



AALBORG UNIVERSITY
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STAKEHOLDERS PERSPECTIVE TOWARDS ADVENTURE TOURISM (AT) DEVELOPMENT AND THEIR ROLE IN IT.

“Understanding Economic, Social and Environmental Impacts of AT, In the case of Pokhara”

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ABSTRACT

This master thesis aims to investigate the impacts of Adventure Tourism (AT) in Pokhara, along with stakeholder's perspective and their roles in Adventure Tourism Development in Pokhara. It also addresses the collaboration between all stakeholders in relation to the impacts and the decision-making process, collaboration benefits and power issues. By examining all the impacts and stakeholders' roles, it deals to conclude if AT can be helpful for the local development of Pokhara. Pokhara is a touristic city of Nepal, that lies in western part of the country and is famous for various tourism adventure activities such as paragliding, hiking, trekking, rafting, canyoning, bungee-jumping, mountain climbing, rock climbing, and eco-tourism, through which one can experience unforgettable outdoor experiences. However, due to the tourism activities, the impact on the local community is undeniable, and cannot be left unidentified. So, we intend to examine those various impacts caused by AT in Pokhara in terms of economic, social and environmental factors.

In the research processes, qualitative method has been used. Respondents such as governmental officials, tour operators, cafe and hotel owners, and locals were interviewed semi-structured questionnaires via online platforms that gave us an insight on stakeholder's point of view regarding their involvement in the AT development process, as well as how certain stakeholders 'locals' hope to get involved. Furthermore, data analysis was performed in order to back up the conclusions and assertions made during our interviews. The availability of various adventure tourism infrastructures, tourism stakeholders' see Pokhara as an ideal adventure destination. Our finding reveals that there are numerous positive and negative impacts of economic and social factors, but the environmental impacts seem to be more unbalanced and not sustainably initiated, resulting in the negative impacts outweighing positive impacts. Positive impacts on the economy and societies of Pokhara are considered very significant in the local development of Pokhara. This research also disclosed that the good collaboration between the stakeholders are crucial factors to address these impacts, where we have discussed conflicts and issues that have been seen among the stakeholders in adventure tourism development of Pokhara.

Keywords: Adventure Tourism, Local development, Stakeholders, Tourism Impacts, Pokhara

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AT	Adventure Tourism
ATTA	Adventure Travel Trade Association
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
ATDI	Adventure Tourism Development index
CAAN	Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal
ACA	Annapurna Conservation Area
ABC	Annapurna Base Camp
NTB	Nepal Tourism Board
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
NGO	Non- Governmental Organization
INGO	International Non- Governmental Organization
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
RPM	Research Planning & Monitoring
USD	United States Dollar
AAU	Aalborg University
i.e.,	That is
e.g.,	example

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1. INTRODUCTION

Over the years, the tourism industry has been experiencing a rapid change as a result of its diverse target markets. In order to meet the changing demand of the tourism industry, varieties of ways have been developed which often justifies the development of new tourism sectors. As a result, adventure tourism (AT) has become one of the most common forms of tourism in recent decades. According to UNWTO (2014), the tourism industry is a rapidly growing industry, and among several forms of tourism, adventure tourism belongs to one of the prominent and fastest growing subcategories of it. There is no definite definition to explain the AT, but the adventure trip is identified on the basis of its primary activity: hard adventure activity or soft adventure activity (UNWTO, 2014). AT is gaining popularity as visitors seek out vacations that are different from the traditional beach vacation. However, adventure activities vary from person to person, but in the modern world, activities such as trekking, mountaineering expeditions, bungee jumping, scuba diving, and rock climbing are widely cited as examples of adventure tourism. AT is regarded as a rising niche market that has the potential to become extremely successful and profitable (Thomas, 2012). Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) (2016) claims, adventure tourism is valued for USD \$263 billion and is continuously increasing (Knowles, 2019). The higher demand of AT is considered due to its low-volume products and longer-duration visits, and adventure tourists are found to have more willingness-to-pay for adventure activities that deliver unique nature, local culture, or an activity-focused experiences (Knowles, 2019). While Tourism industry is considered as an effective tool for the economic growth of the local economy and its diversification, adventure tourism is claimed to have enormous opportunities for the development of the local economy by generating income and employment, and potential to increase biodiversity conservation and encouraging sustainable development among locals (Meyer & Meyer, 2015; UNWTO, 2014). Even Though the potential of AT is highly discussed, no academic research is explored on the basis of the conceptual framework of sustainable tourism (Knowles, 2019), only eco-tourism and nature-based tourism includes these frameworks.

With the rise of adventure's demand, UNWTO (2014) suggests that this form of tourism should execute sustainable tourism theory as their course of action. Tourism industry on a global scale is very dynamic and has a competitive nature, but it brings many positive and negative impacts along

with it. Thus, this paper is designed to discuss being centered within AT in a Pokhara, its role for local development, impacts of AT in Pokhara and stakeholder's roles/collaboration for the development of AT.

The relationship between the developing countries and tourism industry are claimed to be positive with enormous opportunities in terms of economic, social and environmental (Durberry, 2002 in Meyer & Meyer, 2015). This paper examines the relationship between adventure tourism and Pokhara, Nepal on the basis of economic, social and environmental impacts.

This paper's main aim and objectives are mentioned below:

Aim

How do the various stakeholders view Adventure tourism development in Pokhara? And how do they perceive their own role in such development?

Objectives:

- To understand the social, economic and environmental impact of Adventure tourism in Pokhara.
- To examine the stakeholders' collaboration and their role in Adventure tourism development.

2. BACKGROUND

This chapter includes a brief summary regarding the background of adventure Tourism in Nepal, specially focused on our designated destination 'POKHARA'. It includes the description of Pokhara and tourism in it, so that it gives a brief outline about our case which will also help to perceive the literature reviewed in our next session.

2.1. Tourism in Nepal

Although Nepal opened its doors to foreign visitors in 1951, it was not until the 1960s that many westerners visited the country (only 4017 in 1960) (Zurick, 1992). Mountaineering teams were among them, and some of their members went on to found adventure travel programs in the country. In Cohen's 'counterculture traveler', Nepal's popularity as an adventure travel destination skyrocketed in the 1970s, when Kathmandu served as the endpoint for long overland trips undertaken by European backpackers (in Zurick, 1992). The adventure tourism industry has always operated with a keen eye on global tourism trends. Foreign arrivals have steadily risen to 1.46 billion in 2019 after the global economic crisis, which saw a 40 million decrease in visitors between 2008 (920 million) and 2009 (880 million) (UNWTO, 2020). International travel in Nepal continued to surge in 2019, in spite of natural disaster and political chaos (UNWTO, 2020). Within the global tourism industry, adventure tourism is the fastest-growing niche (ATTA, 2018a). Despite the fact that Europe continues to dominate the adventure tourism market, the Asia-Pacific region is growing at the fastest pace, according to an industry report (Doshi & Das 2018; ATTA, 2018b in Wengel, 2020). The country offers a plethora of opportunities to discover with Nepal being one of the most popular tourist destinations, offering various types of adventure tourism (Nepal, 2016 in Wengel, 2020).

Nepal has been named '*a trekkers' paradise*' by a popular guidebook Lonely Planet because of its Himalayan views, ancient temples, indigenous villages, and jungle wildlife. Nepal welcomed one million tourists in 2018 (Aryal, 2019 in Wengel, 2020, p.2) and the government aimed to draw two million foreign visitors in 2020 by launching tourism campaigns such as the Buddhist Circuit Tour 2019, Asian Rural Tourism Festival 2019, and Visit Nepal Year 2020 (Badal, 2019 in Wengel,

2020). Though Nepal is best known for its mountaineering, the country also offers rafting, paragliding, mountain biking, and bungee jumping, among other sports (Aryal, 2019 in Wengel, 2020). Land-based adventure sports, such as mountaineering – subdivided into trekking and mountain climbing (Beedie & Hudson, 2003; Apollo, 2017) – dominated Nepal's adventure tourism market after the conquest of the great Himalayan peaks in the 1950s.

Nepal's tourism market, trekking is regarded as a famous soft adventure though ATTA put it as a hard category, but mountain climbing is considered a hard adventure with high risk, whereas trekking is a moderate to low-risk sport (Badal, 2019 in Wengel, 2020). Apart from mountaineering, white water rafting (pioneered by Nepal Association of Rafting Agents since the middle 1980s) and air adventure sports, primarily paragliding and skydiving, are other common and well-established adventure activities in Nepal (Badal, 2019 in Wengel, 2020). Despite the fact that the Nepal Air Sports Association estimates the tourist numbers more than doubled between 2015 and 2018 (Aryal, 2019 in Wengel, 2020), air-based tourism remains a niche activity due to its classification as a hard adventure with high risks and costs (Celsi et al., 1993). Other well-known adventure activities include jungle safaris and kayaking. Canyoning and stand-up paddle boarding (water-based), Skiing and mountain biking (land-based), as well as zip-flying and bungee jumping (water-based) are among Nepal's new adventure activities (air-based).

2.2. Pokhara: Tourism Geography

Pokhara is regarded as Nepal's second largest city, which is about 200 kilometers from the country's capital, Kathmandu, Nepal. Pokhara covers an area of 464.24 sq. Km, with a total population of 402,995 (Pokhara Metropolitan City, n.d.). Pokhara was declared as a metropolitan city on 10 March 2017 BS. The altitude of Pokhara ranges from 1300 meters to 600 meters in terms of highest and lowest altitude respectively (International Finance Corporation, 2016). This city possesses a distinct climate, vegetation and numerous scenic lakes, and several ranges of mountains. The tourism attributes of Pokhara ranges from trekking and to heterogenesis and geographic travel along with various other characters. Pokhara is rich with unique natural resources, as it has eight lakes (example: Mairi, Begnas, Nyureni, Dipand, Fewa, Khashte, Gunde,

and Rupa), and also has three highest mountains of the world. (Annapurna I ranging 8091 m, Dhaulagiri ranging 8167m, and Manaslu ranging 8164 m) (Upreti & Upadhyaya, 2013).

Tourism in Pokhara was established as a climbing waypoint in the 1950s and 1960s. Pokhara was exposed as a mountainous destination for tourists on 3 June 1950, after a French citizen and mountaineers team stepped in to ascend Mt. Annapurna I (Upreti & Upadhyaya, 2013). Later, in 1962, tens of thousands of tourists started discovering Pokhara as a starting point for climbing the mountain. (Shrestha & Shrestha, 2013). In Nepal's tourism sector, Pokhara has a wide range of varieties. three of the world's tallest mountains, vast number of lakes, religious sites, cultural heritages, trekking, hiking trails, adventures and other manmade tributes that make up this beautiful geographical landscape. According to the report of World Bank Group (2016), from 2001 to 2010, an increasing number of tourists visiting Nepal came to Pokhara. During this time, Pokhara's tourist arrivals increased at a compound annual growth rate of 12.8 percent, while Nepal's grew at a rate of 5.9 percent. Pokhara attracted 21.6 percent of all visitors to Nepal in 2001. However, in 2010, this ratio increased to 38.3 percent (World Bank Group, 2016). According to a report by the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN) on flight movements at Pokhara airport in 2017, Pokhara's airport had the highest number of passenger movements in the first ten months of 2017. The passenger movement in Pokhara has risen by 32% over the previous year's figures. The airport in Pokhara handled 253,873 passengers in 2016 (Arpana, 2018). However, due to a lack of accurate data on surface transportation, there is no exact data on travelers in Pokhara as a whole, but some hotel entrepreneurs estimate that more than 550,000 people visit each year. Pokhara is the key entry point for tourists heading to the Annapurna Conservation Area (ACA), where about half of them have rerouted (Upadhaya, Sapkota, & Upreti, 2013).

