent view. After 'service quality', 'room and front desk' was found to be the most important attribute in selecting a

hotel and has the greatest impact on overall satisfaction, which is similar to previous studies (Choi & Chu, 2001; Chu, 2002; Knutson, 1988; Tsai et al, 2011; Yavas & Babakus, 2003). Service quality factor comprised of staff's behaviors like politeness and helpfulness, efficient services, neat appearances and multi-lingual skills. "Room cleanliness and comfort" is deemed to be the principal factor and is still important related to overall customer satisfaction (Chu, 2002; Dolnicar & Otter, 2003; Lee, Han, & Willson, 2011). This is similar to finding of the study, where room and front desk was chosen as significant predictor of hotel satisfaction. The room and front desk factor comprised of cleanliness, bed/mattress/pillow comfort, check-in/check-out and reservation.

Hence, destination managers and other tourism promoting bodies like Nepal Tourism Board should improve service quality and room and front desk of hotel, which impact satisfaction of international tourists. This is in consistence with the proposition that if customers are kept satisfied with the quality of service and amenities they received (in our case room and front desks), such satisfaction outcome may bolster and buttress their future repurchase intention and at the same time influence them to propagate favorable word of mouth publicity (Fornell, 1992; Halstead & Page, 1992). In other research studies, it has been established that service quality convert into a customer satisfaction, attraction of new customers, positive word-of-mouth, repeat visits, so forth (Akbaba, 2006; Reid & Bojanic, 2009; Zabkar et al., 2009; Zeithaml et al., 2006). Yee et al. (2010) expressed that customer satisfaction is directly affected and has significant relationship with service quality, moreover the relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty is also found to be highly significant. This finding of this study matches with previous findings.

Implications

Owing to the concept of satisfaction and loyalty, this study clearly exhibits that both attitudinal and behavioral loyalty towards a hotel is driven by satisfaction drawn from hotel attributes. When established hotel attributes that are instituted in hotels in Nepal were examined from the eyes of the international tourists, two main attributes stood out – service quality and room & front desk. These hotel attributes were the indispensable factors that lead to international tourist satisfaction and ultimately loyalty. In much clearer sense, once customers' preferences are clearly recognized and understood, hoteliers are in better position to predict and service their customer's needs and wants proactively, rather than being reactive to their dissatisfaction (Oberoi & Hales, 1990). This study actually provides that guiding knowledge to manage international tourists' satisfaction and loyalty from hotels in Nepal.

In other words, it seems service quality and room & front desk are the two main hotel attributes that are sought out by international tourists visiting Nepal,

while choosing an accommodation. Consequently, the concerned authorities Nepal Tourism Board, Hotel Association of Nepal and other governing bodies, managers associated with various hotels within Nepal, universities and colleges teaching various hospitality related courses, processionalists owning and working in hotel in Nepal should exhibit service quality and room & front desk superiority performance that satisfies international tourists making stay in Nepal a worthy affair. If these two factors could be delivered, the study shows that tourists will be re-visiting these hotels and also will be generating positive words of mouth intensifying much needed loyalty and gain much needed competitive advantages.

Limitations and Suggestions For Future Research

This study has several limitations that need to be rectified in future research. First, there might be self-report bias due to the fact that all the study variables were captured from self-reported measures. Second, the samples for this study were drawn from mainly from Pokhara, which is top tourist destinations of Nepal, where international tourists could be found. Small sample size, drawn from one tourist destination might create doubt on the representativeness of the sample. Regardless, the findings of this study are in both in agreement and also in contrast with the findings of the studies carried out in the different cultural contexts suggesting that though satisfaction can be predicted by hotel attributes and loyalty can be predicted by satisfaction. Also replication of this study in Nepali cultural context to enhance the reliability of this study is suggested.

This study may be replicated with samples from all over Nepal in other tourist destinations so as to validate the findings of present study. Future studies could also examine the moderating role of other variables in the relationships between hotel attributes factors and international tourists' hotel satisfaction. With complete concentration on satisfaction and loyalty of international visitors, it is advised that future research investigate frequent domestic travelers to disclose factors that influence their hotel satisfaction and loyalty to promote the growing importance of domestic tourism nowadays.

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High Altitude Hospitality

Basant Prasad Joshi*

Abstract

*Most of the books and journals of hospitality and tourism, generally talk about history, trends and components of hospitality as a newly emerging discipline but there are a few books could only make significant contribution on the prospects, challenges and opportunities for hospitality especially in high altitudes where the challenges are ample. People would basically be interested to travel to altitudes to crave the places of adventures specially trekking, hiking, mountaineering, rock climbing, snow skiing, etc. Providing hospitality in high altitudes is a very perplexing task where there is always a scarcity of man, material and management. Hochschild (2003) in his book *The Managed Heart* explains about the human factors that are important in providing hospitality services. The importance of feelings and its belongings on the offered services to the client and guests has a direct bearing on the overall experience and this experience is much important in high altitudes where the sentimental values are more important than the physical elements of a good service.*

Keywords: *Altitude sickness, Emotional labor, Teashops, Alps*

Introduction and overview

Hospitality basically refers to the relationship between host and guest has a history connoted with very early Greek times when people used to gather in a common place for festivals, religious purpose or rituals. (Kunwar 2017, p.56) stated, “Most of the people in hospitality sectors refer to hospitality as the friendly and welcoming behavior towards the guests. Frequently, such a friendly and welcoming behavior may include sharing food, drinks and accommodation with the realm of shared happiness resulting in the establishment and maintenance of lasting relationships. In fact, the host—guest relationship serves as a power and control measure” In these times, the hospitality services were for social causes only. It was about this time that the concept of thermal bath came into existence for healing and relaxation. These thermal baths now a day have turned into the modern day Spas. According to the early history of Hospitality about 40 BC, the Romans who provided accommodation to the travellers

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in Government premises travelled from one place to another for trade purpose and when they travelled seek for pleasure, comfort and entertainment leading to the development of this industry at large.

Researcher in this study finds that the most of the books and journals of hospitality and tourism, generally talk about the history, trends and components of hospitality as a newly emerging discipline but there are a few books could only make significant contribution on the prospects, challenges and opportunities for hospitality specially in High altitudes where the challenges are ample. People basically travel to Altitudes to crave the places of adventures specially trekking, hiking, mountaineering, rock climbing, snow skiing, etc. Providing hospitality in High altitudes is a challenging task where there is always a scarcity of man, material and management. We use the word management to show up its direct proportionality with the man as a primary element of providing Hospitality. We have been living in the modern age where people travel for pleasure and find the most amazing yet very exhilarating destinations to have a very vacationing experience. Nepal as being a world destination for altitude climbing has a history connoted with Mt. Everest, the highest peak of the world. The fundamentals of this study lies on finding as to how the lives are surviving in these destinations? What are the challenges associated to High altitudes to provide real time hospitality to visitors? What developments are going on in these destinations? What are the Basic Hospitality tools used for bringing the hospitality to a level? To have the answer to these all the questions, Researcher used a very pragmatic survey in the different High altitude destinations in Nepal.

For this kind of study, research based conduct is important. Researcher conducted the study based on unstructured questionnaire in the different High altitude tourist destinations of Nepal like Everest Region, Langtang Valley, Helambu and Gosai Kunda, also the researcher took feedback from the trekkers in different regions especially from the Upper Mustang area. The trekkers in Upper Mustang area from Tukucho to Muktinath to Ghami to Lo-manthang to Sangboche, Kagbeni to Lete to Ghasha to Beni to Pokhara were asked about their experience in the journey. About 15 cooks of this region and about 15 Porters and more than 50 travellers of the region were taken interview during the research related to food, drink, hospitality, prospects and problems in high altitude areas and the hospitality offerings.

Historical Overview of Hospitality

Medieval Period considered in between 5th to 15th Century was the period of Western Roman Empires and merged in to the age of modern discovery has provided a lot for the growth of Hospitality Industry. This is where the English travel and do excursion in their own privately owned residences. This further gave rise to the existence of Caravanserais that provided some resting places of the caravans, the

group of people travelled together for some trade purpose. These places then turned into the first places to offer refuge to travellers.

Persians in this period acted smart to establish further inns and post houses in the routes of caravans which then used to offer accommodation to the soldiers and couriers. In a book by Marco Polo, he estimated to have 10,000 such post houses in a distance of 25 KM. Marco Polo's book "The Travels of Marco Polo" gave significant contribution to what should be offered to a modern day traveller. In the year 1282, in Florence, Italy, an innkeeper formed an association with turning hospitality to a business with its own right, took government permission to sell wine and was spread into the rest of the world as hospitality industry elsewhere. (<https://soegjobs.com>)

In 14th Century which is regarded as the most important period to start the formal opening of the Hotel Industry with the opening of Hotel Kosshu Nishiyama in Japan. Hotel De Henry or Hotel de Salm in around 1788 in 16th Century in France was the next hotel of third era to give rise to the formal opening of Hotel industry in the world, names of this hotel changes over the years. These Hotels have created trends to have more openings in New York, England and other Southern colonies. After the French revolution for far-reaching social and political upheaval in France that lasted from 1789 until 1799, there were quite noteworthy developments made in the Culinary Arts and Hospitality Industry by Chefs like Escoffier and M. Boulanger who took the culinary standards to other heights.

In the 19th Century, the development has spread in a great way opening Savoy Hotel in London, Delmonico in New York followed by tourist standard hotels in other part of the world creating better standards in Hospitality Industry. Two consecutive world wars in 19th Century has disturbed the growth of Hotel/hospitality Industry at large turning the entire tourism industry to be called dark tourism or 'Thanatourism'. In the industrial revolution starting 1970's, the construction of new hotels in Europe, England and America paving ways to open new hotels in Far east.

Modern Hospitality after 20th Century has modern architects, engineers, developers, and managers further has the hospitality academies producing competent hospitality professionals has been regarded as the most important industry of the world. Today the Hotel industry has developed a lot giving choices to the travellers to make their stay a most memorable one. We have many chain Hotels namely: Ritz Carlton, Sheraton, Hilton, Radisson, Hyatt, Marriott, Starwood, etc.

Etymology of Hospitality

Hospitality refers to a benevolence relationship between the host and guest where as the host receives the guest with goodwill, honor and diligence. Louis, chevalier de Jaucourt describes hospitality in the Encyclopédie as the virtue of a great soul that cares for the whole universe through the ties of humanity.

Derives from the Latin *hospes*, meaning “host”, “guest”, or “stranger”. *Hospes* is formed from *hostis*, which means “stranger” or “enemy” (the latter being where terms like “hostile” derive). By metonymy the Latin word ‘Hospital’ means a guest-chamber, guest’s lodging, and an inn. *Hospes* is thus the root for the English words *host* (where the *p* was dropped for convenience of pronunciation), *hospitality*, *hospice*, *hostel* and *hotel*.

Western world today celebrate hospitality as etiquette and entertainment and rarely a matter of protection and survival. However, it still shows the respect for guests, providing them with their needs and wants by treating those equals. Cultures and subcultures vary in the extent to which one is expected to show hospitality to strangers, as opposed to personal friends or members several recent definitions of hospitality activities are interesting because they confirm the current preoccupation to commercial provision.

Joint Hospitality Industry Congress (JHIC, 1996) and the Higher Education Funding Council- England (1998) defined hospitality in industrial/commercial term as a cluster of services provided by a variety of organizations in different sectors of the industry. Since this definition is broadly related to the supply of goods and services hence are economic in nature. The major focus of this definition is the service nature of this industry and hence is totally dedicated to commercial provisions of hospitality. That said, these economic definitions are essentially limited and flawed by their preoccupation with the here and now.

A wider understanding of hospitality suggests firstly that hospitality is essentially a relationship based on host and guest. To be effective, hospitality requires the guest to feel that the host is being hospitable through feelings and generosity, a desire to please, and a genuine regard for the guest as an individual. Consequently, calculative hosting where the guest senses a hidden motive can be counterproductive. A second point flowing from this wider understanding is that the current commercial provision of hospitality provides but one avenue for the exploration of hospitality. The social domain assists in setting the study of hospitality and the component elements in a wider social context. The value placed on being hospitable, caring for strangers, assisting the poor and providing hospitality to those in need, within a society’s value system, is an additional and fruitful line of enquiry. Similarly, the relationship between guest and host still takes place in private settings of one’s in group. (Lashley & Morrison, 2000)

In India and Nepal hospitality is based on the code of *Atithi Devo Bhava*. The guest is equivalent to God is taken from an ancient Hindu scripture which became part of the “code of conduct” for Hindu society. This principle is shown in a number of stories where a guest is revealed to be a god who rewards the provider

of hospitality. From this stems the Indian practice of sociability towards guests at home and in all social situations. Nepal and India follow almost the similar pattern of hospitality but differs in many ways based on the regional choices and cultural understandings.

Mosaic at San Vitale, Ravenna, Abraham and the angels, pre-547, Judaism praises hospitality to strangers and guests based largely on the examples of Abraham and lot in the Book of Genesis (Genesis 18:1–8 and 19:1–8). In Hebrew, the practice is called *hachnasat orchim*, or “welcoming guests”. Besides other expectations, hosts are expected to provide nourishment, comfort, and entertainment to their guests, and at the end of the visit, hosts customarily escort their guests out of their home, wishing them a safe journey.

One of the main principles of Pashtunwali is *Melmastia*. This is the display of hospitality and profound respect to all visitors (regardless of race, religion, national affiliation or economic status) without any hope of remuneration or favor. Pashtuns will go to great lengths to show their hospitality.

Celtic societies also valued the concept of hospitality, especially in terms of protection. A host who granted a person’s request for refuge was expected not only to provide food and shelter to his/her guest, but to make sure they did not come to harm while under their care.

Even in historical myths the term hospitality has been generously offered by a mankind to the god and among themselves. “Duryodhan ki Mewa Tyagi, Sag Bidur Ghar Khai, Sabse Onchi Prem Sagai.” (Shreemad Bhawat Geeta, p. 618). The hospitality provided to lord Krishna by Bidur is an example where lord Krishna eats simple boiled green vegetables as being served with heart in Bidur’s house but he denied eating dry nuts and savories in the house of Duryodhana (villain of Mahabharata). This shows that the hospitality for a showmanship has very less receiving as long as the hospitality for hospitality from the heart does exist.

Jagatguru Shree Kripaluji Maharaj the fifth original Jagatguru (World Teacher and Moderator of all the religions) in his book *Prem Ras Siddhanta*, the philosophy of divine love (Kripaluji Maharaj, 1955) stated, “Service and hospitality should be as per the wish of his master not the wish of his servant or the service provider. Any service or hospitality given as per the wish of his master or service beholder is a true service or hospitality”

High Altitude Hospitality an Emerging Castigation

High altitude is considered as the level more than 3000 feet above sea level although the boiling point of water at 2000 feet is 208 °F instead of 212 °F. In the west world, Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, California, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington

and Wyoming are situated at high altitudes but not in that high as compared to the mountains of Nepal.

With the increasing rate of the travelers who crave to visit many places of adventures specially related to this subject for e.g. trekking, hiking, mountaineering, rock climbing, snow skiing, etc, the concept of the High altitude Hospitality starts putting its feet in. When people travel in high altitudes in search of peace, adventure and the natural belongingness, the high altitude hospitality discipline should flinch in serving their needs in those places. This has become an emerging castigation because of its nature and fame. Traveling in high altitudes is an adventure, fun, flair and fascination. When this area of tourism exists the hospitality follows. Hospitality at high altitude is really challenging as there is always a scarcity of man, material and resources. This study focuses on the Nepalese high altitude hospitality with its connotation to the rest of the world.

Tourism and Hospitality in European Alps

Alps are one of the most exciting destinations in the world, are adventures and risky to life if not planned well. Oberstdorf in Bavaria, Saalbach in Austria, Davos in Switzerland, Chamonix in France, and Cortina d'Ampezzo in Italy are annually visited by more than 120 million visitors. Tourism in these destinations is an integral to the Alpine economy with much of it coming from winter sports, although summer visitors are also an important component.

The term Alpine states or Alpine countries refers to the territory of eight countries associated with the Alpine region, as defined by the Alpine Convention of 1991: Austria (28.7% of the total area), Italy (27.2%), and France (21.4%), which represents more than 77% of the Alpine territory and more than three quarters of the Alpine population. From a strictly national point of view, and with the exception of microstates Liechtenstein and Monaco, the Alps are dominant in only two countries: Austria (65.5% of its territory) and Switzerland (65%).

It is said that the people started visiting the alps in around 19th century in search of peace and to get connected with the nature, scenic beauty and then started staying for Spa, a kind of natural spring water bathing for medicinal purpose specially in high mountains where the water carries some essence and oils of the high mountain herbs and medicinal botanicals making water to act as medicine. The origin and evolution of cog-railways in 20th century helped the tourists to bring them even more high mountains, well above the touch line of the snow capped mountains. During 19th century the concept of winter sports were introduced and in 1882 the first figure skating championship was held in St. Moritz, Switzerland followed by a downhill skiing in 20th century with the installation of the first ski-lift in Grindelwald around 1908.

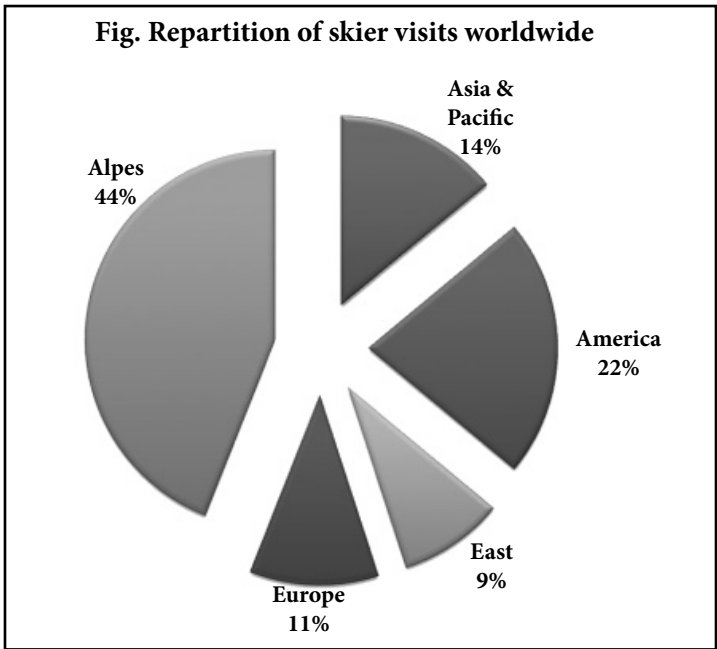


Fig. 1. Repartition of skier visits worldwide

Winter Olympic Games also brought the people in high altitude venues. For example in the first half of 20th century, Olympic winter games were held three times consequently in 1924 in Chamonix, France, in 1928 in St. Moritz, Switzerland and in 1936 in Garmisch, Partenkirche. After world war II, the winter games have been held in St. Moritz (1948), Cortina d'Ampezzo (1956), Innsbruck, Austria (1964 and 1976), Grenoble, France, (1968), Albertville, France, (1992), and Torino (2006).

Alpine tourism has the history associated with the introduction of ski-lifts in Switzerland and in Austria for winter visitors and also in the mid of 20th century the popularity of downhill skiing in the villages of France. Austria and Switzerland were famous for the winter sports till 1970's and after then winter tourism has become famous in France, Italy and Tyrol.

Nepalese High altitude Teashops and Hospitality

Nepal is a mountainous country and famous in the world for having eight peaks which are above 8000 m height including Mount Everest, the highest peak of the world. Nepal is famous for its adventurous yet very nature connecting destinations. A concept of village tourism/homestay tourism has been into practice in recent days and is gaining popularity after a Visit Nepal year 2011 movement by Nepal tourism

board to attract more visitors in Nepal. People from round the world come to Nepal to travel to the sky touching mountains, experience adventure and more over to get connected with the wildy available flora and fauna. Nepal is rich in mountain herbs, spring waterand organicfood (medicinal in nature). Data shows that it has about 848 varieties of birds, 8% of total birds of the world, total 4% mammals, 11 out of 15 varieties of butterflies, 600 varieties of local plants and more interestingly as explained above the eight out of eleven eight thousand meter high mountains are in Nepal including Mount Everest which is the largest among all and named after British Engineer Mr. George Everest.

Nepal's Alps are interesting and people living in these areas are daring and hospitable. Nepal is not only famous for its land escape, Alps, Mountains and Himalayas, but also for the people and their hearts. Nepalese show their hospitality from the core of their hearts as they are spiritual in nature and have a strong belief in the guest whom they treat equivalent to the god.

Approximately 83% of land mass from a total of the 1, 41,181 sq. km (Nepal CBS, 2006) areaof Nepal is covered with mountain landscapes including Himalayas, however, attributedwith pristine nature and culture. Out of more than 3,500 km. vast extensions of thehighest Himalayas termed as Hindu Kush – Himalaya ranging from Afghanistan in thenorth-west to Myanmar in the south-east, Nepal's Himalaya has covered approximately 800 sq.km beginning from Byasrishi Himal in Darchula in the west to Kanchejunga in the east(Upadhayaya & Upreti, 2008).

In the midst of around 1792 mountain peaks existed in Nepal, 1310 peaks are above6000 meter and only 326 peaks have been opened for climbing (TAAN, 2008).The four ranges of mountains covering Sivalik, Mahabharat, Mid Hill and highHimalayas with valleys in between are inhabited by a range of different communities.The communities are a mixture of various castes, ethnic people, and indigenous groupsfrom Tibeto Mongoloid and Indo Aryans races with their age-old rich cultures andtraditions.Alps are famous in Nepal for having lots of mountainous herbs and medicines; Api Mountain in Darchula is famous for having a new botanical as well as biological herb called Yarchagumba. This has been regarded as the most expensive bio-botanical herb of the world. This is regarded as half the plant and half the snow insect.

Mountain regions are generally characterized by irregular & steep relief ofland/surface, deep gorges, low temperature, fragile ecology, and poorsoil,limited choice of crops, remote isolated villages, low oxygen pressure, and low humidityof air. (Upadhayaya, 2006). Mt. Everest 8848m, Kanchenjunga 8586m, Lhoste 8501m, Makalu, 8463m, Cho Oyu, 8201, Dhaulagiri, 8167, Manaslu 8156m are the common important mountains which are elevated from the year 1953 till 1960 by different mountaineers.

Trekking in Nepal has a history connoted with the locally known teahouses known as “Bhatti’s” these small teahouse are taken as the starting points, connecting points and resting and ending points of the entire journey and are key to the entire experience. Sometimes, these teahouses literally serving wood fired locally made tea with some snacks have the lodging facilities with few beds on first or second floor with a minimum of the facilities for the guests for e.g. a wooden or metallic bed with jute netted base, a good mattress, bed sheets, good quilt or blanket and Pillow. Goodterrazzo flooring and a simple corrugated sheet shades enough for spending one or two nights. Attached bathrooms with hot and cold water are also provided in majority of the tea houses. The term tea houses can also be understood as guest houses with a minimum of accommodation and food facility.

Nepal in the current years has been suffering from load shedding which sometimes is more than 18 hours a day has badly affected the operation of these guest houses and is difficult to maintain many guest related facilities for e.g. hot water, mobile charging, water boiling, etc. however for the daily cooking purposes wood fire is the mean which is readily available in all the guest houses. In the winter season, the basic mean of heating is also the wood fire chamber which is locally known as chimney spreads from the restaurant to all the rooms till the roof for ventilation. The heat from the hearth goes via a tunnel to all the rooms and is escaped to the roof; this on the way makes the room warm. The provision of Hospitality in mountainous routes of Nepal is exciting yet very limited but the visitors have a unique experience of these routes while interacting with the people and the hospitality they offer from the core of the heart. The condition of the hospitality providing institutions are not improved yet for e.g. the animals are slaughtered at homes or in the hotels in locally acceptable conditions but not in slaughter houses because of not having the provision of it. Some of the hotels are seen with the walls of rooms coated with locally available colorful mud as paint but is risky as if touched comes in hands and sometimes can make the clothes dirty. Storing food is a complication because of non-availability of the commercial store rooms and also because of the heavy load shedding. This is how it is obvious to get the fresh food in every hotel. Availability of spring water (very natural herbal water) is the main attraction of the region as each hotel provides the same water for drinking after boiling. Travelers can drink the water straight from the tap because of the water coming from the direct source instead of coming from the preserved tanks. Since most of the mountainous areas are difficult to transport, people rely on the house made organic fertilizer for their farms hence making each farm product an organic one. Visitors have a chance to get the fresh products which are organic in nature.

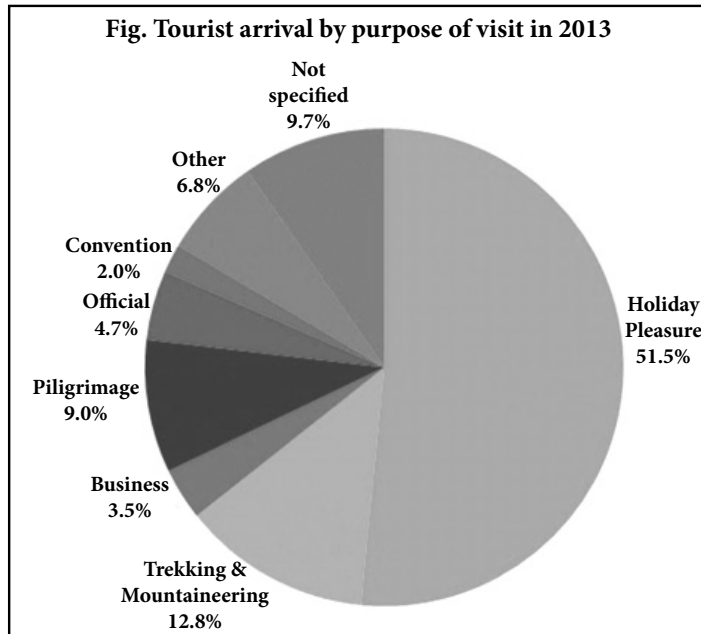


Fig. 2, Tourist arrival in Nepal by purpose of visit in 2013

Elevating from the green suburbs in the beginning to the wide desert valleys in the middle with snowcapped trekking ways to the sky touching bright and fresh Himalaya makes it a great journey. On the way it is obvious to see the local lifestyle in some of the routes for e.g. towards Annapurna circuit, the local life style makes it a show case of what Nepal has to offer to the foreigners with survivalability and happiness living in the most difficult conditions. The system of water supply in homes and hotels, Mills, Wood fire, Local architecture, local schools, local festivals, museum, and entertainment and also the wild life are some of the important and exciting endeavor for travelers.

Sunrise is the main attraction of Pun Hill in Annpurna region situated in 3100 M height. Early morning hundreds of travelers visit to the top of the hill surrounded by the range of great white Himalayas waiting to give a reflection of golden rays of an innate sun in the morning. The conversion of the color of the entire mountain range in a few minutes of time is what travelers want to see after many days journey. The closeness of the nature with peace and tranquility are the products in offer.

Challenges in High altitudes

High altitude sickness

A high altitude climbing is an extreme difficulty when we get to the top of the peaks. Every time we take a breath; we are only taking 60% of the oxygen molecules.

That is an extreme stress because our body needs a continuous supply of oxygen. We cannot store up oxygen like we do for our calories required. Instead we have to have a continuous supply going to our mitochondria all the times. So this is a problem for the people at sea level who travel to the peaks, where the amount of oxygen is very less which can even lead to medical problems including altitude sickness.

Constipation

Constipation is actually a quite common complaint at altitudes, where decreased oxygen slows down the function of the intestines and excessive fluid losses rob water from the colon (NAMOHA, p. 3) The opposite can also occur due to food preparation with less-than-adequate hygiene; diarrhea is quite common among climbers in Africa

Hypoxia

Human body has a long history and is genetically able to cope up with the extreme conditions of either decrease in oxygen situations or infections in lungs causing hypoxic conditions or in anemic situations where we do not carry same amount of oxygen as we carry in the sea level. We also caught up with the diseases like sleep apnea causing the people to stop berating for some times causing hypoxia.

The archeological evidences show that the people started living in high altitudes for more than 11000 years ago by following the migration of the animals. It is very difficult to predict that why people actually started living in high altitudes in the earlier times and settled permanently. Some investigations in Andean Plateau shows that the people started living in high altitudes rather than visiting occasionally. It is also found that in Tibet someone visited about 35000 years ago but not to stay permanently.

The studies from a French doctor named Vault in 1980 showed that the blood cells of the people living in Andean highlands are more than in a normal sea level people he also noticed high level of hemoglobin, wide chests, wide lungs and a very special breathing rhythm. The question comes if the same pattern is found everywhere in the world? (Cynthia Beall, 2011)

This study shows that the people living in these high altitudes carry very special characteristics in one way or another. This is the reason why it is very important to understand the diversity of the human body to adapt the situations. High altitude hospitality is based on the facts drawn from studies carried in past and present. No hospitality can be perfect without understanding the comfortability of the people traveling or living in these destinations.

High altitude Food and Beverages

Food and beverages being an important part of high altitude travelling, it is important to have a good balance of nutrients with a small consumption as the amount of oxygen is less and the food items should be easily converted into the required energy.

Oxygen is important as more than 90% of the conversion of the energy of food is not possible without oxygen. As food and beverages being the most important element of hospitality, it is important to know the different parameters in which the food and beverages can be offered to the travellers so as to make their experience a better one.

It is very important that the people should understand the universal cooking techniques will not be applicable in high altitudes. Air pressure decreases about $\frac{1}{2}$ pound per 1000 feet height. Following table shows the level of pressure and height.

Level	Air Pressure per square inch
Sea Level	14.45
5000 ft.	12.3
10000 ft.	10.2

At higher elevations, because of less pressure of air, the liquids from the food evaporate faster as the liquids evaporate in lower temperature and this way, the cakes and other bakery products expand faster. This may be understood two ways.

1. The food products can be cooked faster for those which require less time and temperature
2. Food items might be raw and take longer time to cook because of the molecular formation and complexity of the food items.

Following are the different characteristics and activities in food and beverages in high altitudes

- The boiling point of the water decreases by 1 °F by every 500 ft. elevation
- Food items to be prepared by boiling take longer time than usual
- High latitude areas are lower in humidity and it needs the food to be covered during cooking
- Pressure cookers work better which retain the moisture and hold the evaporation to an extent
- Turning up heat doesn't cook the food faster as it doesn't increase the boiling point of water.
- Recipes used to cook the food and bakery items do not work exactly at high elevations. These way small adjustments are required in boiling potatoes, eggs or making roast items and bakery products.

Researchers from Colorado State University, Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition found that food preparation in high altitudes basically affected in two different ways

- 1. Water and other liquids in high altitudes evaporate faster and can be boiled in lower temperature
- 2. Gases in the breads and cakes basically expand more faster

Even at sea level, meat and poultry (as well as low-acid vegetables and fish) must be processed using a steam pressure canner. If using a dial gauge at high altitudes, the pressure in the canner must be increased by 1 pound of pressure for each 200 feet above sea level. If using a weighted gauge, the 15 pound weight must be used at all altitudes above 1,000 feet. It is not required to add additional processing time if the pressure of the canner is adequately adjusted. (Kendall, 2013)

Pressure Required to Reach 240°F	
ALTITUDE	PRESSURE REQUIRED
Sea Level to 2,000 feet	11 Pounds
2,001 to 4,000 feet	12 Pounds
4,001 to 6,000 feet	13 Pounds
6,001 to 8,000 feet	14 Pounds
8,001 to 10,000 feet	15 Pounds

Table.1, Pressure required to reach 240 °F

To avoid the risk of botulism bacteria, all canned foods should be canned as per the recommended guidelines. In every 1000 feet additional elevation, need to boil for an additional 1 minute to prevent and kill clostridium botulism bacteria widely found in foods. For example, at 3,000 feet, we need to boil food for 12 minutes. Due to high density, spinach and corn are boiled for about 20 minutes in all altitudes.

Many cooking methods can be used to cook eggs safely at high altitudes including poaching, hard cooking, scrambling, frying and baking. In general, do not increase the heat, just increase the cooking time. Eggs must be cooked thoroughly until yolks are firm. Scrambled eggs should not be runny. Casseroles and other dishes containing eggs should be cooked to 160 °F. Use a food thermometer to be sure.

At high altitudes, extra-large eggs give added moisture and structure to baked goods and desserts. Smaller eggs will result in batter that is less stable and more likely to fall during baking. Also, increasing the amount of egg strengthens the cell structure and may prevent the too-rich cake from falling.