Currently, Pokhara offers a wide range of adventure activities such as paragliding, zip lining, canyoning, mountain biking, rafting in seti river, kayaking, skydiving, eco-tourism, bungee jumping, short-day hiking and a trek to Annapurna Base Camp (ABC). Pokhara is ranked as one of the best adventures and leisure cities in the world and is gaining popularity because of the soft adventure activities (Nepal Tourism Board, 2021; International Finance Corporation, 2016). The enormous growth of tourism induces the probable positive advantages in economic, social and environmental dimensions. Even Though Pokhara started as an adventure destination due to

mountain tourism, now the city offers a diverse range of activities for adventure seekers. And, to offer a wide range of services for the adventure seekers, there are wide ranges of actors and institutions involved in Pokhara tourism industry. The figure 2.2.1., illustrates what stakeholders are involved in Pokhara’s tourism industry.

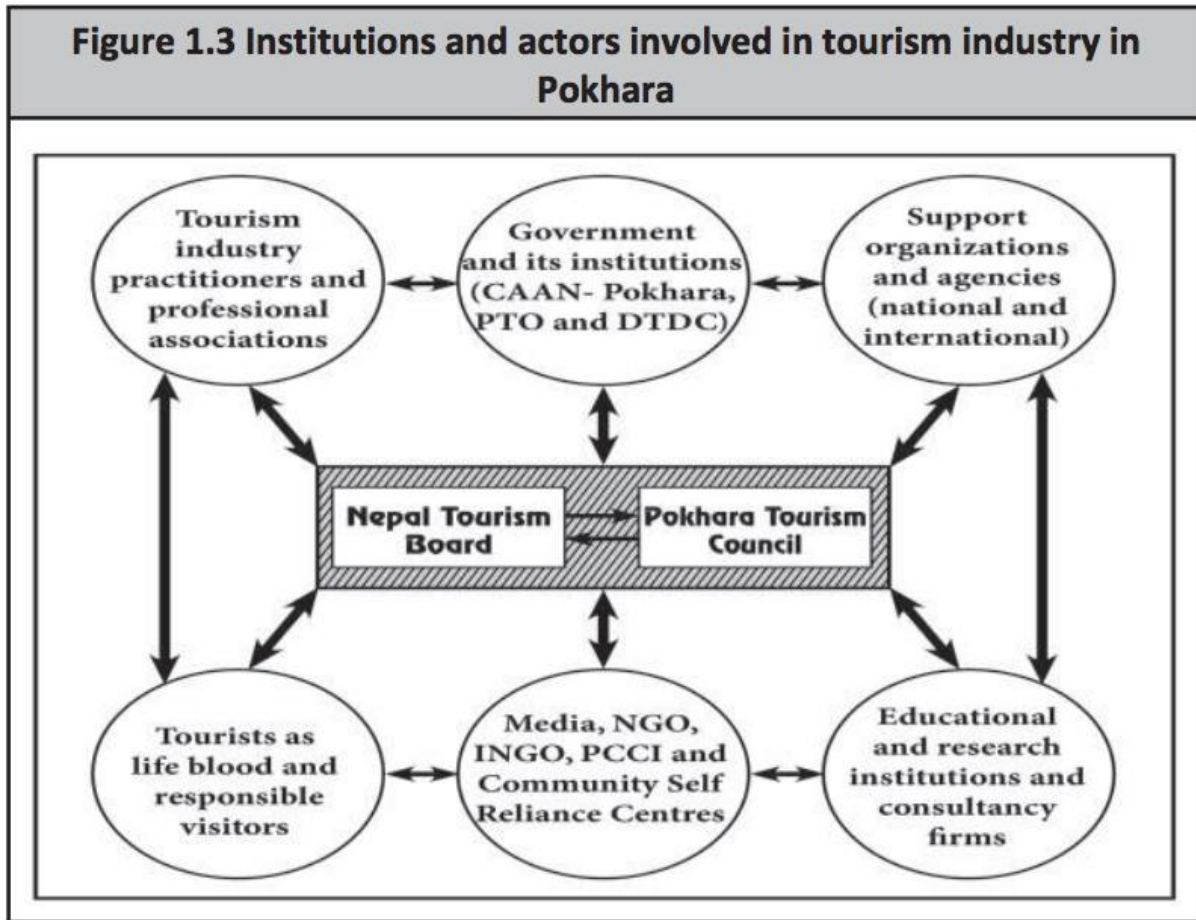


Fig 2.2.1.: Illustration of Pokhara’s tourism industry stakeholders. Retrieved from Upreti and Upadhyaya (2013, p. 13)

The figure 2.2.1., illustrates what Pokhara’s tourism industry comprises. These stakeholders are separately placed but these multiple sub-sectors are functionally interconnected directly or indirectly, and these actors are engaged to develop, operate and manage the tourism industry in Pokhara.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter examines and presents the several theoretical literatures that are used to create a structure of this thesis and mainly to find the answer for our research question. The theories used in this chapter will help to review collected data later in the next chapter. In order to have better understanding, the chapter is divided into two sections: 1. Adventure tourism, and 2. Stakeholders with its sub-headings.

3.1. Adventure Tourism

The first session: AT, includes various theoretical overview regarding its definition, history, and adventure tourism and development. The concept of adventure tourism will also highlight various impacts through the economic, social and environmental framework.

3.1.1. Defining Adventure Tourism

Defining adventure tourism in a simpler way is difficult as it lacks a precise definition (World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2014); however, there are some authors who have described adventure tourism. Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) states “*adventure tourism as a trip that includes at least two of the following three elements: physical activity, natural environment, and cultural immersion*” (in UNWTO, 2014, p. 10). Whereas, Buckley (2006) states, adventure tourism are any “*guided commercial tours where the principal attraction is an outdoor activity that relies on features of the natural terrain, generally requires specialized sporting or similar equipment, and is exciting for tour clients*” (p. 1). It is understood here that a client may not be one operating the equipment but can also be one of the passengers while doing any adventure activity. The author admits that the given definition on adventure tourism may not describe the wide range of this tourism whilst individual experience of one person can vary to another, thus the adventure tourism boundaries cannot be well-defined (Buckley, 2006). When the term ‘adventure tourism’ itself is boundless, its core activities have distinguished attributes which makes them apart from the other types of tourism. (Swarbrooke, Beard, Leckie, & Po, 2003;

Buckley, 2006). Adventure tourism is considered as a vague term, thus Swarbrooke et al. (2003) claims that the use of the term ‘adventure travel’ instead of ‘adventure tourism’, is mostly done in the literature (p. 6). According to authors, adventure travel is more extensive in compared to tourism as it includes the goals which can be related to professional activities on the basis of Addison (1999) definition on adventure travel as stated, “*any activity trip close to nature that is undertaken by someone who departs from known surroundings to encounter unfamiliar places and people, with the purpose of exploration, study, business, communication, reaction, sport, or sightseeing and tourism*” (Swarbrooke et al., 2003, p. 6). However, in both terms’ ‘adventure’ is key point which is evocative for several people and their minds start flooding the images and associations related to the term what ‘adventure’ may mean to them, as people’s imagination and emotions are certainly part of the adventure experience (Swarbrooke et al., 2003). Swarbrooke et al. (2003) presents some of their understanding to the term ‘adventures’ that are as follows:

No.	Characteristics of Adventure
1	Uncertain Outcomes
2	Danger / Risk
3	Challenges
4	Anticipated Rewards
5	Stimulation and Elation/ Excitement
6	Separation
7	Exploring and Discovering
8	Absorption and Focus

Table 3.1.1.1. Characteristic of 'Adventure' in travel (Swarbrooke et al., 2003, p. 9)

The different characteristics of 'adventure' in travel highlights the viewpoint that adventure tourism consists mostly of the intangible products, which travelers experience and tends to satisfy what they want (Miettinen & Pajari, 2014). Adventure tourism as an experience-based travel adds value when the travelers learn and interact amidst local populations by connecting along with their core values (UNWTO, 2014).

According to UNWTO (2014), Adventure activities are divided as a hard or soft adventure based on their nature. There are thirty-four numbers of activities that are divided in between soft or hard adventure. Hard adventures such as trekking, climbing, and caving are highly risky according to their nature, so such activities need a high-level specialized skill or a professional guide to perform in contrast soft adventure does not require specialized skills and higher level of physical demands (Stowell et al., 2010; Swarbrooke et al., 2003). Both types of adventure 'hard or soft' are "*highly lucrative segments of the adventure tourism sector*" (UNWTO, 2014, p. 6), which means that even though the adventures activities are segmented based on their nature, they play an equal role for the growth of the adventure tourism. The figure 3.1.2. below present the activities that are divided into hard or soft activities.

ACTIVITY	TYPE
Archeological expedition	Soft
Attending local festival/fairs	Other
Backpacking	Soft
Birdwatching	Soft
Camping	Soft
Canoeing	Soft
Caving	Hard
Climbing (mountain/rock/ice)	Hard
Cruise	Other
Cultural activities	Other
Eco-tourism	Soft
Educational programs	Soft
Environmentally sustainable activities	Soft
Fishing/fly-fishing	Soft
Getting to know the locals	Other
Hiking	Soft
Horseback riding	Soft
Hunting	Soft
Kayaking/sea/whitewater	Soft
Learning a new language	Other
Orienteering	Soft
Rafting	Soft
Research expeditions	Soft
Safaris	Soft
Sailing	Soft
Scuba Diving	Soft
Snorkeling	Soft
Skating/snowboarding	Soft
Surfing	Soft
Trekking	Hard
Walking tours	Other
Visiting friends/family	Other
Visiting historical sites	Other
Volunteer Tourism	Soft

Fig 3.1.1.2. Adventure activities according to its nature (ATTA, 2013 in UNWTO, 2014).

Along with various definitions, Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) (2020) highlights the key elements on what makes the entire adventure experience? They are nature, culture and activity.

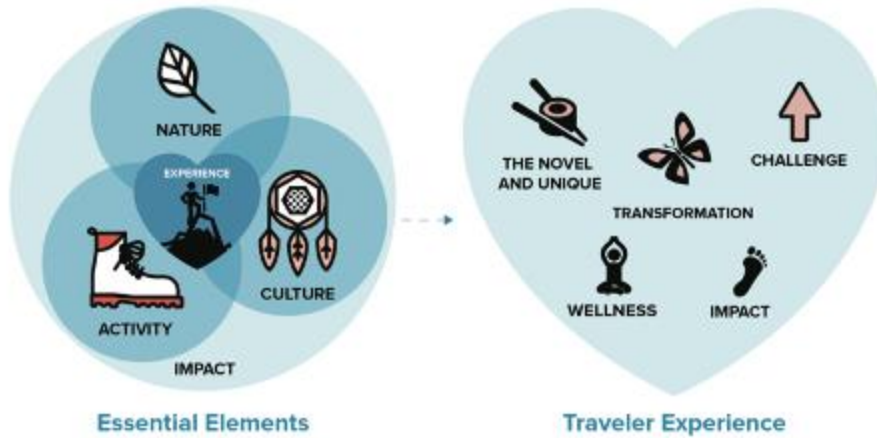


Fig 3.1.1.3 Adventure experience and elements (Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA), 2020)

The left side of the above image illustrates its elements that are essential and plays a vital role to provide ‘experience’ when they are combined together. An adventure travel provider shall note these individual elements when kept together delivers an overall experience. According to ATTA (2020), considering every single component of a trip as an individual ingredient and accommodating them together shall be considered by travel providers in terms of adventure travel. The concept of ‘impact’ locates the components of the adventure travel within it. It means, to adventure travel products developers the ‘impact’ must be a crucial consideration. It is because the travel providers leave an impact on each place, they make their visit (ATTA, 2020).