To determine what might work best in high latitudes, it is advisable to test out a variety of foods at elevations above 10,000 feet and scrap what doesn't appeal there, as it probably won't get any more palatable higher up. It is always advisable to take the tastiest foods we can find, and plenty of different options, as it is likely only get increasingly finicky higher up. Try to ward off monotony; it can't be imagined

anything worse than having the same food 4-5 days in a row if we didn't like it the first time we tried it.

Canned foods which does not require too much freezing and easy to open and does not contain much carbon dioxide are advisable in high altitudes. Following are some of the most common food items for trekkers in alpine region.

Breakfasts: granola or energy bars, Pop tarts, oatmeal, bagels, hot sweet rice, couscous, grapes, hot cocoa, tea and cider

Lunches: crackers (wheat thins, Ritz, Cheezits), cookies, bagels or rolls, jerky, sausages, cheese sticks, nuts, candy bars, dried fruits, flavored juice drink mixes, fruit leather, fig bars, hard candy, trail mix

Dinners: cocoa, cider, soups, hot jello, and teas as the first course; freeze dried meals with rice, noodles, vegetables; instant rice, stuffing, or mashed potatoes; pudding or mousse for desserts

Findings and recommendations (Study and observations of Nepalese High altitudes)

In the Nepalese trekking routes, normal Nepali food is easily available. However, there is a fixed menu for tourists to have continental food which is not available to Nepalese local tourists. Due to the road conditions and accessibility, food cost is high and this creeps the affordability for the local tourists. Some destinations like Annapurna Circuit have the community benchmarks for the menus. There are the same rates and items in the menu however are lacking the consistency, quality and quantity of food served. It is all different in all the outlets or eateries. Menu has the combination of western as well as Asian food choices for example: Spaghetti Neapolitan, Roasted Chicken, Fried Fish, Omelets, Fried Eggs, Pizza, Chowmein, Fried Rice, Porridge, Fresh Cut Fruits, etc. are very commonly available items. Because of load shedding in these areas Pizza and other bakery items requiring electricity for cooking are sometimes not available. Road conditions and problems in transportation of raw materials sometimes obstruct the availability of menu items and guests sometimes have to cope with whatever is available. Chow Chow, local noodle is very famous in these all destinations as it is instant and easily available in all the routes. It is also seen in some of the areas that tourists are participating in cooking with the hotel owners and cook for their choices and the cooks of these lodges learn the new dishes with them. All the lodges and eateries are good in preparing Nepalese food and are famous among the Nepalese tourists. Dal, Bhaat, Achar, Masu (Curry, Rice, Chutney, and meat) cooked in Nepalese style are most popular items available anytime during lunch and dinner in any of the eateries however, being the spicy nature of the Nepalese cuisine, it is difficult to the Foreigners specially Europeans and Americans. Indians are used to with Nepalese food as being similar to their native food. Some tourists

from west world are open to Nepalese food and like to take without hesitations and locals are also aware to make it less spicy for them.

The tourists flow is generally higher in August- November. Therefore there aren't too many options for staying at Kagbeni- Lo-manthang area (i.e. in upper mustang). The lodges are generally clean with common bathrooms and toilets. Hot water facility is available only to foreign tourists. Domestic tourists can avail the hot water facility by paying certain amount.

It is noticed that the locally made traditional tourist lodges are made in a trans-modern way with a reflection of Nepalese traditional hospitality and the modern components of lodging facilities. Walls of the rooms are coated with locally available elastic kind of mud and are painted again with white and red mud found locally. Some of the lodges put adhesives in the mixture of colored mud fix it so that it does not come in contact with the body and clothes. Most of the lodges are not painted with the use of adhesives causing the paint coming out while being in touch with the body and other substances. Traditionally made lodges are shed with black thin stone and some are with the white and colored corrugated aluminum sheets. Mosquito nets are readily available for summer and most interesting is the local air conditioning system which is a wood fire chamber, locally known as chimney spreads from the restaurant to all the rooms till the roof for ventilation. The heat from the hearth goes via a tunnel to all the rooms and is escaped to the roof; this on the way makes the room warm. Accommodations are also available with the open fire system to maintain the temperature.

Government has totally ignored the condition of road from Beni-Jomsom. If the roads can be maintained, the revenue can be significantly increased. There aren't any workshops for repairing bikes, or any other vehicles except at Jomsom. Trekking routes to Annapurna circuit, Everest region, Langtang valley, Manaslu Circuit, Helambu and Gosainkunda lakes are in good conditions for trekking and after the recent earthquake of April 2015; there is a little disruption in roads and trails. Narrow trails are the only means of journey for both the porters and the tourists. They are so narrow and sometimes the porters can touch the upper part of the luggage in the cliffs and has the chances of accidents. The same trails are the trails for the herds of donkeys and ships which are the means of transportation for locals and it is difficult to pass on the way. Bushes and the slippery trails are much dangerous sometimes if not walked with cares.

No proper hospitals can be seen on the highway. Government can at least initiate the medical help facility during the peak tourist season. Health care facility is in poor condition in the high altitude areas in Nepal. Basic medical and other facilities are not ample in the trekking routes causing which, there is a singular risk associates with

the traveller. If the traveller becomes sick, he/she has to walk for hours to reach to the hospital or health center.

Basic Hospitality norms are not widely practiced in these areas. Basic courtesy on receiving the guests, seating and farewell are not in proper standards. Things are done in a very traditional ways. Basic way of respect is to offer Namaste by joining two hands and offer thanks by saying Dhanyabad. Other basic etiquettes like body language, eye contacts, grooming standards, hygiene standards, mise-en-scene of the areas, etc. are not seemed to be well organized.

Hotel Everest view is situated within the Sagarmatha (Everest) National Park in Nepal which is a UNESCO world heritage site; this hotel offers a 360 degree view of the most awe inspiring peaks. Visitors observe and feel a mesmerizing scene of luxury while seeing the view of Mr. Everest from every room.

Opened in 1971, Hotel Everest view is listed don Guinness Book of world records in 2004 as being the highest placed hotel in the world at 1300 ft. This has been featured in many media and television and has become a destination in its own right. Hotel Everest view has become an example of the only hotel in the world providing luxury at the high altitude in the world for which Nepal is proud of. It is a perfect place from which the visitors explore the nearby villages and enjoy the eye-catching landscape filled with evergreen trees, shrubs and rhododendron forests. The dedicated staff provide with an excellent service and delicious cuisine to make the stay of the guests the most unforgettable experience. Hotel Everest view symbolizes the adventurous spirit of the Himalayas. It was way back 1969 when Takashi Miyahara first put his eyes on the magnificent Everest range from a ridge in Syangboche. His absolute breathtaking views captivated his heart and from that moment, he dared to dream that one day he would build a luxury hotel in the same location.

Even today, building a hotel at 3880 m height is next to impossible basically in Nepal because of its geography and accessibility. To have this hotel built in 60's would have been a great challenge. Wight no accessibility, the construction of Hotel Everest view relied on the local porters carrying the construction materials on a two week trek from Lamusangu, which is 80 km from Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal. Some of the items were transported from Helicopter. Blankets and eating utensils were all imported from japan. These were shipped to a port in Calcutta and then transported to Nepal.

This hotel was built with a dream that guests from all over the world can come and enjoy a 360 degree view of the Himalayas, appreciate Mt. Everest from every room and be treated with great hospitality. It is this unparalleled location and experience that makes a visit to Hotel Everest View a once in a lifetime trip. For a few, it is a journey that is taken many, many times.

This shows that Nepal has a history of providing services and hospitality at very high altitudes.

Recommendations and Suggestions

Hospitality in High altitude starts from the Porters those who are deputized for the basic means of transportation of the food and belonging of the trekkers in these regions. The behavior of trekking guides is the most important elements of hospitality in these alpine routes. It is very fundamental to understand that the adventurous journey of nomad facilities by the locals should be encouraging, inspiring, motivating and supportive so that the traveller receives the maximum satisfaction of what he has opted for getting out of these alpine routes where there is always scarcity of a community which they belong to. Talking of hospitality in these routes, it is all a behavior and other actions which encourage the travelers to be more with the routes they are travelling. This behavior should be supported by good gestures, ready smile on face, good food, drinks and the accommodation, and rest is all manageable. The main goal of travelers should be to understand the psychology of the travelers and act accordingly to make their stay most memorable.

Emotional labor is potentially good. No customer wants to deal with a surly waitress, a crabby bank clerk, or a flight attendant who avoids eye contact in order to avoid getting a request. Lapses in courtesy by those paid to be courteous are very real and fairly common. What they show us is how fragile public civility really is. We are brought back to the question of what the social carpet actually consists of and what it requires of those who are supposed to keep it beautiful. The laggards and sluff-offs of emotional labor return us to the basic questions. What is emotional labor? What do we do when we manage emotion? What, in fact, is emotion? What are the costs and benefits of managing emotion, in private life and at work? (Hochschild, 2003)

* I use the term emotional labor to mean the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display; emotional labor is sold for a wage and therefore has exchange value. I use the synonymous terms emotion work or emotion management to refer to these same acts done in a private context where they have use value. (Hochschild, 2003)

Following are the important recommended attributes and body language and hospitality traits required for the service people in high altitudes

Smile on face

In the high altitudes, the trekkers are tired and are more often in a different state of mind. Sometimes are in a very good state of mind and sometimes are more anxious and a kind of down faced. It is very important to have a smile on face of the people deputized for hospitality in these routes. Smile on face signifies many positive

impacts in the mind of the trekkers. This shows generosity, humbleness and a happy mood of service provider. A smile should be gentle and genuine which should reflect the state of our serving heart and attitude

Patience and persistence

Patience and persistence in the high altitude are key to a happy and fruitful experience for the travellers. The service holders should be of very high degree of patience and persistence while being in these infrequent and scares routes. The routes are sometimes difficult to elevate, food is not readily available and travel sometimes can become tiring and monotonous. In these circumstances the service providers should have lots of patience and persistence.

Proactiveness and understanding

It is important that the service providers should understand the needs and the wants of the travelers in advance; this is known as a proactive behavior. Since high altitude travelling is an adventurous experience, a proactive approach pleases the travelers and motivates them to enjoy their trip the fullest.

Body language

Attitude is displayed through the use of body language. The management and hospitable display of the service providers' body language has positive impacts on the customer experience. The position, movement of hands, eye contact, the originality of the smile, actions and words are very important.

Grooming and hygiene

Grooming and maintenance of one's personal hygiene as well as the workplace hygiene is another important aspect of the travel. The people involved in providing hospitality should maintain a high degree of grooming and hygiene standards. It is evident that the Alps are too cold and bathing everyday would not be possible as how it is possible in Terai region but the service providers should not be compromising the quality of services in connection with sanitation and hygiene. Short hair, close shaving, well-trimmed nails, management and tie up of the long hair of the ladies, uniform, bags and shoes should all be maintained in global hospitality standards.

(Karagianni, 2015, p. 184) stated, "Moreover attention is paid to the employee's overall appearance which should reflect a professional image and a positive attitude towards the visitor-client together with feelings of support and cooperation. Every employee, before he starts his work, should make a final check to his appearance, keeping always in mind that the first impression is very important to his contact with the visitor-client. Organizations and enterprises always require that employees should combine their personal traits and qualifications in the most constructive manner".

Graciousness and friendship

It is important to offer hospitality with graciousness and show a friendly behavior to the travelers so that they make their trip a most remembering and have a feeling of being respected. Travelers in high Alps are with a mindset of achieving some adventurous experience and friendliness and humbleness from the service providers add value in their experiences

Food and Beverage Services

It is obvious that the Alps may or may not be avail of the high level of sophisticated service conditions, accommodation, staff and the equipment. A good management of services is required. The most important parameter of good service could be efficiency and effectiveness. Whatever food is served, whatever the bed provided, whatever are the facilities provided, it is important to do these all the things with lots of care with heart.

Greetings and other basic etiquettes

Basic etiquettes are very important. Etiquettes are directly connected with the body language. Formal greetings, wishing, paying respect, handshaking, smiling and showing empathy are the basic etiquettes of service people. It is necessary that the best service experience cannot be possible in absence of any of these qualities.

Government concerns to improve basic hospitality in these routes

Government of Nepal should have more concern about the basic infrastructure in trekking routes so as to give a comfortable journey experience to the travellers besides the elevations and muddy trails.

1. Trails can further be grouted or stoned to make them comfortable to walk. It is strongly recommended to have basic medical facilities for the travellers in all the trekking routes and standby helicopters for immediate rescue from different sites.
2. First aid training is important for locals and even the porters for an immediate service in emergencies.
3. Tourist police should be much utilized in trekking destinations for more secured journey for the travellers
4. Research team is required and an action oriented research is recommended for quick results
5. Security system should be improved in the lodges as there are no security companies deputized in these hilly regions
6. Hygiene, sanitation and safety training programs are important for the staff members of the lodges

7. Basic courtesy guidelines should be taught to all the hotels, homestays and lodges

Conclusion:

This has been a very difficult and time consuming research as there are very less publications based on high altitude hospitality as people always treated this as a part of general hospitality and it is seen that no special attention is given to this kind of study before. After the study it is found that the high altitude destinations are most challenging venues and special care is important for the travelers, be it home stay hospitality or hospitality in hotels and Lodges. As pointed in the introduction and overview of this article, most of the books and journals of hospitality and tourism, generally talk about the history, trends and components of hospitality as a newly emerging discipline but there are a few books could only make significant contribution on the prospects, challenges and opportunities of hospitality especially in high altitudes where the challenges are ample. It is also found that people basically travel to altitudes to crave the places of adventures specially trekking, hiking, mountaineering, rock climbing, snow skiing, etc. Providing hospitality in high altitudes is a challenging task where there is always a scarcity of man, material and management. We use the word management to show up its direct proportionality with the man as a primary element of providing Hospitality. We have been living in the modern age where people travel for pleasure and find the most amazing yet very exhilarating destinations to have a very vacationing experience. Nepal as being a world destination for altitude climbing has a history connoted with Mt. Everest, the highest peak of the world. This has also been observed as to how the emotional labor as mentioned by Hochschild in his book "The Managed Heart" explained about the human factors that are important in providing hospitality services. The importance of feelings and its belongings on the offered services to the client and guests has a direct bearing on the overall experience and this experience is much important in high altitudes where the sentimental values are more important than the physical elements of a good service.

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Food Tourism Revisited

Ramesh Raj Kunwar*

“to eat is a necessity, but to eat intelligently is an art’ (Francois de La Rochefoucauld-1613-1680; in Buiatti, 2011, p. 100).

Abstract

Though food is the basic need of human being, it is the best way to express the culture and the tradition of a community. Food as a tangible part of cultural and traditional representation attracts most of tourists around the world. Food is one of the important pulling factors while selecting the destination. Though after information revolutions most of the facilities are at a click distance, food is the only one that needs the distance to be covered in order to discover the majestic taste in the native structure. Food majorly describes the patterns that communities are residing. Most of the native cuisine that attracts most of the foreigners is based on the native resources and way of preparing and presenting foods. In some countries food is not only taken as a means to generate income but also a means to protect their tourism.

Keywords: *serious leisure, foodscapes, gastronomy, slow food, sustainability, brand management.*

The Concept

According to the definition of *Business Dictionary*, food is “edible or potable substance (usually of animal or plant origin), consisting of nourishing and nutritive components such as carbohydrates, fats, proteins, essential mineral and vitamins, which (when ingested and assimilated through digestion) sustains life, generates energy, and provides growth, maintenance, and health of the body” (www.businessdictionary.com).

Food is a common language. It is spoken to communicate, to share emotions, feelings and sensations. Food is also closely connected to the ritual and religious life of the people. Food has a high potential to become used in symbolic contexts. Food

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is the manifestation of exchange crossing the boundary (symbolically the mouth) between inner self and the outer world (the other) (Sheringham & Daruwalla, 2007).

Folklorist, food scholars, and food aficionados have long been fascinated by occasions of exploratory eating – instances of eating the new, the unfamiliar, the alien – and by the institutions and artifacts which enable those occasions, such as “ethnic” restaurants, international cookbooks, and folklife festivals (Long, 1998, p. 181, FN1).

In the field of hospitality, the pleasure of food is not only based on the taste but on the sharing of it with others. Sharing food means talking about the pleasures of the table or any eatable places and this, in turn means talking about hospitality. Nobody can really enjoy their food considering that it is a universal right and that each kind of food, even the most common and “simple”, presents many histories that could be told, history of region, history of an identity, history of a population, history of a village, history of a family, history of a religion, in a word, history of a culture (Buiatti, 2011: 93).

Historically, people secured food through two methods: hunting and gathering and agriculture. Today, most of the food energy consumed by the world population is supplied by the food industry, which is operated by multinational corporations that use intensive farming and industrial agriculture to maximize system output (www.wikipedia.com).

In 1943, Maslow, as cited by Doshi (1995,p.22) identified the basic human needs as physiological- safety or security, love or belongingness, esteem or status, and self-actualization. The concept of food thus is quite comprehensive. Physiologically, highest priority of all human beings is to survive. People will eat anything that they perceive might provide nourishment. At the personal level, food and people interaction in a society are related to (a) satisfaction of the basic human needs, and (b) people's beliefs concerning proper relations to their food, which may reduce to a definition of which foods are suitable to eat under certain circumstances. Malinowski has argued in his study of Trobrianders that the main function of food in a society is for human survival. He has pointed out that human body's need for food has done much to shape society through all the activities concerned with food production, distribution and utilization (1944;in Doshi,1995, p.22). When enough food is supplied to meet the demand for nutrients and assure survival, man becomes concerned with safety-security consideration. A person is then, occupied with the problem of the distinction between ‘food’ and ‘poison’ in relation to health. The result is that the definition of ‘food’ is restricted to those items that are least associated with illness, i.e., those that appear to be least poisonous and reliably non-toxic. The definition of what is ‘poison’ is

expanded to include unfamiliar or strange items and prescribed items (Doshi, 1995, p.23).

For human societies, food is 'the sense of identity which is at the core of human autonomy. The biological need for food and the social act of eating combine to give... a particular meaning, a kind of cultural power' (Simpson, 1996, p. 6; in Rusher, 2003 p. 193). Food as a central element, of cultural values and regional identity is a popular theme and central focus of several tourist destination countries.

It has been said, all social practices can be assessed from a cultural point of view (Johnson, 1986, p. 282). In post- industrial societies food represents more than basic sustenance, and pleasure is placed above need (Finkelstein, 1989; in Everett, 2009, p. 399).

Food is also related with attitudes which varies across cultures. For example, there are important differences in attitudes towards food. For British and Japanese tourists, food is the most important part of the good vacation. For Australians it is ranked third, for Germans it is fifth and for the French food is not at all important (Sheldon & Fox, 1989; in Reisinger, 2009, p.329). Those from high-uncertainty-avoidance cultures have more negative attitude to pre-cooked food because they are more concerned with the purity and quality of food than those from uncertainty-low-avoidance cultures, who frequently purchase and consume fast food (Demooji, 2004). Cultures also influence eating habits. According to Robertson (1987; Reisinger, 2009, p.329) Americans eat oysters but not snails, French eat snails but not locusts. Zulus eat locusts but not fish; Jews eat fish but not pork; Hindus eat pork but no beef; Russian eat beef, but not snakes; Chinese eat snakes but not people; The Jelas of New Guinea find people delicious! (Reisinger, 2009, p. 329). Here the present author prefers to use Nepalese Hindus eat mutton but not Cow and Muslims eat Cow but not the pork.

In his conclusion, Marriott (1968; in Doshi, 1995, p.16) while employing the attributes of food transaction as a criteria, observes that any transfer of food always makes the giver higher, the receiver lower; suppose that and rendering of service always makes the master higher, the servant lower.

Marriott has worked at local level, that is, village level to find out caste ranking by employed in analyzing and comparing caste hierarchies in "other communities and regions of South Asia." In the context of food ideology, food preferences and food avoidance, what Marriott has found out is important- the relevance of ethnic foods in differentiating a local community. Food types, food status are valuable criteria for assessing ranking of a caste or class society. For instance, in the study of tribal, Status ranking can be made within a group by using the criteria of food production, food consumption, and status food (Doshi, 1995, p.16).

As suggested by Doshi (1995), the interrelated social function of food in society are as follows:

1. Gastronomic function
2. Means of cultural identity
3. Religious and magic function
4. Means of communication
5. Expressions of economic wealth and status
6. Means of exercising influence and power

Gastronomic function is a part of the science of good eating. The lower segments of society do not appreciate the gastronomic aspects of eating but the higher segments of society eat food not only for biological needs but for pleasure as well. The organoleptic properties of a food can determine whether people accept or reject a food. The pleasure obtained from food is determined by taste, odor, temperature, appearance, structure or texture. The pleasure is related to the community's social psychology and cultural basis. Taste and appreciation of food differs from region to region (Doshi, 1995, p. 26). The social aspect of food consumption patterns is that they are a means of cultural identity. It is through the food that people of various segments and classes are identified by the society. Yet another aspect of food and food consumption is related to religious and ceremonial functions. Food is also utilized as a source of communication. The exchange of gifts and serving of food during feasts and other community dinners between individuals and holding of feast among communities on the occasion of birth, marriage and death assumes important function. Meals arranged on such occasions have a strongly competitive element. The economic status of a person also gets expression through food habits and food consumption (Doshi, 1995, pp. 26-28).

In general, the food consumption, besides satisfying hunger and promoting growth and energy to the body also enhances friendliness and social warmth. It has uses in performing rituals and advancing hospitality. It also helps the consumer to attain status. There are prestigious foods which put a group or an individual on a higher rank in society.

Food has many roles to play for consumers; it is functional (sustaining life); it plays a key role in our celebrations; it is a conduit for socializing; it is entertaining; it is sensuous and sensual; it is a way of experiencing new cultures and countries. For many, food becomes highly experiential (i.e. much more than functional) when it is a part of a travel experience, it can become sensuous and sensual, symbolic, ritualistic, and can take on new significance and meaning. Even the most basic meal can be etched in memory forever when it is eaten when surrounded by awe inspiring

scenery or at the end of a special day explaining a new city (Mitchell & Hall, 2003, p. 60).

Food is being accepted as a long-established communication of meaning and can be used as an illuminating focus of theoretical exploration in order to pursue work that recognizes that landscapes are increasingly understood as subjectively experienced and culturally encoded.

Classification of Foods

Doshi (1995,p.36) in his book, on the basis of secondary sources, has given scientific classification of food. There are 'proximate principle' which explain the main bulk of foods. Proteins, fats and carbohydrates are termed as 'proximate principles', "they are burnt or oxidized in the body to provide the energy for various activities of life. On the basis of these dietary patterns, there has been found cereals, pulses, nuts, oilseeds, vegetables, fruits, milk, milk products and flesh foods as major types found in India.

Frederick J. Simoons (in Doshi,1995,p.37).who has authoritatively written about the food habits in China has classified the food habits of the Chinese on a scientific basis as(1)cereals and pulses;(2)roots and tubers; (3)other cultivated vegetables; (4) seaweeds and other algae; (5) fruits; (6) edible nuts, nut-like fruits, and seeds; (7) flesh and fowl; (8) fish, turtles, and tortoises; (9) eggs; (10) spices and flavorings; and (11) beverages, including dairy products.

There is yet another classification of food given not on scientific principles but on empirical observations by Laura Jane Harper and Maryellen Spencer. They have classified the food commodity groups as: (a) cereals and grains products; (b) starchy roots, tubers and fruits; (c) pulses, nuts and oilseeds; (d) vegetables; (e) fruits (other than starchy); (f) foods of animal's origin; (g) fats and oils; (h) sugars and syrups; (i) spices and other condiments; and (j) other foods not classified above, including yeast, algae and fermented products. The authors observe that dietary patterns within the same culture tend to form specific food groups a useful starting point. It is further argued that the food grouping such as the 'basic seven' (USA) or eight (relating to Chinese culture) have limited application to these culture groups (Doshi, 1995, p. 37).

Passion and Bennett (in Doshi,1995, pp.37-38), who are credited to have worked in southern Illinois of USA, have developed a broad classification of foods as (1) core, (2) secondary core, (3) peripheral foods. Core foods are the universal, regular, staple, important, and consistently used foods. Secondary core foods are foods in widespread use but not universally consumed. They are more variable in use and form, less important emotionally, and include recently introduced packed food bought from provision stores. Peripheral foods are the least common foods, infrequent in occurrence. Their use is characteristic of individual rather than groups.

One of the reliable criteria of caste or tribal ranking in India is food consumption (Doshi, 1995, pp. 25-26). Food habits in the Hindu ritual system have also been studied by a number of anthropologists. For instance, the practice of offering food to the gods and deities and receiving *prasad* in return has been analytically examined by Lawrence Bobb (Doshi, 1995, p.15). Bobb observes that the acceptance of *prasad* indicates the lower position of the devotees as compared to the deity.

One stems from the high Brahmanical (Vaisnavite) tradition of the Indian plain and divides food into three categories: 1) *sattvic*, 2) *rājasic*, and 3) *tāmasic*. The first is the food of saints. The *sattvic* diet is strictly (lacto) vegetarian and also regards certain vegetables as impure, e.g., onion, garlic, and radish. The second is the food for kings and warriors. The *rājasic* food contains meat from goat and chicken as well as eggs. The *tāmasic* is the food of demons and titans. It permits all the items in the two previous classes, as well as buffalo meat, fermented foods, spirits, garlic, onion, etc., in short, many of the foods which are explicitly excluded from the *sattvic* and *rājasic* diets. The underlying conception is that the food determines men's moods and actions. *Sattvic* food will make a man saintly; *rājasic* food will make him a ruler or warrior, i.e., powerful and sexually potent; *tāmasic* food will make a man an uncontrollable victim of lewd passions, like a demon or a titan. This is a gross simplification. Hindus are well aware that not all people can be saints or kings, but nevertheless it reflects the ideas Hindus have about the effects of food on the state of mind. Newars (of Nepal), as mentioned by Per Lowdin (1998), do apply the idiom expressed in this classification, but only selectively, for instance, at *vrta* days when the pious observe a fast or, according to this classification, abstain from polluting foods, e.g., meat, garlic, onion, and alcoholic beverages. *Sattvic* food stuffs are offered to certain deities, notably, to Mahadev and Narayan (Vishnu), who are thought to be vegetarian and who do not accept blood offerings. milk, grains, sweetmeats, etc., which are offered them are later eaten by the devotees as *prasād*. The *sattvic* food is associated with the Hindu current which regards renunciation of caste and society, abstinence from meat and alcohol, and celibacy as the proper means to attain salvation (Lowdin, 1998, p. 31).

Historically, the role of food in tourism was much underrated, academically and by the travel industry itself. Yet, since travel began food has been a very important element of the tourist experience. Even going back to Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, written at the end of the fourteenth century, food was an essential element of pilgrimage for the characters in the book, and thus an important element of their tourist experience (Povey, 2012, p. 82).

Food tourism studies have been undertaken from a variety of disciplinary perspectives including economics, marketing, regional development, nutrition, economics, tourism, anthropology, psychology and other social sciences. Therefore, it

is hard to find out accepted definition of food tourism. This reveals that food tourism research is very popular in European countries which have been untouched in Nepal although it has a lot of scope. There are very few authors who have made efforts to collect varieties of Nepalese food and the way of its preparations have certainly given remarkable contributions for introducing Nepal and Nepalese food. This has given birth to kitchen table tourism for replacing arm chair tourism. The present author consulted a lot of materials written by Majupuria (2008), Kansakar (1994), Association of Nepalese in America (1996), Vaidya (1999), Ratnapustak Bhandar (2007) and Pathak (2011). The authors have collected approximately 392 kitchen recipes. The books are the best collection of tested gourmet recipes. Recently, Khanal (2016) has identified 100 ethnic dishes of Nepal. Some anthropologists (Lowdin, 1998; Kunwar, 1999) have also studied on Nepalese food from anthropological perspective which are very useful to know about Nepalese food heritage. But, up till now no one has done research on food tourism or tourism and gastronomy or culinary tourism, slow food, slow city, slow tourism and slow tourist in Nepal. Therefore, realizing the importance of food tourism as a sub-field of tourism, the present author made attempt to highlight on what food tourism is. It is believed that this study will be very useful to the students of tourism and hotel management, restaurants and researchers on one side and those who are involved in farm tourism, agri-tourism and rural tourism, they can also use it as an impetus for developing food tourism in their region.

Food Tourism

Urry's (2002) 'gaze' privileges the eye; locating other senses in a distinctive visual environment. In claiming the visual has long been understood as the most discerning and reliable sensual mediator between humans and their environment Urry (1992) suggested practices of tourism can be approached with an emphasis on vision. Although the 'gaze' continues to provide a seminal concept for contemporary tourism discussion (Franklin, 2001), particularly those that pursue visual-centric approaches that focus on representations, tangible semiotics and the visual consumption of landscape, it has become apparent that ocular-centric approaches are limited in their ability to tackle the complex dimension of more embodied postmodern activity (Edensor, 2001; in Everett, 2009, p. 341). Since the publication of Urry's *The Tourist Gaze* (1990), it has become increasingly popular to critique its central theoretical concept of the 'visual' and even Urry himself latterly accepted that the work has often been taken too literally, suggesting that by using the visual sense as a central organizing sense (Urry, 1992) he ultimately favored the dominance of visualism, over after sensory methods of engagement (Everett, 2009, p. 340).

Tourism researchers now acknowledge that there is more to tourism than the visual aspects of the visitor experience epitomized by Urry's "tourist gaze" (1990; in Sims, 2009, p. 321). A growing body of work is beginning to pay testament to the role

that sensation of taste, touch, sound and smell can play within the holiday (Boniface, 2003; Davidson, Bondi, & Smith, 2005; Eastham, 2003; Mitchell & Hall, 2003; Urry, 1995; in Sims, 2009, p. 321), with holiday food becoming of particular importance to researchers (Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Germann Molz, 2004; Long, 2004b; Torres, 2002; in Sims, 2009, p. 321). More specifically, it is recognized that the kind of foods and drinks on offer for tourists can have major implications for the economic, culture and environmental sustainability of tourism destinations, with researchers arguing that a focus on locally sourced products can result in benefit for both hosts and guests (Sims, 2009, p. 321).

Food has been increasingly regarded as multidimensional, everyday artifact which encompassed the very identity of a place or individual. Eating exotic and global foodstuffs has become part of a new postmodern culture characterized by pluralized and aestheticized experience that have fostered new patterns of tourism consumption and the development of new individualized identities. Food tourism characterizes the 'new' tourism experiences (Poon, 1993; in Everett, 2009, p. 340). Academic studies of tourism and food relationships have examined a range of issues including: caterers' use of local food stuffs (Telfer & Wall, 1996); competition for land and labor between the tourism and food production sectors (Belisle, 1983); the role of food in destination image (Hughes, 1995); agriculture's role in creating touristic landscapes (Buchgraber, 1996); and tourists' food choices (Reynolds, 1993; in Boyne and Hall, 2003, p. 285).

Food has always been an integral part of tourism but has not received much attention until recently (Hjalager & Richards, 2002; Hall et al., 2003; Quan & Wang, 2004; Cohen & Avieli, 2004; in Keken & Go, 2006, p.52). Cohen and Avieli (2004; in Keken & Go, 2006, p.52) consider it even curious that the most bodily of the senses, taste, and more specifically eating and drinking, remained virtually unexplored in the sociological and anthropological study of tourism, notwithstanding their obvious centrality in the experience.

Food is one of the essential elements of the tourist experience. The social and cultural significance of food is finally gaining the recognition it deserves (Cook & Crang, 1996), as in the role of food in tourism (Hall, 2002; in Hall & Sharples, 2003, pp. 1-2). Therefore, it is an important element in the marketing of tourism and in determining visitor satisfaction as well as an important component of hospitality studies.

While writing about food tourism, Hall et al. (2003, p. 168) discuss about certain tourism of taste. They summarize the importance of studying food tourism as follows:

1. Food is an attraction in its own right to travel, for mistaking a specific event or a firm like a winery or a brewery,

2. A particular destination could have a best reputation for certain products, i.e., wine from Tuscany could example of special interest tourism (Hall & Mitchell, 2001),
3. Being part of tourist experience, food has become an important element in the marketing of tourism and in determining visitor satisfaction.

Historically, the role of food in tourism was much underrated, academically and by the travel industry itself. Yet, since travel began food has been a very important element of the tourist experience. Even going back to Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, written at the end of the fourteenth century, food was an essential element of pilgrimage for the characters in the book, and thus an important element of their tourist experience (Povey, 2012, p. 82).