The other side (right) of the image illustrates how adventure travel is motivated by diverse ambition and desires which influences their consumption and emotional process of their trip. The image highlights travelers seeking much to their wellness: physical and mental, exclusive experiences, challenges and transformation (ATTA, 2020).

3.1.2. History of Adventure Tourism

Humans have been travelling since the primeval time in search of food and for a number of other survival purposes. Exploration has been a method of adventure travel for humans for hundreds of years. People have traveled for the purpose of discovering scientific, geographical or colonial motives like Marco Polo, Captain James Cook and Sir Ernest Shackleton (World Tourism Organization, 2014). According to Swarbrooke et al. (2003), the first adventure travelers were early explorers on a quest for knowledge, in search of new wealth, lands, and unknown locations. 'Columbus, Cook, Da Gama, Magellan, and Raleigh' are only a few of the well-known early adventurers. They further mentioned mercenaries were also regarded as early adventurers who were mainly interested in making money and taking risks, while others, such as Pilgrims, were searching for spiritual insight (Swarbrooke et al., 2003).

According to Van der Merwe (2009), adventure tourism has already been part of the race of human beings even if the participants of that age did not see it as adventure tourism, but rather as place exploration, it has always existed in society. Instead of being a recreational sport, it was a way of life for them. Due to the nature of adventure tourism and the many different factors that should be considered when attempting to describe what adventure tourism is, there is no precise definition of this term. This form of tourism first emerged in the 1980s, when there was a paradigm shift in international tourism and alternative models began to emerge as a response to mass tourism's negative practices (Zurick, 1992). Adventure tourism was a part of this new wave as a form of 'green' or 'alternative' tourism, ecotourism and adventure tourism are gradually merging into one category of tourism with more socially and environmentally responsible tourism products, according to the 1995 PATA Adventure Travel and Ecotourism Conference and Mart, but ecotourism and adventure tourism should still be niche segments in order to retain profitability (Lew, 1996; Cloke & Perkins, 1998)

Though we may compare previous conquests, expeditions and pilgrimage to modern Adventure Tourism. It has gained rapid popularity over the last few decades. Part of this growth and sudden popularity can be attributed to the commercialization of outdoor recreations (Buckley, 2000, 2004a; Travel Industry Association, 2005 in Buckley, 2007).

3.1.3. Tourism and Development

Tourism plays an important role for the development of all countries, by using the several resources such as: natural, cultural and anthropic along with local traditions and customs. Through tourism, it connects all the people from over the world bringing the real profits to the host communities and contributes to the GDP rate and employments (Băndoi, et al., 2020). According to Băndoi et al. (2020), “*Tourism is not only a stimulating factor for local and regional economies, but also a catalyst for all areas of activity with which tourism companies come into direct and indirect contact*” (p. 1). The authors also claim that tourism is a tool for regional development as it assists in creating new activities related to the local economy (Meyer & Meyer, 2015). According to Durbarry (2002), the relationship between the tourism development and economy are found to have positive relationships as it allows for the new business start-ups (in Meyer & Meyer, 2015). Several developing nations and regions are claimed to have managed to increase their economies through tourism development (Meyer & Meyer, 2015). It has proven to be helped by broadening local economies and attracting the foreign investments leading to the increased: balanced payments, employment opportunities and income, regional development, and household consumptions (Meyer & Meyer, 2015). The relationship between the tourism development and quality of life are very crucial topics and benchmarks an extended strategies and policies at different levels: local, regional or global level with several researchers being more concerned on this topic. Due to its rapid growth and the potential economic growth that it brings along with it does not surprise how tourism is hugely used and brought into practice as a tool of achieving development.

As tourism is claimed to be a tool for development, what does the term ‘development’ refer to? The development is considered as a “good change” or is a progress that brings positive transformation (Thomas, 2000 in Sharpley & Telfer, 2002, p. 23). According to Keyser (2009), the motive of development is “*to reduce poverty, inequality and unemployment, and also to reduce deprivation in order to broaden choices*” (in Tshipala & Coetzee, 2012, p. 2). Based on tourism literature, Sharpley and Telfer (2002) explains that tourism development is justified on the basis of its role in terms of social and economic development. Tourism industry accounts for nine percent of global Gross Development Product (GDP) (UNWTO, 2014), which makes it one of the

world's largest economic sectors. Tourism creates many benefits to tourism destinations by creating employment opportunities, income, incentives, and public awareness about biological diversity (UNWTO, 2014). Goulet (1992) segments the general development into the five components as: economic, social, political, cultural and full life paradigm. The economic component looks for wealth and equal access to all the resources that help in overcoming poverty. The development in social components are improvements in the health, proper education, employment facilities and proper housing opportunities (in Sharpley & Telfer, 2002). The development in the political dimension recognizes equal human rights, political freedom, and societies able to select and run the political systems that are appropriate based on their needs. The development in cultural dimensions seeks the protection and preservation of cultural identity along with their self-esteem. The last dimension of development, the full-life paradigm seeks the preservation and enlargement of the meaning of societies' symbols and beliefs. However, there are different other strategies to measure the developments based on different authors thus, Veltmeyer (2011) strongly recommends that one shall not stick-on particular stick based on single ideal theory as it affects and hides the other dimensions of the development.

In current perspective, tourism perceives the development based on 17 sustainable goals', and plays a key role in delivering the sustainable solutions to provide a better future to all (Tourism4sdgs, n.d.). Harris et al. (2002) explains that the development plan in tourism shall follow five principles: it should focus on the conservation of the attractions which adventure tourism is based on; it should encourage the active local participations; it should focus on tourism development with environmental awareness; it should provide proper guidance on how to develop and provide tourist accommodations and other available touristic facilities; and it should make the policies prioritizing for new adaptation and experiments under proper supervision avoiding monopoly interests (in Tshipala & Coetzee, 2012).

3.1.4. Adventure tourism and Development

According to Sharpley & Telfer (2002), *“the extent to which tourism contributes to the national or local economy, or more generally, to development varies according ta variety of factor”* (p. 20). Here, we aim to study the local development through the perspective of adventure tourism.

Adventure tourism has been one of the fastest growing in the tourism sector (McKay, 2013; Knowles, 2019). However, the term ‘adventure tourism’ is minimally understood as an international tourism form (Steynberg & Grundling, 2005). Currently, adventure tourism is valued over 263 billion US dollars (Knowles, 2019). The adventure tourism market has grown enormously for two decades as a large number of tourism consumers are found to seek experiences that are novel, challenging, yet exciting as well (McKay, 2013). This form of tourism focuses on attracting a high-value customer, providing support to the local economies. Adventure tourism growth seems to be beneficial by creating a positive impact for the tourism and local destination economies along with their people and their surrounding environments as well (UNWTO, 2014), making it a possible aspect to implement the theory of sustainable tourism, however, there lacks the literatures which investigates the intersection of these two variables: adventure and sustainable development (Knowles, 2019). According to Sand and Gross (2019), “*adventure tourism is not an analytical concept*” but the community and research interested in adventure tourism is growing (p. 2). Adventure tourism and sustainable management in a tourism industry is emerging as a distinct subfield in tourism study making it a likely new topic in terms of literature (Upadhayaya, 2018). The development of adventure tourism and its impacts into the local destinations in terms of economy, social and environmental are least comprehended, but still many developing nations seem to adopt this tourism enthusiastically (Steynberg & Grundling, 2005). Thus, this paper analyses adventure tourism in Pokhara, Nepal and how impacts the communities based on a sustainable framework as “*sustainable tourism is not a discrete or special form of tourism*” (Knowles, 2019). The guidelines of sustainable tourism development and its managerial practices can be applied to all types of tourism in any type of destination (United Nations, 2016). The sustainable principles focus refers to socio-cultural, environmental and economic aspects in terms of tourism development, whilst there must be a balance in between these dimensions to achieve long-term sustainability.

3.1.4.1. Economic Impact

According to UNWTO (2014), tourism is one of the world's largest economic sectors, accounting for 9% of global GDP and one out of every eleven jobs. Tourism plays an important role in poverty

alleviation and the state can benefit from creating employment and income and also get a strong incentive for conservation (UNWTO, 2014). In terms of economic impacts of adventure tourism, Buckley (2006) addresses that different scales and sites are needed to examine differently because adventure tourism consists of various forms of activities with it. Buckley (2006) highlights that the US adventure tourism was expected to be more than 200 billion US Dollars before a decade that included only motorized recreational instruments and ski resorts. Scotland's adventure tourism has 2.9 billion US Dollars annual turnover and Caribbean diving industry is estimated to have 1.2 billion US Dollars, the global whale watching adventure turnover is also expected to be 1 billion US Dollars per year (Buckley, 2006). These are only a few examples, but based on huge statistics, adventure tourism is considered as a significant component of the tourism industry (Buckley, 2006).

According to Steynberg and Grundling (2005), adventure tourism in the form of an economic growth instrument is described as *“the expansion of economic activity in a specific area with the purpose of raising incomes of the domestic population”* (p. 1421). In broader concept, *“the adventure tourism's economic development refers to [...] ensuring that appropriate changes in the structure of economic activity occurs whilst at the same time improvements in the distribution of income and wealth as a result of adventure tourism”* (Steynberg & Grundling, 2005, p. 1421).

This definition of adventure tourism gives similar meaning to the definition of tourism where it states tourism as an instrument *“to promote economic development, and to alleviate poverty as an alternative to other traditional economic sectors such as industrialization”* (Meyer & Meyer, 2015, p. 198). In both the definition of adventure tourism and overall tourism, the basic aspect is 'increasing the economy in a destination'. The increased economy helps in alleviating the poverty and other addressed issues of that particular destination. According to UNWTO, adventure tourism helps in alleviating poverty by creating employment opportunities, high income and the incentives for the purpose of conservation (2014). Adventure tourists are considered to give a larger economic impact in comparison to mass tourists, because of the adventure tourists willingness to pay higher amounts for local guides that are skilled in the activity and have knowledge to interpret ensuring the safety (Knowles, 2019). Thus, sustainability of these economic aspects is based on the right balance between infrastructures of adventure tourism and adventure tourism activities (Steynberg & Grundling, 2005).

3.1.4.2. Socio-cultural Impact

According to Smith (1995), socio-cultural impacts of tourism result from the interaction between ‘hosts’ identified as local people, and ‘guests’ as tourists. In every form of tourism, it is important not to overestimate the social impacts of tourism. It is vital that governmental departments of tourism, industry, and agencies need to recognize how individuals and host communities perceive the advantages and disadvantages regarding the tourism of that destination (Deery, Jago & Fredline, 2012). This social impact consists of dimensions such as quality of life, norms, value, society model, and environmental destruction (Deery, Jago & Fredline, 2012). Socio-cultural impacts, as stated by Böhm (2009), are changes in social structures and relationships caused by the development of tourism in a destination. In a positive light, tourism development in society contributes to be healthier; people are more open to interacting with visitors, have a broadened mindset, imitate good habits, appreciate other people's habits, and are willing to preserve their own culture (traditional dances, traditional culinary, and heritage), accepting differences, being able to meet their basic needs (food, shelter, and clothing), and encouraging people to participate in tourism activities are all important factors (Zach & Hill, 2017). However, relating all these social impacts of tourism is least discussed in connection to adventure tourism.

‘*Acculturation*’ can also be defined as the cultural changes that occur when different groups of people come together (Böhm, 2009). According to Zurick (1992), a transformation of remote worlds into adventure tourist sites brings several cultural consequences. In adventure tourism too, acculturation is an issue as it refers to tourism destinations ‘borrowing cultures’ from tourists that can degrade authentic cultures of adventure destinations increasing the inequity leading to frustrations, changes in value and lifestyles. Also, using an authentic culture in the form of resources may violate the rights of designated destination people (Zurick, 1992). Furthermore, the author highlights some types of culture, for example handicrafts, performances come out as touristic art which will bring higher price to the people living in that society, but still these cultures are often produced due to tourist demands rather with a purpose to retain traditions. This form of tourism is also found to have positive social influences in terms of “*self-concept and internalization of group safety values*” (Sand & Gross, 2019, p. 2). Adventure tourism has been found to increase more personal growth, developing several skills along with self-expression as

adventure tourism is more about “*overcoming challenging, and thereby stimulating solutions and pushing personal boundaries and less about risking one’s life*” (Sand & Gross, 2019, p. 2)

3.1.4.3. Environmental Impacts

As described by Zurick (1992), the number of visitors, their behavior, and the natural environment's resiliency or fragility all have an effect on the environment. Litter and vandalism, trail erosion, habitat change, water pollution, poaching, loss of endangered plant and animal species, and resource depletion are all examples of negative environmental impacts related to tourism (Zurick, 1992). Some authors argue that tourism is inherently harmful to the environment in the long run (Cohen, 1978). Others argue that tourism can be beneficial to the environment (Pigram, 1980). While cautioning against negative environmental effects, Boo's (1990) study of ecotourism notes that tourism can encourage the establishment of protected areas and raise funds to preserve them (Boo, 1990 in Zurick, 1992). As similar to other forms of tourism, adventure tourism is also found to have more attention regarding the “*climate change, footprints and sustainability*” (Sand & Gross, 2019, p. 3). Tourism activities are hugely responsible for ongoing carbon emissions and adventure tourism is a form that is using the environment as its place (Sand & Gross, 2019).

In an adventure tourism, tourists seek to observe and physically experience several landscapes desiring uniqueness and meaningful connections. This leads the tourists to those regions that are difficult to access and has no mass-tourists, nature tourists and eco-tourists (Knowles, 2019). Adventure tourism in the form of trekking tourism led to social changes with environmental destruction in the Himalayas (Upadhayaya, 2018). In order to accelerate adventure tourism, mountains and its trekking trails are commodified. These trails on one way attract a huge number of explorers, mountaineers, general visitors, and specially trekkers, providing a direct access to the authentic experience of the destination's culture and nature. But in other ways, it has caused urban forest loss and changed the structures of trees (Upadhayaya, 2018).

Bell and Lyall (1998) also states, adventure tourism helps to improve the landscape's remoteness, its ruggedness and uniqueness being centered around the attractions (in Knowles, 2019). While the

development of remoteness in adventure tourism is seen positively by Bell and Lyall (1998, in Knowles, 2019), Steynberg and Grundling (2005) states that adventure tourism occurs in only those places which have remoteness, where adventure tourism isn't an alternative method to anything. Tourism is considered as a tool for development, but adventure tourism development should only occur in a place of remoteness as stated contradicts the idea of the whole development concept. According to UNWTO (2014), "*Adventure tourism is attracting attention for its emphasis on rural areas, local culture, and because it can often be developed within existing infrastructure*" (p. 46). The increasing commercialization of natural environments, on the other hand, is gradually taming the wilderness through the practice of adventure (Cloke & Perkins, 1998). Environmental degradation occurs as adventure tourists travel into numerous parks, nature reserves, and wilderness areas, which are often difficult to access (Hall, 1992), and the environment rarely has a chance to recover. The natural environment will suffer from overcapacity, litter and trash, erosion of the landscape and trails, deforestation and collection of wood supplies for fuel, disturbance of animal habitats, water pollution, and many other ills unless this degradation is effectively managed. Ironically, as these issues arise, adventure tourists become less interested in the destination, and they move on to degrade another environment (Williams & Soutar, 2005). Thus, these impacts address the vital considerations needed on management options in the high conservation value areas.

3.2. Stakeholders' Theory

The second session: Stakeholders, includes overview of its definition, AT stakeholders and local development, collaboration and participation, benefits and opportunities, and their power relations.

3.2.1. Introduction to Tourism Stakeholders

The term 'stakeholders' appeared for the first time in 1963 at Stanford Research Institute's internal memorandum (Freeman et al., 2010). Freeman et. al. (2010) defined stakeholders as "*those groups without whose support the organization would cease to exist*", in which shareowners, communities, creditors, employees, suppliers, and customers are identified as stakeholders (p. 31).

However, stakeholders are also an individual or a group, who have an interest in an organization’s activities and its outcome. Also, on whom the organizations rely in order to achieve its goals and objectives are also identified as stakeholders (Freeman, Harrison, & Zyglidopoulos, 2018). The concept of stakeholder is much broader that consists of large parties that its analysis highlights the importance to consider all the parties that are to be affected or by whom an important decision can be affected (Freeman et al., 2010). Laplume, Sonpar and Litz (2008) explains the stakeholder’s theory “[...] is ‘managerial’ in the sense that it addresses how managers performs duties, and it is intimately connected to the practice of business, of value creation and trade” (in Theodoulidis et al., p. 174), as they identify the value generated being the central driver of an enterprise. According to Tuan (2016), in the tourism industry, mostly identified stakeholders are tour operators, business proprietors, and governments rather than several other people/groups that are affected by tourism taking place. Some of the tourism stakeholders from Freeman (2010) are presented in a map:

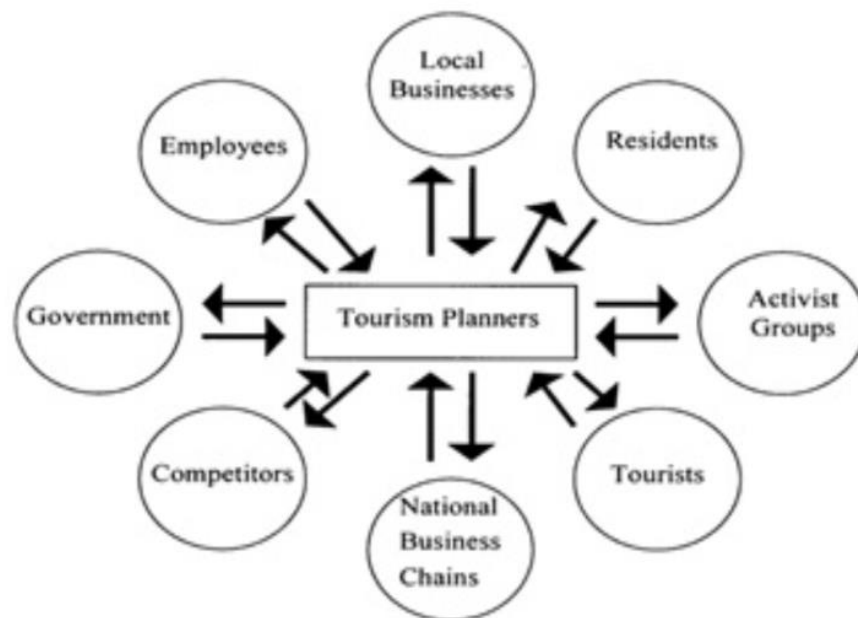


Fig 3.2.1. Tourism Stakeholder Map (Freeman, 2010, in Tuan, 2016)

It is very crucial to analyze the relevant planning bodies who are into the tourism activities. Tuan highlights the necessity of “scanning for potential players to the planning process and long-term success of the service venture”, because it “necessarily requires the tourism planners to perceive

distinctly the difference between a stakeholder's role and a group and to consider the interests or perspectives of different stakeholder groups as defined by the roles which they serve with regard to the particular development initiative” (2016, p. 79).

3.2.2. Adventure Tourism Stakeholders and Local Development:

Stakeholder participation is frequently cited as important for sustainable tourism development but there is little documentation for niche areas like adventure tourism (Kent, Sinclair & Diduck, 2012). Although the relationship between ecotourism and adventure tourism has been acknowledged by organizations such as the Adventure Travel Trade Organisation, little adventure tourism research has focused on issues of sustainability to date (Buckley & Carter, 2006). The academic emphasis is still linked to the concept of adventure and its applications to outdoor recreation (Weber 2001; Beedie & Hudson, 2003). When it comes to sustainability and any kind of tourism, the emphasis always turns to ecotourism, which is one of the adventure tourism's forms. This focus is understandable, considering that ecotourism shares several characteristics with widely held sustainability beliefs. According to Barbier (1989), *“sustainable development is the balance among environmental impacts, economic development, participatory process, intergenerational equity and sustainable livelihood”* (in Tuan, 2016, p. 77). Minimizing negative impacts on the host community, conserving and preserving cultural and natural resources, encouraging environmental education, engaging stakeholders in planning and decision-making, and distributing economic and social benefits to the host communities are some of these characteristics (Sirakaya et al., 1999). In relation to the above discussed adventure tourism's social, economic and environmental impacts, the stakeholders overview will give us an insight how they perceive their role in sustainable tourism development.

The Adventure tourism industry, in a similar aspect to tourism as a whole, is highly fragmented. Since the adventure industry is so fragmented, it necessitates a high degree of cooperation and coordination among the various stakeholders, including tourism operators, the government, builders, and suppliers (Hansen et al., 2019). This necessitates that all levels of government, tourism agencies, private sector organizations, and communities identify their roles clearly and

work for productive and inclusive partnerships (Kent, Sinclair & Diduck, 2012). The communication and knowledge sharing between the stakeholders is crucial to sustain the growth and successful outcome of the industry, in which different stakeholders have distinct roles, obligations, and desires to create a sustainable tourism management (Swarbrooke, 1999; Adu-Ampong, 2017). Support of stakeholders in planning and policy making is crucial. For example, according to Dredge (2006) *“Community groups need to have access to policy and decision-making processes in a forum where learning, creativity and innovation are fostered amongst both government and non-government actors”* (p. 271).

The effects adventure tourism can have on the environment and local communities should be addressed in terms of its economic, social and cultural values. Over-commercialization, over-capacity, and sustainability concerns, as well as risk lawsuits, accreditation issues, and long-term business sustainability issues, are all issues that unregulated adventure tourism creates. The major challenge in this regard is that all stakeholders must work together to achieve a transition to a more broadly based, rural economy, using metrics that offer significant benefits to the local community while also being more specifically rooted in or complementary to the sustainable use of the area's unique natural qualities (Greffrath & Roux, 2012 in Tshipala, Coetzee & Potgieter, 2019).