Food tourism should be regarded as an embodied form of tourism, a phenomenon whereby the 'process of experiencing, making sense, knowing thorough practice as a sensual' human subject in the world' is particularly pronounced (Crouch, 2000, p. 68; in Everett, 2009, p. 341). Food tourism may be defined as 'visitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations for which food tasting and/ or experiencing the attributes of specialist food production region are the primary motivating factor for travel' (Hall & Mitchell, 2001a: 308; in Buiatti, 2011, p. 95). Such a definition does not mean that any trip to a restaurant is food tourism. Indeed such is the need for food to be a primary factor in influencing travel behavior and decision making that as a form of special interest travel, food tourism may possibly be regarded as an example of culinary, gastronomic, gourmet or cuisine tourism that reflects consumers for whom interest in food and wine is a form of 'serious leisure' (Wagner, 2001). Though Everett (2009, p. 338) has also studied on food tourism, his work relates to tourists who make a conscious effort to visit specific food/ drink tourism sites, rather than an exploration of the more generic hospitality sector in tourism....gourmet or culinary tourists who are defined as those tourists whose primary intention to visit a place is connected to taking part in a culinary experience (Murray, 2008; in Stockebrand et al., 2011, p. 29),

With the growing role that food plays in tourism, many researchers have devoted time to the study of the relationship between food and a specific tourism destination, such as food tourism, culinary tourism and gastronomic tourism. Long (1998, p. 32; 2004) defines culinary tourism as 'the intentional, exploratory participation in the foodways of another — participation including the consumption, preparation, and presentation of a food item, cuisine, meal system, or eating style considered to belong to a culinary system not one's own' (pp. 20-21). The concept of "culinary tourism" refers not only to geographical travel for the purpose of sampling foods of foreign lands but also to any journey outside of one's normal dietary routine into the realm

of the exotic “other” (Chai, 2005, p. 121). Culinary Tourism is ultimately a profitable if perhaps unnecessarily challenging work. It may attract more converts to foodways, a field that successfully mines connections between ordinary and extraordinary, custom and novelty (Camp, 2006, p.379). But when it’s time to eat, Culinary Tourism is right on time (Camp, 2006, p. 378).

The term “foodways” suggests that food is a network of activities and systems – physical, social (communicative), cultural, economic, spiritual and aesthetic. Folklorist Don Yodor (1972, p. 325) borrowed the term from anthropologist John J. Honigman (1961) to refer to the total cookery complex, including attitudes, taboos, and meal systems – the whole range of cookery and food habits in a society. As such food touches every aspects of our lives (Long, 1998, FN 4).

According to Long (2004), one can be a culinary tourist when, for example, patronizing local ethnic restaurants, looking through a cookbook, cooking a recipe from another food culture, or walking through a local ethnic grocery store. Long states that “Culinary tourism is more than trying new and exotic foods” (2004, p. 1; in Lockwood, 2008, p. 362).

Regarding gastronomic tourism, Santich (2004) posits that it is ‘tourism or travel motivated, at least in part, by an interest in food and drink, eating and drinking’ (p. 20; Lin et al., 2011, p.32). Santich further states that gastronomic tourism is about participating in another culture, associated with a particular place and people. According to these explanations of the use of food in tourism, it is apparent that food has the ability to enhance the sustainability and the authenticity of a destination, strengthen the economy of a place and establish the hospitality of a region (du Rand et al., 2003; Everett and Aitchison, 2008; in Lin et al., 2011, p.32).

Buiatti (2011) proposed that food tourism could be defined as ‘a visit to food producers with a strong interest in tasting that food and an even stronger motivation to learn about the production process from raw materials to the final product’ (p. 95). In the definition of food tourism it is necessary to differentiate between the tourist who consumes food as a part of travel experience and the tourists whose interests, behaviors and even destination choices are influenced and determined by a specific interest in food. Food is obviously an integral part of any travel experience but its importance and significance has been ignored for different reasons: for some travelers it is just a kind of “fuel”, for others, who are a growing minority, it is a significant at times the most important reason or motion to travel. Somewhere in between we can find all potential consumers/ tourists who might become the driving force of food tourism (Buiatti, 2011, p. 94).

Food tourism provides a conceptual vehicle for pursuing a more culturally aware tourism agenda. It is suggested that food represents more than purely an economic

commodity; it is a multi-dimensional cultural artifact capable of linking issues regarding the relationships between place and identity, and the material and symbolic (Everett, 2003, p. 337). Through food tourism it is important to generate economic development that can help preserve natural resources and improve the quality of life of the communities in a region. This ensures that indigenous food and production method are not lost in the globalization (Buiatti, 2011, p. 92).

Many tourists travel to a particular destination which has established a reputation as location to experience quality food products e.g. the Napa valley in California Province in France, Tuscany in Italy, Niagra in Ontario and Yarra Valley in Victoria, Australia (Hall et al., 2003, p. 3; in Hall & Sharples, 2003, p. 7).

Food tourism is strictly related to the literature on wine tourism which is defined as a tour or visit to wineries, wine festivals and events correlated where the most important motivation for the tourist is to directly experience the characteristic, the quality of a wine through a testing session. The concept of food and wine can be linked to the land and when, for example, the viticulture is successful as it “changes” the local landscape into a mix of tourism, agriculture and industry. Consequently, food/wine production and tourism should rely on regional or local labels/branding for market promotion and in this way the regional/local brand can be an important source of differentiation and a sort of added value for rural region where that particular wine or food specialty is produced. The topic of food specialties is of great interest nowadays and can be considered from different points of view, in particular the relationship between products and territory and the connection between agriculture and tourism. Food is an important part of regional culture and identity and food production has strong impact on the landscape (Buiatti, 2011, p. 95).

Wine, food and tourism are all products which are differentiated on the basis of regional identity. For example, wine is often identified by its geographical origin, e.g. Burgundy, Champagne, Rioja, which in many cases, have been formalized through a series of appellation controls, in turn founded on certain geographical characteristics of a place (Moran, 1993; in Buiatti, 2011, p. 92). Foods, for example, cheese, are also identified by their place of origin. Similarly tourism is also promoted by the attraction of regional or local destinations.

‘Food tourists’ are the most dedicated group, and local food has an important role in their destination choice. For ‘interested purchasers’, food contributes to holiday satisfaction and they sample local food when the opportunity arises. ‘Un-reached tourists’ believe that food can contribute to the enjoyment of their holiday, but they seldom buy local foods. The ‘un-engaged’ and ‘laggards’ are those who have limited or no intention to try local food groups (Smith, Macleod, & Hart Robertson, 2010, p. 78).

The research carried out by various scholars of different disciplines have been variously examined the interrelationships between tourism and food or food and tourism. The economic, social, cultural and physical impacts also are manifested in tourism food contexts. These impacts can be found in both supply and demand side domains and can be felt simultaneously in both. Some food and tourism initiatives, for example, seek to generate positive outcomes for both the tourism and food production sectors- through increased economic activity – and tourists- by enhancing their visitor experiences (Boyne & Hall, 2003, p. 286).

Several reasons can be put forward for the growth in attention to food as an area of interest for tourism studies. Since the early 1970s European rural regions are industrialized, societies have been very substantially affected by successive rounds of economic restructuring. In response to loss of services and traditional markets and removal of tariffs and regional support mechanisms, rural areas have sought to diversify their economic base with new agricultural products and tourism being two such responses. Food tourism strategies are therefore a significant instrument of regional development particularly because of the potential leverage between products from the two sectors (Telfer, 2001a).

Sustainable tourism and food

Research has shown that food is important to sustainable tourism on a number of levels. Firstly, it is argued that increasing tourist consumption of local foods can generate a multiplier effects that will benefit the local economy (Torres, 2002; in Sims, 2009: 320). Secondly, it is concerned about the environmental consequences of transporting food across the globe have led researcher to urge that “buying local” is vital if the tourism industry is to reduce its carbon footprint (Boniface, 2003; in Sims, 2009, p. 322). Thirdly, there is a growing recognition that tourism destination throughout the world are competing each other in a bid to attract visitors. Successful tourist destination must develop a range of goods and services that will distinguish it from other destination and attract a steady of visitors. Promoting high-quality cuisine or distinctive local food products is one way of achieving this (Hage,1997; Hashimoto & Telfer, 2006; Libery et al., 2003; Woodland & Acott, 2007; in Sims, 2009, p. 322). Indeed, local foods may be particularly popular with tourists because they are considered “iconic” products that capture the “typical” nature of a particular place (Bessiere,1998; Urry, 1990; in Sims, 2009, p. 322).

Food tourism as a form of consumption

As societies in the West have entered advanced stages of capitalism, ‘consumption’ has become a central theme of lifestyle. The concept of consumption surpasses the idea of merely buying something to meet basic psychological needs, such as buying a loaf of bread because of hunger. Using social and human psychological perspectives

associated with consumer behavior studies, it is recognized that by purchasing a certain good or service, a range of needs may be met that go beyond our most basic biological requirements. (Holden, 2008, p. 42)

Sociologists emphasise that through the process of consumption, it is possible to the differentiate oneself from the crowd, and subsequently gain a sense of identity. Being linked to consumption was a theme developed in the late nineteenth century by the American sociologist Thorstein Veblen (1899; in Holden, 2007, pp. 35-36). Veblen's work was based upon observation of the newly emerging wealthy middle class in America, who were making considerable amounts of money from trade and manufacturing. In what was a critical account of their lifestyle, Veblen coined the phrase 'conspicuous consumption', to explain how this class used leisure and consumption to differentiate themselves from the rest of society. Through the purchasing of goods and other ornaments and services, they took on a different identity from the rest of the populace, who could not economically afford to purchase these products. By the end of the nineteenth century, tourism also offered a form of consumption, which permitted social differentiation. Within what was a predominantly patriarchal society, by sending one's wife or daughter on holiday from America to Europe, the message was conveyed that one possessed wealth. (Holden, 2007, p. 36)

Using tourism as a means to achieve social differentiation has become increasingly prevalent in western society. Mowforth and Munt (1998) use the term 'habitus', borrowed from the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, to suggest that the types of tourism we participate in carry cultural symbols and meanings. Habitus refers to the ability and inclination of individuals and social classes to adopt objects and practices that differentiate them others in society. Although the ability to participate in international tourism in contemporary society fails to achieve social differentiation as at the time of Veblen, yet where we are able to go and what we choose to do on holiday carries cultural messages and differentiates us from others in society (Holden, 2008, p. 44).

The link between urbanization consumption and tourism has been developed by both Boorstin (1992; in Holden, 2008, p. 44) and MacCannell (1976) to explain why people choose to travel.

Methodology

For the first time, the present researcher wrote a review paper on food tourism that was published in this same Journal of Vol. 3, 2011. At this moment, the researcher thoroughly reviewed the articles of food tourism and gave the title food tourism revisited. Methodologically, the study is based on secondary sources. The scholars of food tourism have suggested to follow transdisciplinary perspective (Scarpato & Daniele, 2003), multidisciplinary perspective (O' Gorman, 2010) and interdisciplinary perspective (Visentin, 2011). Interdisciplinary is not the mere merging of different

disciplines- is called into account to shed light from its specific perspective onto the subject of study. Rather interdisciplinary is a means to identify and study new themes that single disciplines would not be able to put in to focus, describe interpret by themselves (Visentin, 2011, xiii).

The reviewing of past research efforts facilitates an improvement and understanding of research and reveals the philosophical, conceptual, substantive and technical problems of research in a field (cited from Backman & Morais 2001). Certainly; this approach can be linked in the study of food tourism as studied by previous researchers.

Gastronomy

"Eating is an agricultural act", (Wendell Berry, the American poet, farmer by profession born in 1934). It follows that producing food must be considered a 'gastronomic act' (www.slowfood.com). Gastronomy tourism refers to trips made to destinations where the local food and wine beverages are the main motivating factors for travel. (www.onecaribbean.org).

It is time for the tourism academy to move food tourism out of the 'grey zone' of cultural and heritage and knowledge its conceptual opportunities (Scarpato, 2002; in Everett, 2009, p. 339). Notably, it has been suggested that the wider body of research on relationship between food, society, culture and the economy is 'tainted by a missing gastronomic perspective' (Scarpato, 2002, p. 60; in Everett, 2009, p. 339). Scarpato argues that the contribution of gastronomy studies to tourism discourses remains surprisingly untapped as it offers an innovative conceptual framework that can contribute significant new dimensions to tourism research. Consequently this article embraces food tourism as a multi-dimensional vehicle that can highlight the richness and diversity characterizing the way tourism studies is evolving into a more critical social science open to cultural interpretation. In particular, it can contribute to further understandings of the dimensions and complexity of postmodern forms of consumptive activity. After all, the notion that food and drink might serve as a central organizing for anyone studying the world of humankind seems to have eluded virtually all social scientists, but, after a bit of reflection, it does make abundant good sense (Zelinsky, 1985, p. 51; in Everett, 2009, p. 339).

Most current dictionary definitions of gastronomy still emphasize the 'science' aspect defining gastronomy in terms of the art and/or science of good or delicate eating. While it might be possible to translate art and science as skill and knowledge and thereby demonstrate a continuity and consistency with the early nineteenth-century understanding, most contemporary interpretations of gastronomy seem considerably narrower than that of Brillat-Savarin, who considered gastronomy to pertain to a range of disciplines including natural history, physics, chemistry,

cookery, commerce and political economy (Brillat-Savarin, 1994; in Santich, 2007, p. 48).

Brillat-Savarin demonstrated that his understanding accorded with the etymological origins of the term, which derives from two ancient Greek words: *gaster* [the stomach and, by extension, the digestive system] + *nomos* [rule or regulation] (Brillat-Savarin, 1994; Richards, 2002; Stierand, 2013, p.50) or 'nomon' (Stierand, 2013, p. 50). Thus gastronomy can be seen as relating to rules associated with eating – what, where, when, why, how and with whom. The 'science' of gastronomy enables the elucidation and understanding of these rules, which in turn serve as the basic for the guidance. Significantly, Brillat-Savarin's understanding of gastronomy is also consistent with the intentions of Archestratus, possibly the first person to use the word. (Archestratus was a Sicilian Greek who lived in the fourth century BC and who wrote probably the earliest food and wine guide to the Mediterranean region – what was best to eat and drink and where to find it; *Gastronomia* is one of several putative titles to this book) (Wilkins & Hill, 1994; cited in Santich, 2007, p. 48).

A concise definition of 'gastronomy' is notoriously elusive. The interpretations given in a recent text, *European Gastronomy into the 21st Century*, echo the standard dictionary definitions: 'the art, or science, of good eating', 'the enjoyment of food and beverages', 'the enjoyment of good food, and good beverage, in good company' (Gillespie, 2001; in Santich, 2007, p. 48). A recent article in a popular French magazine described how to transform 'cuisine' into 'gastronomie', thus implying that gastronomy is in some way special or superior, either by the cost of quality of the ingredients, by the preparation methods or techniques or by the care and time devoted to the finished dish. (Ironically, the idea of transforming an ordinary dish or meal into a special one also implies sleight-of-hand tricks specifically designed to deceive the eater.) Such 'elitist' interpretations tend to associate gastronomy almost exclusively with restaurants and restaurant cuisine (Santich, 2007, p.48).

When Gillespie adds that gastronomy is 'also an examination of the terms "good food" and "good wine" (or other beverages), and "in whose terms"', the 'terms' suggested relate specifically to restaurant situations (2001; cited in Santich, 2007, p. 48). While this narrow interpretation might seem appropriate in the context of restaurants and commercial hospitality, it is inadequate to represent the potential depth and breadth of gastronomy (Santich, 2007, pp. 48-49). In hospitality and hospitality management, however, the term 'gastronomy' is more narrowly associated in the Western world gastronomy and haute cuisine as matters of economic and cultural significance, as a result of which established and elaborate culinary practices and aesthetics have globally influenced chefs and the hospitality industry for over 400 years, an influence recognized in 2010 when UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) added the gastronomic meal of the French to

its 'Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity' (UNESCO, 2010; Stierand, 2013, p. 50).

It is significant that Brillat-Savarin does not specially refer to food and drink in his definition of gastronomy, but rather to everything that relates to our nourishment ('...insofar as we sustain ourselves'). Thus the focus of gastronomy is not so much food and drink *per se*, or even meals, but our *eating* of food, our *drinking* of beverage – in other words, *consumption*. To the extent that this is a convivial rather than a solitary activity, gastronomy therefore extends to sociability and communication. While gastronomy necessarily refers to food and drink, what is more important is their place in human societies and how human societies produce, prepare, classify and value food and drink – in other words, the norms, explicit or implicit, which are understood and accepted by the culture in which they originate and which apply to such concepts as mealtimes and contents of meals, to the values associated with foods, to the ways foods are produced and to food and beverage partnering. Ferguson (1998; cited in Santich, 2007, p.49) has proposed that gastronomy be considered a 'cultural field' which includes not only the 'culinary products, but also an understanding of the 'practices and products, values and behavior, rules and norms, institutions and ideas that are attendant upon the preparation and consumption of food' in particular social setting (Ferguson, 1998; cited in Santich, 2007, p.49). Since the fifteenth century, led by the French, European gastronomy and haute cuisine has witnessed three distinct culinary eras: the ancient regime, classical cuisine and nouvelle cuisine. In the culinary world this led slowly but steadily to the development of a new style of cuisine – nouvelle cuisine – that crystallized as a distinct phenomenon in the early 1970s (Rao et al., 2003; in Stierand, 2013, p.52). The underlying philosophy of nouvelle cuisine was based on four values: truth, lightness, simplicity and imagination (Rao, 2009, p.86; in Stierand, 2013, p.52). Chefs started to question established culinary conventions and created new dishes by using the concepts of transgression and acclimatization. Transgression meant that old cooking techniques were combined with new ingredients, or old cooking techniques were combined with old ingredients in hitherto unacceptable ways, such as combining fish with meat or salads with foie grass. Acclimatization, on the other hand, meant adopting foreign cooking traditions, in particular through employing exotic spices and seasoning (Fischler, 1993; Rao et al., 2003; in Stierand, 2013, p. 52). In this sense, nouvelle cuisine introduced a more contemporary and self-expressive way of cooking.

At present there is much debate over whether we are entering a fourth era, of molecular cuisine, or avant-garde cuisine (Stierand, 2013, p.51). Another root for creativity to become accepted as a concept in culinary practice was laid by the Oxford physicist Professor Nicholas Kurti, who was interested in applying science to solve problems in the kitchen. In 1988, together with physical chemist Herve This (2006b)

founded a new branch of food science under the name of molecular and physical gastronomy (This, 2006a; cited in Stierand, 2013, p. 52). This name derived from a series of workshops about the physics and chemistry of cooking run by both scientists. In 1998, however, Herve This (2006b; cited in Stierand, 2013, p. 52) decided after the death of Nicholas Kurti to use the simpler term molecular gastronomy that he had always favored (This, 2006b; cited in Stierand, 2013, p. 52). The basic intention of molecular gastronomy is to better understand the 'chemistry and physics behind the preparation of any dish' in order to gain knowledge that can help to produce healthier, more attractive and better food (This, 2006a:1062; in Stierand, 2013, p. 52).

Unfortunately, the term molecular gastronomy became fashionably misused by both the media and some chefs who, straining after effect, pursued a form of largely excessive hyper-creativity that took shape in such dishes as strawberry risotto with salmon and tended to emphasize the aesthetic (especially the photogenic) appearance of food over taste (Stierand, 2013, p. 50).

Gastronomy today relates to 'the production of food, and the means by which foods are produced; the political economy of food; the treatment of foods, their storage and transport and processing; their preparation and cooking; meals and manners; the chemistry of food, digestion and the physiological effects of food; food choices and customs and traditions' (Santich, 2007, p. 49).

Gillespie's focus on the material aspects of food and its preparation, typically in a restaurant context, not only places unreasonable limits on the domain of gastronomy but overlooks the crucial roles of the critic, the guide, the adviser, roles which were pioneered in the nineteenth century by Grimod de la Reyniere and Brillat-Savarin (Santich, 2007, pp. 49-50).

Food is an important place-marker in tourism promotion. The climatic conditions, culture and history of a region shape the character of the food that is produced. Gastronomy is often said to be a sub-sector of cultural or heritage tourism for this reason. This link between location and gastronomy has been used in a number of ways in tourism, including promotional efforts based on distinctive or 'typical' regional or national foods. Food can also be used as a means for guiding tourists around regions and countries, for example in the form of trails (Hjalager & Richards, 2002; in Smith, Macleod, & Hart Robertson (2010, p.77).

Hall and Mitchell (2005a; in Smith et al., 2010, p. 78) suggest categorizing gastronomic tourists as follows:

- Gourmet tourists- visit expensive or highly rated restaurants or wineries
- Gastronomic/ culinary tourists- interested in wider issues such as the culture and landscape which produce food and wine

- Cuisine tourists- interested in specific cuisines from a country or region.

Gastronomic tourists (like most special interest tourists) tend to be wealthier and better educated than average travel without children, and are usually in the AB (upper/ middle) or CL (lower-middle-class) groups (Smith et al., 2010, p.78).

Hall and Mitchell (2005a; in Smith et al., 2010, p.78) state that only 3 per cent of international tourists could be described as gastronomic tourists, but Enteleca Research & Consultancy (2000) provided an analysis of tourists which implies that far more tourists enjoy gastronomy as a secondary motivation and could therefore be targeted by food producers or suppliers:

- Food tourists (6-8%)
- Interested purchasers (30-33%)
- The un-reached (15-17%)
- The un-engaged (22-24%)
- Laggards (17-28%)

'Food tourists' are the most dedicated group, and local food has an important role in their destination choice. For 'interested purchasers', food contributes to holiday satisfaction and they sample local food when the opportunity arises. 'Un-reached tourists' believe that food can contribute to the enjoyment of their holiday, but they seldom buy local foods. The 'un-engaged' and 'laggards' are those who have limited or no intention to try local food groups (Smith et al., 2010, p.78).

Erik Wolf (2008; in Smith et al., 2010, p.78), president of the International Culinary Tourism Association, a non-profit group representing more than 500 tourism businesses in 19 countries, described how World Travel market Research had revealed that more than half (53 per cent) of tourists ranked eating traditional dishes as a 'very important' or 'important' part of their holiday. Of British people, 86 per cent said they enjoyed local foods when abroad and would skip meals in the hotel or resort to try out local restaurants. This implies that the latent demand for gastronomic tourism could be much higher than previously thought (Smith et al., 2010, p. 78).

For neophilic tourists, eating new foods is a fundamental element of the travel experience, while for others it can be a reinforcement of feelings of 'not belonging' (Veek, 2010; in Povey, 2012, p. 83).

For the postmodern tourist, food and gastronomy is increasingly fundamental to their identity formation (Ignatov & Smith, 2006; in Povey, 2012, p. 83). This is reflective of the central role of food in culture, where food is literally grown out of the '*terroir*'- the soil and climate of the region. Tourists consuming locally grown

products literally consume the destination and its culture in the flesh (Povey, 2012, p. 83).

According to Buckland (2007; in Povey, 2012, pp. 83-84), tourists who aspire to experience authenticity ascribe high value to the authenticity of their gastronomic experience. There is triumvirate relationship affecting the authenticity of any meal, which is an interaction between. 'The Self' and the sum of their experiences, 'The Thing' that is actually being experienced and 'The Others', which is the ways in which authenticity is defined by societies (Beer, 2008; in Povey, 2012, p. 84). Another key aspect of gastronomy's relationship with tourism is in the area of heritage food. Heritage attractions now often features kitchens, and focus more on the lives of servants and ordinary people than on the leisured classes and aristocracy. Consumption of heritage food is linked to the consumption of place and the value of old British pubs, many of which are heritage attractions in themselves, and the food served therein (Howe, 1996; in Povey, 2012, p. 85), as well as the significance of historically valuable restaurants or 'historant'. Josiam et al. (2004; in Povey, 2012, p. 85) explored this relationship, where actual consumption of heritage could take place.

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As global competition tourist destinations increase the search for distinct products becomes more intense. Gastronomy is seen as an important source of marketable images and experiences for the tourists (Richards, 2004, p. 4; cited in Keken & Go, 2006, p. 56). Richards emphasizes that food has become an important factor in the search for identity. Food is one of our basic needs, so it is not surprising that it is also one of the most widespread markers of identity. We are what we eat, not just in a

physiological sense, but also in psychological and sociological sense as well. Food has been used as a means of forging and supporting identities, principally because what we eat and the way we eat are such basic aspects of our culture (Richards, 2002, p. 5; cited in Keken & Go, 2006, p. 56).

Slow Food Movement

Those who have studied on food tourism in relation with gastronomy and culinary tourism, they have also focused on slow food tourism. The notion of 'fast' in fast food deserves an extra attention in this context because often it is connected with modern (Western) life, which is, young, dynamic, and energetic. Everything needs to happen 'fast'. Although, a reversed trend in this respect can be seen by those people who worry about all this speed and ask for reflection, distressing, slowing down. "An often-brought-up example is the Slow Food Movement that started in Italy in 1989 from Bra, a small city in the North West of Italy, alongside the Langhe wine district and near to the Alba tourist region" (Heitmann, Robinson & Povey, 2011, p. 114).

During an anti-McDonald's protest in Rome 1986 the term 'Slow Food' was coined as a rally called for those who wanted to halt the invasion of standardized .A second influence on the formation of movement was the death of 19 Italians who drank cheap wine that had been mixed with methanol. In reaction to these event, Carlos Petrini formed the embryonic slow food movement, which was officially launched in December 1989 in Paris. Since then the movement has gone from strength to strength, and now has 100,000, members from 132 countries worldwide (Slow Food, 2010; in Heitmann et al., 2011, p. 115; Rombach & Bitsch, 2015, p. 2).

Slow Food is a non-profit, member supported eco-gastronomic organization which was founded in 1989 to counteract fast food and fast life ,the disappearance of local food traditions and people's dwindling interest in the food they eat, where it comes from, how it tastes and how food choices affect the rest of the world (Santini et al., 2011, p. 165).

Slow food is philosophically centered on the rights of all citizens to enjoy clean (unpolluted), fairly traded food that has been sustainably produced with consideration for all stakeholders, including the being eaten and the planet itself (Heitmann et al., 2011, p. 115).

Slow food is a counterbalance to what a French sociologist Fischler calls 'gastro anomaly' (Beardsworth & Keil, 1997; cited in Keken & Go, 2006, p. 52) referring to massiveness of food supplies, the abundance of food and has nothing to do with meat products, technologization of food or the publicity overload for consumers. In 1989 Jacques (Hall & Mitchel, 2002, p. 82; cited in Keken & Go, 2006, p. 52) observed already that there is a new search for identify and difference in the face of impersonal

global forces, which is leading to the emergence of new national and ethnic demands. Tourism is a part of the search for identity and a desire for economic positioning in contemporary globalization. Tourism and food provides identity in terms of provision of the 'other' and in terms of self-reference (Keken & Go, 2006, p. 52).

The Slow City, Cittaslow or Citta Lenta movement is a spin-off of the slow food movement. It has variously been defined as an urban social movement and a model for local governance (Pink, 2008; Heitmann et al., 2011, p. 116). The slow city movement seeks to extend the slow food movement's philosophy to all aspects of urban living providing an agenda of local distinctiveness and urban development (Heitmann et al., 2011, p. 116).

Following slow food and slow cities, the movement has been extended further to other aspects of society and living. The slow movement provides the ideas on how the concept of slow can be applied to education, books, money and living. How the concept is adapted to travelling and tourism will be outlined further below however, central to all of these applications is addressing the issue of time poverty and fast solutions by encoring more through connections to people, places and life (Heitmann et al., 2011, p. 117).

That puts taste first, and also has started the movement 'Slow Cities'. Slow food stands for traditional, original, delightful, diversity and quietness and is of course the opposite of the fast world. The goal of the slow food movement is to rediscover the richness and taste of the local kitchen and fight against standardization. According to Carl Honore (2004; cited in Keken & Go, 2006, p. 51), this slow food movement is part of a bigger movement that propagates slowness in all parts of our daily lives. In his book 'In praise of Slow, how a worldwide movement is challenging the Cult of Speed' he describes how in our Western world there is a growing dissatisfaction with our way of life, the 24-hour economy.

Erik Wolf (2008; in Smith et al., 2010, p. 78), president of the International Culinary Tourism Association, a non-profit group representing more than 500 tourism businesses in 19 countries, described how World Travel market Research had revealed that more than half (53 per cent) of tourists ranked eating traditional dishes as a 'very important' or 'important' part of their holiday. Of British people, 86 per cent said they enjoyed local foods when abroad and would skip meals in the hotel or resort to try out local restaurants. This implies that the latent demand for gastronomic tourism could be much higher than previously thought (Smith et al., 2010, p. 78).

Like tourism, food consumption should be treated as an encounter that flirts with space and contributed to a postmodern landscape saturated with meaning and diversity (Crouch, 1999); demanding a place in the rapidly shifting nature of tourism studies (Everett, 2009).

Garrod, Wornell and Youell (2006; in Santini et al., 2011, p. 167) illustrate the role of country side capital (landscape, biodiversity, historical features, distinctive local customs and way of life, etc.) in the development of sustainable rural tourism. The authors emphasize how rural tourism businesses and destinations exploit countryside resources to attract tourists and after them fulfilling experiences during their journey.

While writing about wine tourists, Johnson (1998, p. 15) has classified two types of wine tourists: *specialist* versus *general tourist*. The general tourist is 'one who visits a vineyard, winery, wine festival or wine show for the purpose of recreation', and the specialist wine tourist is 'one who visits a vineyard, winery wine festival or wine, show for the purpose of recreation and whose primary motivation is a specific interest in grape wine or grape wine related phenomena'. This typology can be directly applied to food tourists with Lang Research's (2001) 'high cuisine and wine interest' tourists the most likely to be the specialist food tourist (Mitchell & Hall, 2003, p. 69). Lang Research found that few American (19.6 percent) or Canadian (14.2 percent) tourists fell into this category...

Gourmet tourism addresses its offer to a small number of selected tourists, whose main interest for travelling is tasting specialty foods or wine in selected restaurants or wineries. On the contrary, the phenomenon of rural tourism involves a wider number of tourists whose interest in food could be secondary or subsidiary to other interests: this is the case with while visiting a certain rural area. The scheme summarizes many facts of food tourism and describes the relationships that rural tourism has with food and furthermore it provides a clear idea on differentiation in food tourism. Terror products can be conceived as a synthesis of production processes based on local resources which directly link, case by case, though in different ways, the product to the territory. In this way, the product is a harmonious bundle of territorial, climatic, historical and cultural characteristics which belongs to a certain region (Arfini, 2005; in Santini et al., 2011, p. 168). This kind of product becomes the cultural marker of a territory and the identity and image of this product provide leverage for the development of the general welfare of the population living in the specific region.

Aurier et al., (2005; in Santini et al., 2011, p. 167) identified three dimensions, cognitively describing *terroir* products in the customer's mind:

Trade – skill, including the categories know how recipes and tradition

Time and culture, including categories history and ritual

Origin, including the categories territory, region and land.

While food is an important part of regional identity and food production does have substantial impact on the landscape it is very difficult to separate foodscapes from broader

concerns surrounding agricultural areas which by their very nature are landscapes of food production. Therefore, the geographical setting, climatic conditions, temperature, seasonal, environmental conditions and places are also important in food tourism. Indeed, one of the critical factors in food tourism is the spatial fixity of the product.

Relf (1996) has suggested that tourism is fundamentally about the difference of 'place'. Clearly a region's physical element combine to define it as a 'place' and contribute to the attractiveness of a destination. Similarly, Cook and Crang (1996, p. 132) identify the importance of place as a means of differentiation: "These geographical knowledge - based in the cultural meanings of places and spaces- are then deploys in order to "re-enchant" (food) commodities and to differentiate them from the derived functionality and homogeneity of standard products and places.' Perhaps not surprisingly then, Hall (1996: 114) suggests that there is a significant overlap between the elements of *terroir* and those features that are important to regional tourism branding (e.g. landscape and climate). Hall and Mitchell (2002b: 69), for example, discuss the idea of 'touristic *terroir*', arguing that 'In the same way that the *terroir* of a region gives wine its distinctive regional characteristics, the unique combination of the physical, cultural and natural environment gives each region its distinctive touristic appeal- its *touristic terroir*' (Hall et al., 2003, p. 34).

Important as this notion of *touristic terroir* is in determining the flavor of the wine and food tourism experience, it is important to note that, like wine, *terroir* is not only influence on flavor. As the late Peter Sichel (former president of the Grand Crus de Bordeaux) suggests '*terroir* determines the character of wine.... Continuing the wine and food analogy, then, *touristic terroir* may determine the character of the regional experience, but it is the influence of the tourism entrepreneur, the winery owner, restaurant manager, chef, service provider or regional tourism office that will determine the quality of the experience (as attested the large number of visitors who cite service as the most enjoyable or important aspect of visits to wineries (Hall & Mitchell, 2002b).