The inter-relationship between the adventure tourism and sustainable development outcomes may not be comprehended much in a literature but the tourism-industry based organization ATTA (Adventure Travel Trade Associations) has created ATDI (Adventure Travel Development Index) as a tool that tourism destination stakeholders use to measure one destinations' adventure competitiveness against another destination. This helps them to understand their strengths and weaknesses, allowing them to develop a strong market for adventure travel. Due to lack of sufficient academic research in this field, several authors and tourism organizations: UNWTO, Knowles (2019), Sand and Gross (2019), and Steynberg and Grundling (2005) are found to have taken the industry-based reports as their references. The 10 indexes by ATDI (2020) are the indicator of a strong adventure market. They are:

Government Policies which support sustainable development

Safety and Security

Health

Natural Resources available in a destination

Cultural Resources of a destination

Adventure Activity Resources

Entrepreneurship

Humanitarian

Tourism Infrastructure

Image of destination

Through stakeholder theory, we try to understand how they perceive the development brought by adventure tourism, whilst we will also address their role in making sustainable tourism development in our case study. Besides some of these indexes are stronger to lead to an adventure tourism development in a destination, so it will be interesting to see some of the indicators such as: Government Policies which support sustainable development, tourism infrastructures and Adventure Activity Resources in relation to stakeholders' initiatives for making strong adventure destinations.

Adventure Activity Resources as an Indicator: ATDI considers a destination ability to support adventure activities as a destination competitiveness. An adventure destination must have an ability to offer a wide range of activities and are constantly evolving to offer outdoor and nature-based activities: varying from bird watching to rock climbing, mountaineering to paragliding, and rafting to rock climbing. Threatened species, forests, grasslands and drylands are the indicators to measure this pillar. ATDI assumes that any country supporting to save endangered species and those who have large scale forests, grasslands or drylands is taking good care of their adventure assets and thus has more potential to sustain adventure tourism if handled these assets properly (ATTA, 2020).

Tourism Infrastructure as an indicator: This pillar indicates the tourism infrastructure such as hard infrastructures (example: assessable roads, airports, facilities and so on), soft infrastructures (example: trail maps), information on culture and heritage, ground operators and trainings to adventure travel providers (example: guides and interprets) (ATTA, 2020). In tourism the role of infrastructure is considered crucial, but adventure tourism varies. According to ATDI, unlike

common tourists, adventure travellers are more sensitive to soft tourism infrastructures compared to hard tourism infrastructures (ATTA, 2020).

Government Policies which support sustainable development as an indicator: ATTA considers the several government policies of sustainable development to measure the competitiveness of the adventure travel region. Within this pillar, they measure the environmental performance index and unemployment per country (ATTA, 2020). In order to increase the market competitiveness of a destinations' adventure tourism, the government policies need to support and promote sustainability along with rural tourism development. This helps to ensure the safeguarding of natural resources, heritages, and cultural resources of the particular destinations. To attract new investors for the development of an adventure destination, coordination and collaboration amongst the private and public sector is a very crucial consideration (ATTA, 2020).

3.2.3. Stakeholders Collaboration and Participation

Tourism is a fragmented industry that necessitates intentional coordination to ensure consistency in perception and delivery (Wang & Fesenmaier, 2007). It is fundamental to bring together a diverse group of stakeholders from various sectors in order to create a successful tourism destination. These stakeholders are involved in the decision-making, planning, and management processes (Saito & Ruhanen, 2017). Stakeholders are also identified as a group of people who are affected or can affect a specific goal (Saito & Ruhanen, 2017). While collaboration is characterized as a process of making joint decisions about the future of a problem domain among key stakeholders (Randle & Hoye, 2016).

Hardy, Phillips, and Lawrence, (2003) described collaboration as working with partners to leverage existing resources to provide maximum strategic benefits. According to Go & Govers (2000), collaboration can help to improve destination branding, impact management, benefit distribution, community cohesion, and tourist experiences. Collaboration also assists in the reduction of possible conflicts and the development of more effective host-guest relationships (Kontogeorgopoulos, 2005). Effective collaboration associated learning, innovation, and

fundamental transformation (Sloan, 2009). Due to the fragmented nature of the tourism industry, coordination and collaboration in planning are required (Adu-Ampong, 2017).

3.2.3.1. Benefits and Opportunities

As seen from various perspectives, there are several advantages in the tourism industry when diverse stakeholders are attempting to solve the same issue. Several authors conducted research on the potential benefits of collaboration in tourism growth, and the key explanation why stakeholders collaborate is that no single entity (institution, company, or private business) can be responsible for the entire tourism development process on its own (Ladkin & Bertramini, 2002). There will be more chances for an integrative approach to development strategies, which will encourage sustainable tourism, if various stakeholders from various fields are involved (Jamal & Getz, 1995; Lane, 1994). Palmer (1996) suggests that cooperation between the public and private sectors will aid in the achievement of community social goals and the promotion of the local region. As a result, several stakeholders' engagement, according to Bramwell & Lane (2000), would encourage social acceptance of destination planning and policy.

Tourism is a complex industry with multiple stakeholders who influence and are affected by its growth, stakeholders must collaborate to solve problems, achieve goals, and create new opportunities (Bramwell & Lane, 2000). Due to the resource dependency and interdependence of stakeholders, there are potential mutual benefits for stakeholders to cooperate with one another. Stakeholders' potential mutual or collective benefits in a collaborative process where participants can learn from each other, learn from the process, formulate new policies, and respond to a changing environment (Bramwell & Lane, 2000). According to Waayers, Lee, and Newsome (2012), the success of the tourism planning process is determined by the formal structures and conditions created by stakeholders. It also relies on stakeholders' motives, personalities, and roles. Therefore, managers must understand the motivations, personalities, and roles of stakeholders in order to make effective tourism planning decisions. Aas et al. (2005) stresses the value of stakeholders' collaboration for effective delivery of services. For instance, the private sector collaborates with the wide diversity of commercial firms and with the local community, such as family-run bed and breakfast establishments and local tourist guides leading tours of townships in

major cities. Internationally, donor organizations such as NGOs', INGOs collaborate with communities to uplift the livelihood of poor people. It is quite crucial to consider that collaboration between stakeholders would add value to tourism and increase understanding and trust between them. (Spenceley, 2012).

3.2.3.2. Challenges and difficulties

Even though collaborative planning is typically described in the literature as a simple, uncomplicated method, different perspectives on the process exist. According to Dredge (2006), the collaborative process is characterized by conflict and clumsy decision-making among stakeholders. Despite the numerous advantages of collaboration mentioned above, formed collaboration does not always reach its full potential (Bramwell & Lane, 2000). Tourism destinations face a range of challenges as global visitation grows. Since a new form of governance is evolving to address these changes, one of these challenges that is expected to grow among stakeholders is conflict (Saarinen et al., 2014; Jamal & Stronza, 2009 in Dredge & Jamal, 2015). They further addressed, unequal power distribution among participants is a problem and barriers in the collaboration process. It is very difficult to develop successful collaboration between the stakeholders with varying levels of power. It is hard to include all stakeholders equally due to the complexity of involving them. Stakeholders with less power may be removed from the collaborative process or may participate with a lower level of power control (Bramwell & Lane, 2000). On the other hand, powerful participants can form groups with people who are similar to them (Bramwell, 2004), ignoring those who are less powerful. When a collaborative process results in competing relationships, collaboration is more likely to fail (Roberts & Simpson, 1999). Obtaining consensus from diverse communities with differing goals, values, and viewpoints (Paskaleva–Shapira, 2001) can be time consuming and expensive (Bramwell & Lane, 2000). One of the potential issues is that some collaborative process participants may not be active enough to work toward a shared goal, so they depend on other members to deliver benefits for all (Bramwell & Lane, 2000). Disparate resources, expertise, and capabilities can be pooled together to form a sum greater than the sum of its components, allowing it to respond to structural challenges (Aas, Ladkin, & Fletcher, 2005). Each stakeholder has control over resources such as knowledge,

expertise, and capital, but they do not have all of the resources necessary to achieve their goal of effectively planning for the future in relation to a major tourism development issue.

According to Saito and Ruhanen (2017) collaboration among stakeholders is possible when: *“a group of autonomous stakeholders of a problem domain engage in an interactive process, using shared rules, norms and structures, to act or decide on issues related to that domain”* (p.190). Saito and Ruhanen (2017) further argue that stakeholders acting alone will be unable to deal with problems that may arise as destinations grow and the problems that come with it. However, building trust among stakeholders and recognizing shared problems is the most difficult task in the collaboration process (Jamal & Getz, 2000 in Saito & Ruhanen, 2017). To gain the trust among stakeholders, Reed (2000) demonstrated that the first step in a partnership is to draw on local expertise in a community in a systemic and respectful manner. As mentioned earlier, collaboration is an ongoing process, so it is necessary to examine the nature of collaborative processes continuously.

3.2.4. Power Relations between stakeholders

Stakeholder cooperation is an essential part of tourism destination planning and management, as mentioned in the previous section. However, not all stakeholders in collaborative activities have the same degree of power and influence; therefore, power is recognized as a key influence in stakeholder collaborations (Saito & Ruhanen, 2017). Reed (1997) defined power as *“ability to impose one's will or advance one's own interest”* (p. 567). It occurs in *“a social actor relationship in which one social actor, A, may persuade another social actor, B, to do anything that B would not have done otherwise”* (Pfeffer, 1981, p. 3). As described by Beritelli and Laesser (2011), power can be used in a tourism destination to organize stakeholders, mediate disagreements, and avoid future conflicts. However, influential stakeholders may use various forms of force, such as persuasion and authority, to enforce their own preferences in order to have the most influence (Saito & Ruhanen, 2017).

Wrong (1979) developed a social relationship-based power typology which can be classified in four ways, according to his theory: coercion, deception, persuasion, and authority. whereas authority is most important because it is the most significant tool for exerting intended impact in

a tourism destination. Authority power can also be envisioned as being coercive, induced, legitimate and competent (Wrong, 1979).

Coercive Power

As described by Wrong (1979) in Saito & Ruhanen, (2017), coercive power signifies to the extent “*which an agent is believed to have authority to coerce other stakeholders to take certain actions*” (p. 191). Coercive power is also correlated with fear, as one stakeholder will threaten another stakeholder with force if he or she does not get their way. Stakeholders are required to obey the power-holding stakeholder, regardless of their own views and interests, and if they fail to do so, they can face sanctions or other penalties (Wrong, 1979). As a result, coercive power is often linked to the principle of fear (Ford, 2005; Stewart, 2001). Wrong (1979) further states that exercising coercive force may obstruct other players or even exclude certain stakeholders from a collaborative process. According to him, coercive power can also be known as ‘political power’.

Legitimate Power

Legitimate power is linked with the presumption that an agent has unconstitutional authority to direct the acts of other stakeholders (Saito & Ruhanen, 2017). According to Ford and Johnson (1998), “*the right to another's compliance with directives that fall within the scope of that authority, regardless of the other's feelings*” (p.18). Likewise, Wrong (1979) states “*the power holder possesses an acknowledged right to command and the power subject an acknowledged obligation to obey*” (p.49). It has been advocated that legitimate authority is often linked to social norms or an individual's formal position in society (Saito & Ruhanen, 2017). In the context of a tourism destination, some stakeholders have formal or informal cooperative relationships with other actors, still some actors have authority within the destination, and other actors may agree that they are the leader (Saito & Ruhanen, 2017).

Induced Power

Induced power, also known as economic power, encompasses one stakeholder gaining power through material incentives such as financial remuneration (Saito & Ruhanen, 2017). Induced power “*characterizes relationships in which one party submits ‘voluntarily’ to the [power*

holder's] commands in return for economic rewards well above sheer subsistence needs” (Wrong, 1979, p. 45). Induced power, as opposed to coercive power, which includes threatening deprivation, is a positive reinforcement that entices another stakeholder's obedience by providing incentives for obeying an order (Wrong, 1979). Since the source of induced power is often linked to remunerations, stakeholders with significant financial resources frequently wield this kind of power (French & Raven, 2001). In the sense of a tourism destination, this may include government agencies, major private sector companies, and developers (Saito & Ruhanen, 2017).

Competent Power

Competent power is a form of power in which professionals or experts in particular fields have the required skills to solve difficult problems or meet the needs of stakeholders in a joint effort (Hankinson, 2009). *“Authority can be ascribed to knowledge and to branches of knowledge; and a person can be called an authority on anything he [or she] knows about”* under competent control (Watt, 1982, in Saito & Ruhanen, 2017 p.191). Competent power sources may include unique skills, expertise, and experiences that are only available to specific companies or stakeholders. Expert organizations such as universities, consulting firms, and research institutes wield competent influence in the tourism destination sense (Saito & Ruhanen, 2017).

Power, according to Lyon et al. (2017), can be divided into two categories: ‘power to’ and power over’. ‘Power to’ refers to an individual's characteristic, implying that they have the capacity to act independently. It could be debated that Stakeholders willingly apply to other stakeholder, and the knowledgeable stakeholder is able to meet stakeholder needs in collaboration. Moreover, ‘Power over’ emphasizes the problems of social strife, power, and manipulation (Lyon, et al., 2017). As a result, we can argue that legitimate power and coercive power are both included in this category; that is, a stakeholder has legitimate authority to determine the actions of other stakeholders, and government authorities may exert coercive power through policy making and execution. Lyon et al., (2017), further explains *“power is an important issue in stakeholder analysis and may come from status, the right to demand wealth, and even the symbols of power.”* (Lyon, Hunter-Jones, & Warnaby, 2017, p. 236). As a researcher, we agree with this assertion and will investigate the stakeholders and how power affects them in this paper.

4. METHODOLOGY

According to Harding (1987), methodology is “*a theory and analysis of how the research process should proceed*” (in Carter and Little, 2007, p. 2). This means, methodology is a process that justifies the research methods, which produces necessary data and analyses for reaching the necessary findings. Hence, as an aim to find answers for our problem formulation, we chose several methods and techniques in order to deal with research problems more methodically. Thus, in this section of the paper we have highlighted the several methodological approaches that are considered best fit for this research study. This chapter is divided into different parts. At the beginning, philosophy of science was considered whereas research approach/method, data collection techniques, validity, reliability and trustworthiness of research were also included. Ethical considerations have presented along with the limitations while conducting or writing this paper.

4.1. Philosophy of science

According to Ponterotto (2005), “*Philosophy of science refers to the conceptual roots underlying the quest for knowledge*” (p. 127). This section has explained our philosophical paradigm that we have followed throughout the research process. Our research has focused on how the various stakeholders view adventure tourism development in Pokhara city and, and more precisely how they perceive their own role in such a development. To this aim, we have drawn on a constructivist approach while conducting the qualitative research, through which we have identified multiple and diverse views and meanings (Creswell, 2014). The central ideas of the current approach are that “*[...] the mental world – or the experienced reality – is actively constructed or “brought forward,” and that the observer plays a major role in any theory*” (Riegler, 2011, p. 237). The constructivism approach works with a goal of emphasizing and understanding the different ‘lived experiences’ from the perspective of those who live it daily (Schwandt, 1994 in Ponterotto, 2005). Schwandt further claims that each one’s lived experiences “*occurs within a historical social reality*”, that

may not be into the highlight of the individual, however, could be brought into the consciousness. (Ponterotto, 2005, p.129)

Thus, a researcher who applies the constructivist approach paradigm, should rely on the respondents' viewpoints of the examined situation (Creswell, 2014). Creswell (2014) further states that social constructivism is linked with qualitative research, which is an ontological position embedded in assumption that the reality is socially constructed by diverse meanings generated by social actors (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2007).

Due to the complexity of research topics and the complexity of the social context, the constructivism approach has been chosen. Considering the current situation of Covid-19 pandemic, the participation of interviews has been varied, and the suitable approach to address such complex research challenges that allowed us to gather in-depth data from the respondents' dialogue is a social constructivist paradigm. Moreover, rather than finding an objective phenomenon, we have tried every possible effort to represent the reality of the situation and utilize the perceptions from the respondents. Therefore, embracing the socially constructive approach means trusting the participants' opinion in the subject matter stressing as well as on the contexts and the cultural situations where the individuals operate (Creswell, 2014).

To make our research more analytical, we have followed a social constructivist paradigm, in which epistemological posture is interpretivism. *“Interpretive view suggests that meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting”* (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991 in Rashid 2019, p.4). So, while deriving from interpretivism, authors are to understand the subjective meaning of social actions (Bryman, 2012). In interpretivism, respondents and their views are seen as key to the research process, therefore choosing interpretivism as the epistemological stance is more helpful and suitable for this research. Undertaking the qualitative research process needed interpretation of collected data and change into knowledge, letting the researchers (us) to answer the problem formulation.

4.2. Research Approach (Relation Between Theory and Research)

Bryman and Bell (2015) have explained the relationship between the theory and research through three different theories: inductive, deductive and abductive theory. These methods help in understanding the research more in depth through their own ways. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) explain that in inductive *“theory would follow data rather than vice versa as with deduction”* (p. 118). The inductive approach initially gathers the data to begin with a theory on the basis of the data analysis while, in contrast, deductive approach starts *“on using the literature to identify theories and ideas that the researchers will test using data”* (Zefeiti1 & Mo, 2015, p. 3). These methods contrast while shifting in between concepts and data’s (Yin, 2011). Due to the several limitations associated with these theories, abduction approaches are being mostly used for the business and social scientific researches (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The authors state that abduction *“is used to make logical inferences and build theories about the world”* (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 27). Thus, we also choose to follow the ‘*Abductive approach*’. This method is more considerate in comparison to others as it *“[...]moves back and forth between inductive and open-ended research settings to more hypothetical and deductive attempts to verify hypotheses”* (Yin, 2009, p. 29).

In this research, we have followed the abductive approach because we believe as a researcher this method suits the best in our process. In contrast to the inductive and deductive approach, abductive approach allowed us to describe, develop or change any theoretical frameworks prior to, during and later in the research processes (Yin, 2009). As we aimed to find stakeholders' perception on adventure tourism in Pokhara and how it has socially and economically impacted the society, this approach has helped us make new discoveries in an analytical and methodological way letting us to change our contents back and forth.

4.3. Qualitative Research Approach

Qualitative research and quantitative research strategy are two commonly used research approaches when conducting a research. Bryman (2012) explains that qualitative research methods deal with words, while quantitative methods deal with numbers. According to Daniel (2016), *“qualitative research approaches human thought and behavior in a social context and covers a*

wide range of phenomena in order to understand and appreciate them thoroughly” (93). Behaviors in statement are interactions, thoughts, and norms which are deliberated holistically.

In this research, we have used the qualitative research method as our action has justified the statement stated by Daniel (2016). This (qualitative) approach is more suitable to our research problem which has more to do with words rather than the numbers because we tried to explain and understand meaning through interpretation after studying their perspective, behaviors and thoughts. Also, a qualitative approach is more explanatory and subjective in nature (DeFranzo, 2011 in Shrestha, 2020). This helped us to understand how participants explain their experiences and how they construct their worlds with the meaning they attribute from their experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Hence, qualitative research suited best for our research as it allowed us to understand the stakeholder’s perspectives towards the adventure tourism in Pokhara. It also helped to describe and analyze the various actions they carried out and how this tourism played a role in local development.

Qualitative research includes diverse methods within it: 1) ethnography, 2) in-depth interviews, 3) focus groups, 4) case studies, 5) text and documents analysis (Bryman, 2012). Here, we have chosen to work with case study and in-depth interviews with the stakeholders that are briefly described below.

4.3.1. Case Study Research

According to Zainal (2007), “*case study method selects a small geographical area, or a very limited number of individuals as the subjects*” (p. 1). We have chosen a specific geographical area as our case study, which is ‘Pokhara, Nepal’. Over the several years, case study has been one of the robust methods when the research needs more holistic and in-depth study (Zainal, 2007). According to Yin (2009), Case study provides understanding of real-world cases along with the necessary contextual conditions that are relevant to the case. Therefore, we chose this case study method to examine the in-depth social phenomenon of our variables: about the stakeholder’s perspective and their involvement on adventure tourism in Pokhara and how their involvement or adventure tourism impacts Pokhara socially, economically, and environmentally. This method is

considered ideal for our research to examine the data firmly and is more applicable to define the present circumstances, i.e., ‘How’ and ‘Why’ within a precise issue (Zainal, 2007; Yin, 2009).

We didn’t choose our case randomly; it was a logical choice because we chose the city of Pokhara as our study area keeping several contexts in our mind. The research area: Pokhara has been developing numerous tourism adventure products lately and it is interesting to examine the stakeholder’s perspective and their involvement on the adventure tourism in Pokhara. As the main attribute of case study is the capacity to generate responses in terms of why, what, whether it is or not, to the questions, this method has helped us to understand ‘how’ stakeholders perceive AT and ‘why’ do they perceive impacts of AT like that (Saunders, 2012).

Case studies are more verified when it is used along with qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods, here we have chosen a qualitative method because our research needs a categorical solution rather than numerical.

4.4. Data Collection Methods

After determining the most suitable research strategy, it is crucial to decide on how the data shall be collected. There are mainly two kinds of data, i.e., secondary and primary data (Yin, 1994). This research is based on both primary and secondary sources of data.

4.4.1. Primary Data Collection

Primary data is collected by the researcher himself/herself, as an outcome of their interaction with the individuals regarding the research topic subject. According to Hox and Boeije (2005), primary data are defined as “*data that are collected for the specific research problem at hand, using procedures that fit the research problem best*” (p. 593). The basic instruments used for collecting this kind of data are surveys, interviews and observations. The reason for using this method is that the researcher believes that the information gathering process is closest to the truth (Mason and McBride, 2014). In our research, primary data was collected from online semi structured

interviews with the various stakeholders of Pokhara city to get the data necessary for analyzing our research problem. Some of the tools of data collection are in-depth interviews and discussion. These mentioned primary data is collected through the means of an online platform.

4.4.1.1. Semi- structured In-depth Interviews:

According to Bryman (2012), interviewing is one of the most utilized techniques in qualitative research. The interview types are structured, semi-structured or unstructured that are designed based on what types of information is necessary to extract out of research (Showkat & Parveen, 2017). This research paper followed the semi-structured in-depth interviews format. We chose this structure as it “[...] allow the interviewer to pursue a series of less structured questioning and also permits the exploration of spontaneous issues raised by interviewee to be explored” (Frances, Coughlan, & Patricia, 2009, p. 310). In other words, semi-structured questionnaires grant more freedom to the researchers to steer the conversations as per their goals and needs for their research while interviewing. Using this method has advantageous us, because of its possibility to gather rich and comprehensive data from a very small sample

We followed one to one interview procedures with the necessary stakeholders by using open-ended questions, letting the participants take control over the interview processes so they can be comfortable. Letting the participants control the process helped participants keep their perspective in a broader way as this method is also understood as a “*discovery-oriented method*” (Frances, Coughlan, & Patricia, 2009, p. 310; Showkat & Parveen, 2017). The interview participants: stakeholders (such as tour operators, hotel/café owners, Nepal Tourism Board members, locals and so on) has been chosen on the basis that they are linked directly or indirectly to the adventure tourism in Pokhara as they have a notable role in achieving our aim to conduct this research. We interviewed seven participants as tourism stakeholders in Pokhara who are directly or indirectly affected because of it. In order to conduct the research, we formulated semi structured open-ended questions considering the literature review and our main variable of the problem formulation: such as adventure tourism, social, economic, and environmental impacts and stakeholders.