Networks and cluster relationships are also a significant part of the development of intangible capital through their role as proving the social capital which underlies much economic development. A cluster is defined as a concentration of companies and industries in a geographic region that are interconnected by the markets they serve and the products they produce, as well as the suppliers, trade associations and educational institutions with which they interact (Porter, 1990; in Hall et al., 2003, p. 37). Such exporting chains of firms are the primary 'drivers' of a regional's economy, on whose success other businesses, construction firms for example, depend in terms of their own financial viability. An industry cluster includes companies that sell as well as outside the region, and also supports firms that supply raw materials, components and business services to them. These clusters form 'value chains' that are the fundamental units of competition in the modern, globalised world economy. Firms and organisations

involved in clusters are able to achieve synergies and leverage economic advantage from shared access to information and knowledge networks, supplier and distribution chains, markets and marketing intelligence, competencies and resources in a specific locality (the cluster concept focuses on the linkages and interdependencies among actors in value chains (Enright & Roberts, 2001; in Hall et al., 2003, p. 37).

Cluster formation is regarded as a significant component in the formation of positive external economies for farms, including those of the wine industry, with tourism being recognized as a significant component (Porter, 1990). While Telfer (2000a) has argued that cluster development has been a significant component of wine and food tourism network development in the Niagara region of Canada. Although one of the lessons cluster development programs around the world 'is that there is no precise, "right" (one size fits all) formula for developing industry clusters' (Blandy, 2000, p. 80; in Hall et al., 2003, p. 38), a number of factor has been recognized as significant in the development of clusters and the associated external economy which serves to reinforce the clustering process.

It is necessary that the traditional tourism activities in particular those specialized in food tourism develop a sensitivity to protect and integrate with the natural cultural resources available in territory. Through food tourism it is important to generate economic development that can help preserve natural resources and improve the quality of life of the communities in region. This ensures that indigenous food and production methods are not lost in the face of globalization (Buiatti, 2011, p. 92).

However, studies of food tourism are largely limited to food safety and hygiene issuesv (MacLaurin, 2001), analyses food and wine festival attendance (Pratt, 1994), supply - side issues such as business networks (Hall & Johnson, 1998), food production and tourism (Telfer & Wall, 1996) and cross promotion between food and tourism (Mitchell et al., 2001) or the impacts of tourism on regional or national cuisine (Hall & Mitchell, 2001). Even more established disciplines studying the 'human element' of food consumption such as anthropology, sociology or cultural studies have done little to explore the consumptive experiences of tourists. As far as consumer behavior is concerned, Mitchell et al. (2000, p. 118) suggested that: consumer behavior research is important for stakeholders in wine tourism because it can help provide important insights into who the wine tourist is, what motivates them to visit a winery, take a guided tour, attend a wine festival or purchase wine and why, thus allowing marketers and managers to effectively target and develop market. Same can also be said of food tourism stakeholders such as restaurant and café owners, cookery school providers, festival organizers, hotel and resort managers, bed and breakfast operators, and food producers.

Consumer behavior research is the study of why people, either individually or in groups, buy the product and they do and how they make their decision (Swarbrooke

& Horner, 1999). Such research therefore examines a range of internal (motivation, attitudes, and beliefs, learning, life styles and personality) and external (demographics, reference groups and culture) influences on decision making (purchase decision, choice, brand awareness and loyalty, evaluation and post-purchase decisions) and, more recently, the consumption experience (the occasion, consumption setting and benefits gained from the experience). Research on consumer behavior is interdisciplinary, drawing on concepts and theories and such fields as psychology, sociology, social psychology, marketing, cultural anthropology, economics, media studies, cultural studies and geography (Bell & Valentine, 1997; in Mitchell & Hall, 2003, pp. 61-62). Further, some tourism authorities have undertaken research that includes eating out as an activity for various segments of the travel market.

Of course a tourist is, first of all, a consumer, and from the consumer perspective the concern about the quality and safety of food he/she can find on shelves and in restaurants becomes stronger every day, especially after the BSE (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy) crises, the foot and mouth outbreak in 2001 and the more recent avian or “bird” flu. Also very important is the recognition by “green” consumers of the impact that long distance food transport can have on the environment (this is so called “food miles”). This has led to a growing interest in organic and natural products, and the importance of food traceability and, hence, an increasing demand for locally sourced food. The preservation of the countryside as a source of relaxation and rest is a fundamental issue both for the tourist/consumer and the tour operators that benefit from it. Also important is to regard the tourism and the maintenance of landscape as an important potential solution to sustain the social life of people that live there, creating productive activities and employment (Buiatti, 2011, p. 94). The local people could play the role of guardians of landscape or environmental architects” (Roberts & Hall, 2001; in Sidali; 2011, p. 7).

How can a territory, a region, a village and their food specialties, be linked to tourism? Most-potential visitors to Italy want to taste traditional dishes, regional specialties, and fresh local produce, possibly organically grown. Food is an important economic and cultural resource offering tangible benefits for tourism. Nepal is one of the most popular tourist destinations of South Asia where more than half million tourists taste Nepalese food i.e. *dal*, *bhat*, *tarkari* and *achar* (rice, lentil soup, green vegetable and pickle). However, if it is essential that people involved in this activity are effective in delivering an authentic food experience to an increasingly aware and health conscious group of visitors.

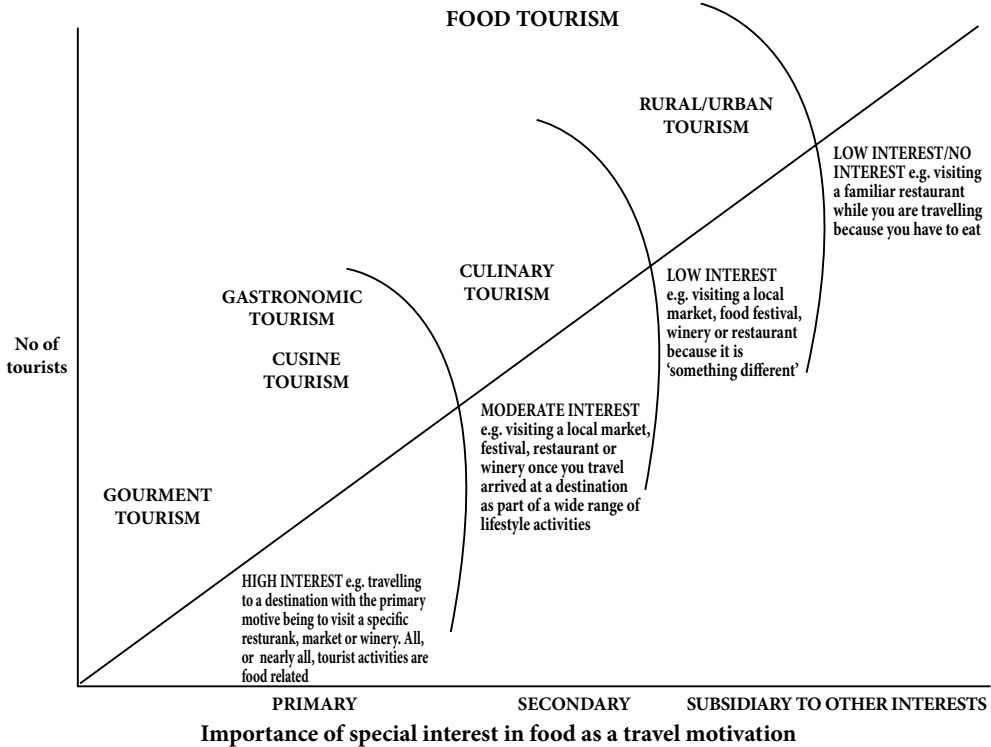
The linkages that exist between food, the landscape or place that the food has strong associations with, and tourism have started to form the basis of an interesting academic debate in recent years. For examples, Reynolds (1993; in Sharples, 2003, p. 206) discusses the importance of preserving traditional food as an essential part

of sustainable tourism, Telfer and Wall (1996) comment on the linkages that exist between tourism and food production, Hall and Mitchell (2000) debate the role of cuisine as a factor in globalization and localization and Hjalager and Corigliano (2000), examine the development of food standards for tourists. Part of this important debate is the concept that local food can form an essential and innovative part of a regional tourism marketing strategy and this argument is now gaining ground (Sharples, 2003, pp. 206-207).

As Levi-Strauss (1978, p. 471; in Scarpato & Daniele, 2003, p. 297) pointed out 'Cooking...is with language a truly universal form of human activity'. But, Bell and Valentine (1997; in Hall & Mitchell, 2003, pp. 75-76) have suggested that 'kitchen table tourism' has replaced 'arm chair tourism' as a form of vicarious exploration, where eating at ethnic restaurants, cooking from ethnic cook books and watching food and travel television shows (often sponsored by local and national tourism organizations) allows us to travel without leaving our home, town or city.

In tourism, the notion of risk is related to one of the key motivating factors for pleasure travel-novelty seeking. High risk-takers (and therefore those with degrees of involvement) see extremely novel environments and situations. Plog (Ross, 1994; Mithcell & Hall, 2003, p.76; in Kunwar, 2017, pp. 52-55) has suggested... allocentrics seek most novel/new environments and psychocentrics seek familiar and less threatening vacations settings. The work of Plog suggests that allocentrics are naturally neophilic (literally they 'love new/ novel' phenomena), while psychocentrics are neophobic ('fear of new/ novel'). Neophilia is also widely discussed within food literature, where it is suggested that human omnivorous behavior is a paradox between neophilic and neophobic tendencies (Bell & Valentine, 1997; in Hall & Mitchell, 2003, p. 77). Tuorila et al. (1994; in Hall & Mitchell, 2003, p. 77) suggest that neophobia in food consumption results in those with neophobic tendencies disliking novel looking, smelling and tasting foods. In contrast, Bell and valentine (1997) have suggested that the development of 'new cuisines' and the globalization of national cuisines around the world has relied on neophilic tendencies and that travel has long involved food neophilia as an important motivator (e.g. grand tours). Neophilia and involvement are, therefore, important concepts in the discussion of the food tourism experience. They provide an insight into some of the experiential differences observed in food tourism consumer behavior (Hall & Mitchell, 2003, p. 77).

The phases of the food tourism experience conceptualized here are: eating at home (pre-travel); eating out (pre-travel) advocated above as a form of vicarious exploration that is different to eating at home; food at the destination; vacation experiences at the; destination advocated by Mitchell, Hall and McIntosh (2000: in Mitchell & Hall, 2003, p. 77) as important influence on the on-site visit in this case food tourism; & food (post travel experiences).

Figure: Food tourism as special interest tourism

Source: Hall & Sharples, 2003, 11

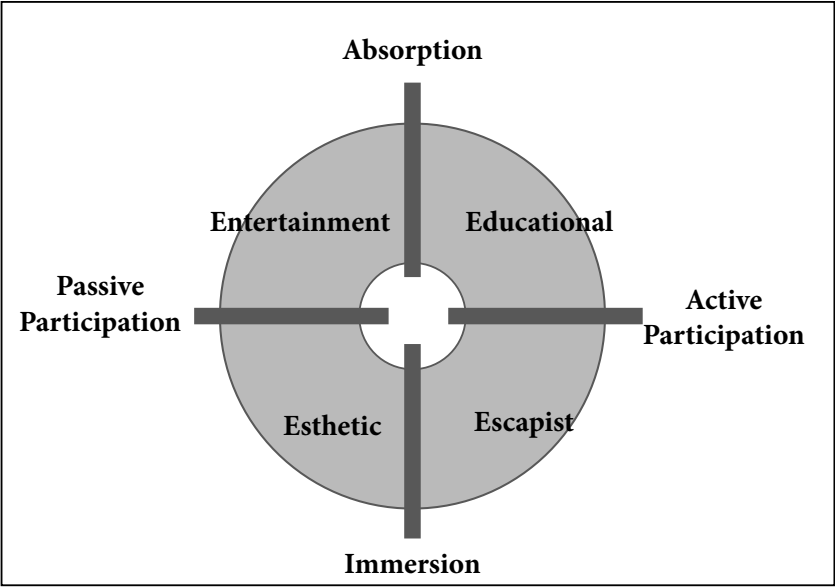
It is being increasingly acknowledged that there is a need to embrace wider and more active bodily involve (mental, physical, intellectual, cognitive and the gaze) (Franklin, 2001). The recently theorized concept of 'performance' (as opposed to gaze) notably proposed by Edensor (2001) and Perkins and Thorns (2001), has become an attractive alternative approach that widens the concept to embrace the more multifaceted, multisensory experience that make up tourism such as adventure (Clock & Perkins, 1998) and sex tourism (Ryan & Kinder, 1996). Although Urry had never denied the existence of multiple gazes in his earlier work, he was kin to state a decade later that 'I think there is a multiplicity and the way to approach the analysis of these multiplicities of tourist gaze is, among other things, to think about the taste-scapes, smell-scapes, sound scapes, touch-scapes' (Franklin, 2001, p. 123; in Everett, 2009, p. 341). Everett (2009) suggests that food- and drink- focused tourism studies offer a more fascinating lens through which to examine these more heterogeneous sensory landscapes and theorize whether they offer different 'kinds' of non-representable knowledge (Crouch et al., 2001). There is a need to address

the ontological blind spot where ‘little so far has been understood about how the metabolic material and fleshy connections consumers make with foodstuff inform their embodied knowledge (Roe, 2006, p. 107; in Everett, 2009, p. 341).

Rural business experience economy

Paraphrasing the seminal article by Pine and Gilmore (1998; in Santini et al., 2011, p. 170) on “experience economy”, a firm (or a group of firms, consortia, etc.) working in the rural tourism sector, before charging admission, should design an experience that customers judge to be worth the price. As shown in figure, two dimensions (graphically represented as two axes) are necessary to develop great experiences: customer participation and environmental relationship. The first axis has on one side the concept of “passive participation” where customers do not affect the reality at all, whilst on the other side lies “active participation” in which the tourist has a prominent role in designing the event. The second axis depicts “external relationship” and has at its two extremes “absorption” and “immersion”. These two concepts have opposite meanings regarding the level of involvement of the tourist with the context. The spectra of the two dimensions define four categories of experiences: *entertainment* (in which tourists participate more passively than actively and the connection with the reality in front of them is more of absorption than of immersion), *education* (when customers are more actively participating but not immersed in the action), *escapist* (where people are more involved than in educational or entertainment experience) and finally, in the case of less personal participation of tourists, *esthetic*.

Figure: The four realms of experience



Source: Pine and Gilmore (1998)

The recipe provided by the authors to design memorable experiences entails five steps:

- (a) Theme the experience,
- (b) Harmonize impressions with positive cues,
- (c) Eliminate negative cues,
- (d) Mix in memorabilia,
- (e) Engage all five senses.

In summary they can be explained as follows: the theme chosen should conduct the whole experience toward a unified story able to catch the customer attention, involvement and participation through positive and consistent (with the theme) cues that create impressions. Impressions are defined by the authors as the “takeaways of the experience”. Thus, each cue or detail needs to be coherent with the general theme given to the experience. In order to do this, it is necessary to avoid every negative cue that might diminish, contradict or distract from the theme. Then, the availability of memorabilia such postcards, t - shirts or other physical reminders of the experience can be important to evoke the impressions. Probably, the most important step to emphasize the magnitude of the experience is the engagement of the five senses. The authors stated that “the more senses an experience engages the more effective and memorable it can be. Not all sensations are good ones and some combinations don’t work”. Smells, flavors, noises need to be deeply studied to verify any coherence among them and any leaning towards the theme chosen by the local operators. This leads to sensory analysis. Nowadays, many promotional and communicational activities in both the fields of ‘food and wine business’ and ‘tourism sector’ are explained using the expression ‘sensory analysis’ (Santini et al., 2011, p. 171).

Sensory analysis

What is sensory analysis? According to Drake (2007), sensory science can be traced back to the 1800s, with the development of psychological theories to measures and predict human responses to external stimuli (Lawless & Heymann, 1999; in Santini et al., 2011, p. 171).

In a recent book edited by Moskowitz, Beckley and Resurrection (2006; in Santini et al., 2011, p. 171), two definitions of sensory evaluation are offered: a) the first is proposed by the institute of Food Technologists and enunciates that “Sensory evaluation is the scientific discipline used to evoke, measures, analyze and interpret reactions to the characteristics of food and materials as they are perceived by the senses of sight, smell, taste, touch and hearing” (retrieved November 10, 2009 from <http://www.ift.org/divisions/sensory>), b) the second has been elaborated by Herbert Meiselman (1993): “Sensory evaluation is a science of measurement. Like other

analytical test procedures, sensory evaluation is concerned with precision, accuracy, sensitivity and avoiding false positive results” (Moskowitz et al., 2006; in Santini et al., 2011, p. 171).