Interviews in qualitative research, search to unveil the story behind the respondent's experiences, that helps the interviewer to get in-depth information regarding the specific topic (McNamara, 1999). Telephonic interviews were performed through 'Whatsapp' and 'Facebook Messenger' to conduct the in-depth interview. According to Maeng et al., (2016), "*WhatsApp and more generally, mobile instant messaging, have been of some methodological interest in the social sciences*" (in Kaufmann & Peil, 2020, p. 231). WhatsApp is used in the research process as it provides general information about the communication partners' connectivity status, such as: last online date and time. Still the capabilities of WhatsApp are not fully exploited (Kaufmann & Peil, 2020). The interview conducted by WhatsApp is less expensive, similar to the interview conducted by skype, that are applicable and efficient especially when the participants are widely spread in diverse geographical regions (Wilson, 2014: Kaufmann & Peil, 2020). Besides this, it helps to mitigate the power relation between interviewer and participants (ibid). Wilson (2014) criticized that telephonic interviews might get disturbed because of the poor network, which actually happened the same in our interviewing process as well.

According to Showkat and Parveen (2017), in-depth interviews are often done face to face that are long duration. But, due to the distance and current circumstances that the whole world is coping with the Covid-19, we considered conducting the interview through online applications such as WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger. The choice of online medium was considered on interviewee convenience. Our experience with online interviews was not so good in some cases because of the disturbed networks, due to which we could not hear some of the respondents' words clearly. However, we were well aware that online conference interviews may not offer similar opportunities to develop the affinity which could enable interviewees to feel congenial in being open to researchers (King & Horrocks, 2010, in Zurikova, 2020).

Since we took the interviews, the responses from the interviews were transcribed and formed into the written format. The process of transcribing might take more time, but Riessman (1993) explains it as one of the best ways to be familiar with the data (in Braun & Clarke 2006).

4.4.2. Secondary Data Collection

Secondary data can be defined as “*every dataset not obtained by the author, or the analysis of data gathered by someone else*” (Boslaugh, 2007, p.2), therefore “*may include data that has been previously gathered and is under consideration to be reused for new questions, for which the data gathered was not originally intended*” (Vartanian, 2010, p.4).

The secondary data of our research relied on academic paper, governmental reports and from available online documents in the stakeholder’s official websites. Secondary data refers to those data which were initially collected for some other purposes (Saunders et al., 2016). We collected the secondary data from various reliable resources for instance; Google Books, Google Scholars, ResearchGate, AAU Library search engines. The materials we collected were from statistics data summaries, census, administrative datas, literature, research papers, books, articles, case studies and so on. We have used these secondary sources to develop our literature review, as well as to support primary data collected through qualitative techniques. We have also used various published information from the site of Nepal Tourism Board and local authorities of Pokhara city. Furthermore, using secondary data has several pros as it allows to retain time and resources, they are very timid and can be accessed very easily. The cons still are represented by the fact that they were already collected for some other purposes and so might not be able to match absolutely the study being conducted & there is absence of scrutiny in the initial process of data collection (Saunders et al., 2016).

4.5. Data Analysis

Thematic method as a data analysis method was chosen to analyse the collected primary and secondary data. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis identifies, analyses and reports the several patterns of themes within the data collected. What are the themes in thematic analysis? Scharp and Sanders (2018) explains themes in research as those salient aspects of the collected data that are in a patterned way, even when the data are collected from the mass experiences. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is a ‘theoretically-flexible’ approach in a qualitative method because of “*useful research tool, which can potentially provide a rich and detailed, yet complex, account of data*”, that could be used into various frameworks for

answering numerous types of the research problems (p. 78). Thematic analysis mostly suits the sets of questions which are related to the people's experiences, their views and perceptions, as this analysis is framed as an experiential and realist method (Aronson, 1994 in Braun & Clarke, 2006). Therefore, we chose to use this analysis as it suited best to our research questions and research processes.

We chose to apply this thematic analysis based on the six steps of Braun and Clarke (2008), that are a) to be familiar with data, b) to generate the initial codes, 3) investigating the themes, 4) Reviewing the themes, 5) Explaining and naming-out the themes, and 6) developing the report (in Scharp & Sanders, 2018). Hence our process in analyzing the data was started after reading out all the gathered primary and secondary data, such as responses collected from the semi-structured interviews and documents from online sources. We analyzed the data based on the themes such as 'adventure tourism', impacts of AT but also other themes emerging from the material such as: barriers, collaboration, power, and issues. We then followed the process of generating codes from the data, which was interesting and "*assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon*" (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 63 in Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 88). We tried to figure out if our codes are 'driven from data' or 'driven from theory'. Only after generating the codes and knowing its nature, we moved forward to explain how our data analysis process has been carried out.

4.6. Ethical Consideration

Ethics in research has been described as a '*norms for conduct*' which differentiate the acceptable and unacceptable actions (Resnik et.al., 2020). Ethical considerations are very important to be considered to make sure that the participants/ respondents are not harmed when conducting the qualitative research involving many participants. While talking with any respondents/participants their agreement for our case is very indispensable which consequently influences the result of the interview (Saunders, 2012). Moreover, Butles & Bally (2018) also says that the analysis of personal descriptions or experiences obtained through online interviews and questionnaires can have some ethical values. Requiring considering the way that data has been collected and, in the individual, has consent for their information to be shared and analyzed. According to Scheyvens,

Nowak, and Scheyvens (2003), ethical issues need to be considered very carefully from the initial step of the research process as it is a crucial process while conducting research.

Driscoll (2011) mentioned three main components that need to be followed for making primary research ethical. Moving forward, it should be highlighted that within the scope of this study, all three clauses are considered. The first factor signifies voluntary participation, which means participants of a conducted interview or questionnaire have to engage at their own will. Secondary, confidentiality and anonymity should be given. Driscoll explained that during the discussion participants might express “[...] embarrassing or potentially damaging information such as racist comments or unconventional behavior” (Driscoll, 2011, p. 156). So sometimes it is a good idea to be pseudonyms. The third element encloses researcher bias. Driscoll (2011) specifies that preconceptions are well discernible “[...] in the way you ask questions, the way you take notes, or the conclusions you draw from the data you collect” (Driscoll, 2011, p. 156). Thus, it is important for the researcher to eliminate personal preconceived opinions towards participants’ response and the investigated object.

Therefore, in our research case all our interviewees/ participants took part at their own will. We ask them to choose the language so that they can be more comfortable to share and deliver a range of information based on facts. They were informed in advance about our research and the purpose of the interview. Each individual participant was pre informed that they have the right to decline answers for any questions which they feel are not appropriate. They were also given the right to withdraw from the interview at any interview processes. We have taken their permission to record the interviews, and we assured them that the interviews taken are solely used for academic purposes. There were no issues with the participants while/or after conducting the interview meetings.

4.7. Research Trustworthiness

In this research, we have preferred to apply the ‘*trustworthiness of the research*’ rather than the reliability and validity. ‘*Validity and Reliability*’ are considered as an unsuitable term for qualitative research because of their various subjective realities while obtaining deep insights of the research (Shenton, 2004; Stumpfegger, 2017). Hence, we also chose to use the ‘trustworthiness

of research' rather than reliability and validity. Guba (1981) has developed several criteria for measuring trustworthiness of the research stated as '*credibility, transferability, confirmability and dependability*' (Shenton, 2004, p. 64). To ensure the credibility of our study, we have considered applying the '*triangulation method*' that helped us to ensure credibility of our collected information. "*Triangulation method refers to the use of the multiple methods or data sources in qualitative research to develop a comprehensive understanding of the Phenomena*" (Patton, 1999 in Carter et al., 2014, p. 545). Here, we have collected the data through semi-structured interviews and other secondary sources in which we have compared and verified all the gathered data. Using this triangulation method enabled us to use different theories to support our findings as well as a cross-validator.

4.8. Limitations

The current pandemic of coronavirus is dramatically demanding a recognition of individual lives, restricting or limiting movements and direct communications, which didn't leave us unaffected as well. So, first and foremost we were not able to travel to Nepal due to closed borders. As a result, we didn't have the opportunity to conduct face to face interviews, or any ethnographic research. We could only conduct the desk research with online methods to conduct interviews. This limited us, making it impossible to detect important elements such as facial expressions & body language which may cause difficulties for researchers to interpret the interview. The budget is also one of the limitations. Due to high cost in direct callings, we chose the alternative applications such as 'WhatsApp' and 'Messenger', that helped us to contact our interviewees. However, they were not online anytime so we had to call them directly asking to be online so we could conduct interviews. We were very concerned for online interviews as Holt (2010) stated, "*Interviews cannot use body language and facial expressions as a tool to probe answers every question should be clearly articulated to the interviewee*" (p.115), therefore, it requires a right preparation to avoid misunderstandings in the period of interview. We tried to contact our interviewees through the means of email that can be taken as a constraint during the data collection. In such cases, it might take several days before a respondent responds to an email, and hence there might be a delay in receiving their answers (Meho, 2006), and we hardly managed to interview 7 respondents even

though we aimed to interview at least 10. Moreover, for the remote interviews we faced a bad network for internet connection and also not everyone has access to a good internet or phone to make telephone calls or any means of video call, which was also a challenge for us. So, we had the same issues during our interviews, so we were not able to get the proper words of the interviewee (Block & Erskine, 2012). Additionally, the authors also argue that the length of the telephonic interview tends to be shorter than face-to-face- interview because of lack of reciprocity between the interviewers and interviewees. In our case, it was a contrast to some of our interviews, as our interview length was longer due to semi-structured questions that allowed us to explore new insights.

5. ANALYSIS

This chapter provides an analysis with an aim to address the findings for the questions outlined in the introduction section. The analysis and findings will be centered around identified topics which relate to adventure tourism development on Pokhara. This chapter is divided into three subsections: The first sector will identify the various *stakeholders* of Pokhara and discuss their perspective on Adventure tourism. The second section will present and illustrate different stakeholders' perceptions about adventure tourism *impacts on local development* (Pokhara). The third section will focus to provide insights on what kind of role these stakeholders play for adventure tourism development in Pokhara, that also highlights stakeholders' *involvement and collaboration* to sustain these developments. We will discuss the following topics being based on the constructed theoretical framework of our Literature Review.

5.1. Pokhara as an Adventure destination- Stakeholders Perspectives

This section describes the stakeholders of adventure tourism and their perspectives on adventure tourism and its growth in Pokhara. It is essential to identify the stakeholders before presenting their perspectives on adventure tourism in Pokhara. We have identified the AT stakeholders of Pokhara on the basis of who are affected directly or indirectly based on adventure tourism activities which we are exploring more in depth. According to Freeman et. al., (2010) stakeholders as “*those groups without whose support the organization would cease to exist*”, in which shareowners, communities, creditors, employees, suppliers, and customers are identified as stakeholders (p. 31).

In this paper, the ‘organization’, which Freeman refers to, is the destination ‘Pokhara’ and its stakeholders are the groups that play a crucial role in development of the destination. There are several groups of stakeholders that are influenced and participate in the adventure tourism industry in Pokhara. We specifically identified the government, tour operators, hotel owners, and locals. Besides these, a wide range of society members are directly or indirectly associated with the adventure tourism in Pokhara, Nepal but have not been included due to limited timeframe and current pandemic ‘Covid-19’. We are well aware that connectivity to broader stakeholder groups could have given new insights on adventure tourism.