From both definitions it is clear that we (Santini et al., 2011, p. 17) are dealing with a science in which statistics cover a prominent role: as a demonstration of this, a new scientific society called the ‘sensometric society’ has been founded by many researchers belonging to this field of study. It (food tourism) provides a useful avenue in which to undergo a significant shift from tourism as a visual practice towards something which engages all the sense in a kind of sensuous geography (Roadway, 1994), involving the literal and physical internalizing of a culture, as opposed to non-immersive gaze. These sites provide avenues of total sensual and bodily immersion, where cultural objects are physically internalized and tourists are submerged in waves of smells, sounds, taste and touch (Everett, 2009, p. 342).

It is undeniable that the ‘sense of place’ has a fundamental relevance for the gastronomic tourist experience. The gastronomic tourists described, here are clearly those identified as ‘modern tourists’, for whom reality and authenticity ‘are thought to be elsewhere; in other historical periods and cultures, in purer, simple life styles’ (MacCannell, 1989, p. 3).

However as suggested by Parasecoli (2002; in Scarpato & Deniele, 2003, p. 301) in the postmodern turn the eatimology of place as ‘a foundation for identities- individual and cultural, local and national’ has lost the energy of the past. The *eatimologies* refer to the analysis of the origin and the development of specific products, their spreading through commerce, cultural expansion, colonization, tourism, and their hybridization (Scarpato & Deniele, 2003, p. 299). Globalization has increased the speed of kitchen modernization.

Food tourism can be and in many cases already is, driving force for farmers to rethink their production activity taking into account the diversification into new markets and the opportunities to obtain an added value to their products.

Hjalager and Richards (2002, pp. 228-229) suggest that ‘a case study can identify relevant issues and the various driving forces that are important for the development of tourism or gastronomy in a particular area’ as well as provide a vital basis for a link between theory and practice.’ Consequently a case study strategy was pursued in order to examine how place and postmodern touristic activity are shaped by food tourism consumption and production in the West of Scotland.

Moreover by participating in food festivals and events, by visiting and buying from specialist food factories by buying from farm shops and farmers “market and by eating at restaurants, pubs and inns which feature local foods /dishes on their menu, the tourist connects closely with the local food culture, starts to understand

the local food culture, starts to understand the landscape that provided it and directly supports the rural economy” (Hall, 2003).

All these opportunities require human resources and intelligence people informed and able to intelligence, people informed and able to acquire new awareness able to have a new model and a new ethic from which to see food tourism development and the natural resources as complementary for their respective sustainability.

According to Gobe (2001; in Stockebrand et al., 2011, p. 30), emotions have a particular influence on the brand management. The consumer buying decision is not only a result of rational decisions. Furthermore feelings become more important because in many cases consumers are burdened by too much product information. By emotions, Bagozzi et al. (1999; in Stockebrand et al., 2011, p. 30) mean “mental states of readiness that arise from cognitive appraisals of events or thoughts” and in commercial terms” are central to the actions of consumers.” Concerning food, Alvensleben (2000; in Stockebrand et al., 2011, p. 30) underlines in his study that especially for regional food, the emotional aspect is very important. In many cases the product quality of regional food cannot be identified by the consumer, so that the buying decision is often a result of emotional attributes of the product or the region in which it is produced. Most studies which focus on communication in tourism underline the importance of emotions- based communication. The power of oral communication has been examined by Salazar (2005) who traced the linguistic skills that tourist guides develop in order to (re)present and actively (re) construct local culture for a diversified global audience. Chronis (2005) demonstrated how symbols inserted into a text can help to negotiate, define, and strengthen social values between service providers and tourists whereas Shin et al. (2008) showed that the use of metaphors significantly influences the purchasing behavior of individuals (Stockebrand et al., 2011, p. 30).

Overall, it appears that the more expressive a communication (i.e., connotative aspects of the message), the more memorable the conveyed information (i.e. the denotative aspects of the message). Against the background, emotional communication seems particularly effective because the connotative aspects such as symbols, metaphors, stories etc. “reduce the complexity of the reality” (Bosaugit et al., 2009; in Stockebrand et al., 2011, p. 30), by providing a more immediate understanding both of the actors involved in the communication process and of the events portrayed.

Although it is plausible that emotional communication can be particularly effective for representing most components of the tourist product, there is less evidence in the tourist literature whether it is appropriate also for conveying information about the food component whether the latter is set in the foreground of the tourist experience. In fact, whereas tourism is a dynamic, extra – ordinary and un- contextualized (at

least until it is experienced) concept, food is “concrete, contextualized and lived” (Kniazeva & Venkatesh, 2007: in Stockebrand et al., 2011, p. 30), This means that it is important to find the right communication for food in tourism since, as underlined by Cohen and Avieli (2004), the culinary aspects of a tourist product can work in its favor or to its detriment: “Since tourists will be generally reluctant to taste or eat (...) foods, whose ingredients are unknown or unfamiliar to them, (the) communication gap between tourist provider and tourists should be reduced in order to avoid any kind of anxiety.” They affirm that the communication of food in tourism should “filter out” the elements which are unfamiliar to tourists by means of a “cultural translation”. They refer to the process which presence the food component anchored to a familiar context. Thus, the communication of culinary aspects in tourism should create an “environmental bubble” (Cohen & Avieli, 2004; in Stockebrand, et al., 2011, p. 30) around the tourist. This has a reassuring function which is achieved by using creative techniques such as employing both discursive verbal practices (e.g., labeling dishes with fancy names) or nonverbal ones (e.g., providing pictures of unknown or little known food).

Food Safety

Food safety is gaining prominence as a consideration by concerned tourists and the wider tourism industry, as awareness of newly emerging food safety issues such as Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE- sometimes referred to as ‘mad cow’ disease) are raised through heightened media attention. Food safety is recognized as one of the three primary concerns raised by participants at the 1998 Think Tank on Safety and Security (International Hotel & Restaurant Association, 1998; in Pendergast, 2006, p.143). They have focused on the particular characteristics with the nature of food-borne illness, the extent that it strikes the tourism market, the potential for genuine partnerships to make a difference and how being an active agent, including knowing which foodstuffs to avoid, might be a useful strategy for minimizing the potential time spent engaged with a pedestal, rather than in more appealing tourist activities.

A sickness caused by eating contaminated food is often called ‘food poisoning’, or more correctly, ‘food-borne illness’. In almost all cases, this illness can be easily prevented with the use of careful food-handling and storage techniques, personal hygiene practices and cleaning processes, particularly in mass catering settings such as restaurants, hotels and takeaways, thereby reducing the opportunity for food-borne illness occur (Pendergast, 2006, p.146).

The Federation of Tour Operators (FTO) has developed a preferred Code of Practice (FTO, 2003) which provides advice regarding a range of elements at tourist destination including those related to: fire safety, pool safety, beach safety, children’s

clubs; and importantly, food safety. The document has been “issued to 18000 accommodation providers in destination, and is the criteria that our members and experts use to measure acquiescence” (FTO, 2005; in Pendergast, 2006, p. 151).

Lessons to Learn

Slow Food association in Italy has recently launched a project in 1999 that uses two tools to protect and promote typical foods for promoting food tourism in Italy. Those two tools are: Presidia Projects and Ark of Taste. The *presidia* began in Italy in 1999 as the supporting arm of Ark of Taste. The Ark had catalogued hundreds of products at risk of disappearing, but with the *presidia*, Slow Food decided to make a concrete contribution to the world of production. *Presidia* is a local projects that focus on a group of producers of a single product, developing production and marketing techniques to allow their work to be economically viable. The *presidia* program is the tool that Slow Food uses to assist producers directly in the commercialization, protection and promotion of their products.

The general objectives of the *presidia* cover the following four areas: economic objectives (increasing producer incomes, developing local driven activities, increasing employment); environmental objectives (defending biodiversity, improving the sustainability of products); social objectives (improve the social position of producers, strengthen their organizational capacity); and cultural objectives (strengthening producers’ cultural identity and promoting production areas) (Buiatti, 2011, p. 96).

Main goals of Slow Food Association (Buiatti, 2011, p. 97)

- To protect the heritage of food, local traditional and different cultures
- To defend food biodiversity
- To safeguards the environment and the land
- To promote taste education in order to help to make daily choices about food with awareness and responsibilities
- To endorse sustainable agriculture
- To protect small producers and their communities
- To promote gastronomic traditions of the world.(Source: Retrieved January 7, 2010, from www.slow food.com; in Buiatti, 2011, p. 97)

One of the key components of the relationship between food and tourism and regional development is that of the promotion of local foods (Hall, 2002). As well as direct purchase by consumers, the use of local food production, while branding menus in terms of their local food content may also be significant in marketing the menu and the restaurant as well as potentially leading to ongoing purchase of regional food - stuffs by consumers. Additionally, the use of local foods may add to

the perceived authenticity of the restaurant experience as well as the wider experience of the destination (Symons, 1999).

Food tourism is strictly related to the development of a sustainable tourism which has its main objective to minimize environmental and cultural change, maximize tourist satisfaction, and optimize long-term economic growth for the region. It is a way of obtaining a balance between the growth potential of tourism and the conservation need of the environment (Buiatti, , p. 100).

In the postmodern era, festivals and events have provided communities with an effective means of affirming their cultural and regional values and identities. Moreover, by participating in food festivals and events, by visiting and buying from specialist food factories, by buying from farm shops and farmers' market and by eating at restaurants, pubs and inns which feature local foods/dishes on their menu, the tourist connects closely with the local food culture, starts to understand the landscape that provided it and directly supports local economy (Hall, 2003, p. 10).

Food Tourism and Destination Brand

Food can also be used in branding a destination (Hashimoto and Telfer, 2006; in Lin et al., 2011, p. 32). In forming brand associations with respect to a specific destination, it is widely suggested that brand name, logo, symbol, slogan and packaging are key elements, and that each of these elements should reflect the characteristics of the destination (Cai, 2002; Tasci & Kozak, 2006; in Lin et al., 2011, p. 32). In light of this perspective, food can be considered an essential element in building a destination brand (Hashimoto & Telfer, 2006; in Lin et al., 2011, p. 32), because food is often intertwined with the social, cultural and natural characteristics of a specific region, and therefore carries a large number of symbolic meanings (Lockie, 2001; in Lin et al., 2011, p. 32). Food has a strong connection to a place. French wines (Henchion and McIntyre, 2000; in Lin et al., 2011, p. 32), Italian pasta (Alexander, 2000) and Cajun cuisine (Ten Eyck, 2001) are good examples. In light of this fact, the distinctiveness of food in relation to a place plays a significant role in a destination identity (Everett and Aitchison, 2008; in Lin et al., 2011, p. 32)

Similarly, from a marketing perspective, although brand identity and brand image are related, they are different concepts. The key difference between these two concepts is that identity originates from the firm, whereas image is an individual's perception of a particular brand (Nandan, 2005; in Lin et al., 2011, p. 34). A brand has to prioritize its focus on the brand identity that enables its target customer to evaluate a particular brand accurately and properly (Ghodeswar, 2008; in Lin et al., 2011, p. 34). Aaker (1996; Lin et al., 2011, p. 34) delineates that brand identity includes a core and extended identity. The core identity, the central of the brand, makes the brand unique and valuable. Specifically, the elements of the core identity should reflect the

meaning and essence of the brand. To become a strong and successful brand, not only is a clear and competitive core identity needed, but well-organized and cohesive elements of extended identity are also essential (Aaker, 1996). In this sense, brand identity needs to fairly reflect the firm's business strategies in terms of its promises to customers (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000; in Lin et al., 2011, p. 34). That is, brand message has to be conveyed clearly (Nandan, 2005). As a result, researchers suggest that brand identity is a theoretical concept that would be best understood from the supply-side perspective (Nandan, 2005). In line with this perspective, Cai (2002; in Lin et al., 2011, p. 34) argues that image building comes one step closer to branding, but it lacks a critical link — a brand identity.

After analyzing food-related information present in tourism brochures and destination website, a frame work for the identity of food in relation to a destination is proposed. This framework consists of 7 dimensions and 14 categories with number of items. Seven dimensions, along with the specific categories, are described in the table given below.

Table: A Framework of an identity of food in relation to a destination

Dimension	Category	Example item
Class of food	A type of food	Raw, cooked, packaged, drink and snack
	A style of food	Traditional, regional, international and fusion
Role of food	A food-related establishment	Restaurant, café, shop, market and farm
	A food-related activity	Festival, tour, holiday celebration and exhibition
Character of food	As a symbol of a culture	Custom, history, religion and pop culture
	As an indicator of a society	Lifestyle and socio-economic status
	As a reflection of a natural environment	Mountain, land, sea, river and weather
Value of food	Dining experience	Authentic, ethnic, trendy, exotic and religious
	Social and cultural experiences	With families, friends and a specific group people

	Sensory quality	Taste, appearance, smell, freshness and texture
	Promised quality	Food safety, health, claim and labeling
Feature of food and food-related subjects	A feature of food or food-related subjects	Origin, ingredient, recipe, and preparing and farming methods
Attribute of foodservice	An attribute of foodservice	Service type, amenity, décor, dining setting and special offer
Availability of food and food-related subjects	An availability of food and food-related subjects	Days open, price, phone, address, transportation and map

Source: Lin et al., 2011, p.38

National and cultural identity is one of the most obvious ways of distinguishing food systems as Other. It is also the frequent category in which culinary tourism is enacted, giving us international dinners, cookbooks and restaurants specializing in the cuisine of particular cultures, and classes televised cooking shows demonstrating cooking techniques from a variety of cultures. This category is based partly on spatial distance and physical boundaries between groups of people. A food system physically removed from the familiar can automatically, though not necessarily, represent the unknown, and therefore, be potentially strange. This spatial distance also refers to the juxtaposition of foodways of varying cultures that have historically had physical distance, usually with the locating of one identity within the context of another, turning the former identity ethnic (FN6). Ethnicity, like Otherness, is a dynamic cultural construct, and is more usefully thought of as a process of contextualization rather than an actual objective state. Ethnic identity is based on perceptions of shared heritage and of living within a dominant host culture (Oring, 1986, p. 24; in Long, 1998, p. 183).

Conclusion

Food is the manifestation of exchange crossing the boundary (symbolically the mouth) between inner self and the outer world. Food not only provides energy but also it gives the identify of people and their places. Food has been associated with culture and heritage. People wherever they have settled they eat different types of food which are produced according to the nature of its ecology and environment. Food is cultural artifact that could be divided into two: the sacred and secular food. Food habit, dietary pattern, way of eating and sitting seem to be important for understanding human society and their culture.

People in this modern world have developed their mode of travelling for having different taste of food. Thus, food tourism as a different form of tourism came into existence in the arena of tourism. In tourism, food seems to be one of the most important economic sources for the local communities of destinations. Food tourism provides a conceptual vehicle for pursuing a more culturally aware tourism agenda. (Everett, 2009) Many food tourists are seeking for authenticity because many of them are frustrated with repeated food stored in refrigerator.

In course of studying food tourism, the scholars of this subject also focused on culinary tourism, gastronomic tourism interchangeably. Food tourism has also been linked with slow food, slow tourism, slow tourist and slow city. Though this was a movement, people are highly influenced from this movement and made efforts to make success this. Today many tourist destinations are with this project which have focused on sustainability trinity (social, economic and environment). Many destinations have used food as source of attraction in strengthening their tourism marketing. Attention must be given on food safety and security. Food is considered as one of the “holy trinity” (Brotherton, 1999; Bell, 2009; Kunwar, 2017). Bell (2009) in this regard has used the term “holy trinity”, first used by Brotherton (1999) which refers to foodscapes, drinksapes and restsapes in business and managerial terms.

Food tourism research is very popular in Europe but not in Nepal, one of the most richest destinations, where people consume *chaurasi benjan* (84 different dishes) consumed by Hindus and many more different types of food and drinks by different ethnic groups. The main reason of not studying on food tourism in Nepal is because there has not been developed food as a tourism product in scientific way. Therefore, this is high time that Nepal tourism authorities should learn, understand and come up with its indigenous strategies to identify, protect and promote the aspects of food tourism in Nepal.

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