In the earlier literature review, tourism is explained as stimulating factor for the development of regional and local economies; as it assists in creating new activities related to the local economy (Băndoi et al., 2020; Meyer & Meyer, 2015). Here, we will analyze how AT has contributed to the local development of Pokhara, Nepal, by creating new adventure activities. As explained in the case before, Pokhara lies in the Gandaki province of Nepal as a metropolitan city with 402,995 total population and has been regarded as a centre of tourism attractions (Pokhara Metropolitan City, n.d.) Pokhara offers a variety of tourism activities that belong to adventure tourism forms. According to Upadhyaya (2018), Pokhara is “*categorically specialized as a famous major tourist destination for adventure tourism and the departure point for the globally known trek route for Annapurna circuit*” (p. 7). Adventure tourism is considered as a fastest growing tourism activities in the tourism sector (Sharpley & Telfer, 2002), thus in order to know how the different tourism players of Pokhara see and perceive Adventure tourism and its development in Pokhara, we have analyzed stakeholders’ views based on the constructed theoretical framework of chapter 2.

From our interview with these stakeholders, Pokhara is defined in various ways as suitable as an adventure tourism destination. According to Swarbrooke et al. (2003), the term ‘adventure’ is evocative for several people and their minds start flooding the images and associations related to the term what ‘adventure’ may mean to them, as people’s imagination and emotions are certainly part of the adventure experience. Through the interview, we try to evaluate how these stakeholders present some of their understanding to the term ‘*adventure*’ and that taking place in ‘*Pokhara*’.

According to Acharya, an adventure tour operator in Pokhara describes:

“Pokhara is a gateway for adventure tourism. There are so many mountains around Pokhara. We have some of the mountains that come under the top 10 mountains of the world which can be seen from Pokhara. Dhaulagiri, Manaslu and Annapurna that are 7th, 8th and 10th highest in the world respectively can be seen from Pokhara. Above 7000 meters, Pokhara has around 100 peaks, and above 6000 meters, Pokhara has more than 200 peaks. Not only mountains, but bungee jumping, rafting, hiking, trekking and rafting, ecotourism makes it an adventure tourism hub”.

- Krishna Acharya (CEO)

According to Acharya's statement, 'adventure tourism in Pokhara' is more directed towards mountaineering, and trekking as he explains many things about Pokhara, rich in mountains that has under the highest top-10 mountains in the world. Other forms of adventure tourism such as rafting, trekking, hiking, and bungee are also highlighted in a small scale. However, in the overall statement we can analyze Pokhara as having a huge adventure resource.

Another tour operator stated, Timilsina perspective towards 'adventure tourism in Pokhara' is somehow similar and supplementing to Archarya's statement. He stated:

"Adventure tourism is a good option for Pokhara because this city has numerous adventure activities tourists can enjoy. Some of the activities are boating, hiking, trekking, bungee-jumping, paragliding, and mountain-biking. Pokhara's tourism history is not very old but growth is rapid. It may be due to suitable/stable weather, landscapes, natural beauty, transit point, and maximum adventure activities provider in whole Nepal. Pokhara is also a transit point for trekking to Annapurna Base Camp".

- Jagan Nath Timilsina (CEO), Freedom Adventure Treks

Timilsina's statement highlights that Pokhara is an adventure destination due to availability of several adventure activities resources such as *boating, hiking, trekking, bungee-jumping, paragliding, and mountain-biking*. His statement also supplements to Archarya's statement that Pokhara is suitable not only because of the activity's richness but also due to its to stable weather, proper landscapes, and its natural beauty.

Another stakeholder, a business owner, has his own definition of Pokhara as an adventure tourism destination, that is similar to other stakeholders' perspectives described above.

"I think adventure or let's say overall tourism is a synonym for Pokhara. [...]. Adventure tourism is about experiencing the destination through physical participation. I have guests, they mostly come for hiking and paragliding."

- Nirjal Subedi, Owner,

Whilst Subedi's perspective about adventure tourism is limited to hiking and paragliding, another hoteliers explain the varieties of adventure tourism activities in Pokhara such as boating, trekking, rafting, canoeing, and bungee jumping, adding further about the hiking and trekking as well.

“Pokhara is one of Nepal's most visited tourist destinations. Pokhara attracts many visitors who come to see the Himalayan range and lakes. Adventure activities like boating, trekking, rafting, and other adventure sports like rafting, canoeing, and bungee jumping are famous in Pokhara. When we ask tourists their purpose to visit Pokhara, they often say hiking and trekking as their main goal”.

- Rabin Thapa, Owner
Hotel Manaslu, Pokhara

Stakeholders that are either tour operators, hoteliers or a restauranter are found to understand what adventure tourism is and resources needed. According to UNWTO (2014), adventure tourism activities are divided into thirty-four different types. Among these, some of the common activities found on Pokhara are hiking, trekking, rafting, eco-tourism, boating, mountain-biking, paragliding, and bungee-jumping.

Likewise, in the eyes of local residents, adventure tourism seems very popular amongst the local and domestic tourists. He also shared his experience of trekking as a part of adventure tourism. Lamsal's statement is also similar to other stakeholders and explained further how he is a part of adventure tourism himself. His statement:

“Pokhara is ranked no. 1 in terms of adventure tourism in Nepal. Adventure tourism in Pokhara includes [...] rafting, mountain biking and gateway Annapurna circuit trek which is believed to be the most adventurous and most visited trek in Nepal. Personally, I have made 4 major trekking as a part of adventure tourism”.

-Mahesh Lamsal, Local Resident
Pokhara

One of the female local residents we have interviewed was not much aware of the term ‘adventure tourism’ but as her husband works in a tourism sector, she has some knowledge about it, and she shared it with us.

“I don’t know much about adventure tourism, but I have some knowledge on it because my husband is a tourist guide and he sometimes tell me about trekking, mountaineering and other activities. Most of the tourists come for trekking, so I believe tourists are more fascinated by these kinds of adventure activities. Every day I can see so many paragliders in the sky, which is also an adventure”.

- Ganga Bimali, Local Resident,
Pokhara

Based on interview with Subedi and Bimali, a local resident, we could see that one of the residents ‘Subedi’ is well aware of what is adventure tourists, what kind of activities comes under it whilst another resident ‘Bimali’ is not so aware about what adventure tourist is all about. But an interesting fact is that Bimali explains her husband is engaged in adventure activities and she does not understand the term. This tourism is a means of their livelihood. These statements by local residents are similar to the other stakeholders that Pokhara is an adventure tourism destination based on the activities available for the tourists. However, their statement also illustrates that adventure tourism is centered between the locals of Pokhara. Tourism is a recognizable part of the everyday life of the locals in Pokhara. Either that is locals taking part in adventure activities or locals who are earning through this. Adventure tourism is centered between the locals of Pokhara. So, it is not only for the tourists but also for the locals.

The representative of Nepal Tourism Board describes Pokhara as the Paradise of soft adventure tourism and he illustrates it with some examples of existing Adventure Tourism in Pokhara.

“Pokhara is regarded as the tourism capital city of Nepal though it is unannounced. It is also called gateway to Annapurna. Data says that most of the visitors who come for nature tourism, visit Pokhara the most as compared to other touristic destinations. Major trekking trails are located in the periphery of Pokhara. If we talk about adventure tourism

in Pokhara, we can say it is the paradise of soft adventure tourism. Visitors can experience so many adventure activities, for instance; trekking, paragliding, para hawking, boating, bungee jumping etc. Among them paragliding is the most demanding adventure activity”.

- Kabidra Bhatta, RPM Officer (NTB)

The interview with Bhatta highlighted adventure tourism in Pokhara has been ongoing for a long time. He explained about the activities available for the tourists similar to other stakeholders' explanations. Tourists travelling to Pokhara are always considered for adventure tourism as there are no proper statistics of what adventure activities have been carried out by tourists. Bhatta's statement also unraveled some interesting facts on how government bodies 'Nepal Tourism Board' segments the adventure tourism in Pokhara in contrast to how UNWTO has segmented the tourism activities into hard and soft adventure activities. The most common adventure tourism activity resources in Pokhara are ecotourism, backpacking, hiking, rafting, canyoning, trekking, and climbing rock/mountains. UNWTO (2014) segments adventure tourism activities based on their nature. For example, hard adventures such as trekking and climbing are highly risky according to their nature, so such activities need a high-level specialized skill or a professional guide to perform in contrast soft adventure does not require specialized skills and higher level of physical demands such as (Stowell et al., 2010; Swarbrooke et al., (2003). But, according to Bhatta,

“I must say that hard/ extreme adventure does not exist in Pokhara. Because we categorize extreme/ hard adventure needs high altitude. Low altitude trekking is a soft adventure, high altitude like mountaineering is regarded as a hard / extreme adventure”.

This contradicts the segmentation of adventure tourism activities based on 'hard and soft' by UNWTO (2014) and Nepal Tourism Board. It means that the adventure activities categorized as hard activities by UNWTO (2014) are considered soft in Pokhara. Only activities such as high-altitude trekking, and climbing mountains in a high altitude, which need a high-level specialized guide to help the tourists are considered hard activities. Similar activities carried out at low altitude are considered by the NTB to be soft adventure activities.

The strategy of segmenting adventure activities by Nepal Tourism Board based on the *altitude*, gives an imprecise answer on what they think about the risk in connection to the activities whether they are carried out on high or low altitude. According to Stowell, et al. (2010), hard adventures

such as trekking, climbing, and caving are highly risky according to their nature, so such activities need a high-level specialized skill or a professional guide to perform. In contrast, soft adventure does not require specialized skills and a higher level of physical demands. Or perhaps rather the level of risk within the same adventure activity on two altitudes is still a question?

Regardless of whether these activities are segmented based on their risk, they are still considered to be “*highly lucrative segments of the adventure tourism sector*” (UNWTO, 2014, p. 6), which means that even though the adventures activities are segmented based on their nature, they play an equal role for the growth of the adventure tourism. We will go more in-depth, where we will explain how these adventure activities can play an equal role for local development of Pokhara or not in the next session. It will also highlight AT impacts, where we explore the stakeholder’s perspectives on AT.

When we asked about adventure tourism to these stakeholders, we can see what the term ‘adventure’ means to them based on their definition of adventure activities. We could see their minds flooding with the images and associations related to the term ‘adventure’ such as: hiking, paragliding, bungee-jumping, rafting, climbing, and trekking. According to all the statements above from the stakeholders, their perception reflects Pokhara as a rich in adventure resources and blooming adventure destination in terms of adventure tourism activities where tourists come to experience any kind of adventure tourism forms. We could also say this because the Adventure Travel Development Index (2020) has highlighted 10 several indicators of strong adventure destinations and one of them includes ‘Adventure Activity Resources’ as an indicator. It says that an adventure destination must have an ability to offer a wide range of activities and are constantly evolving to offer outdoor and nature-based activities: varying from bird watching to rock climbing, mountaineering to paragliding, and rafting to rock climbing.

However, ATDI (2020) states that threatened species, forests, grasslands and drylands are the indicators to measure this ‘Adventure Activity Resources’ pillar. According to ATDI, a country needs to support and save endangered species and those who have large scale forests, grasslands or drylands are taking good care of their adventure assets and thus have more potential to sustain adventure tourism if handled properly (ATTA, 2020). We will analyse how adventure activities in

Pokhara have impacted and what measures have been taken into action by different stakeholders to sustain adventure tourism in the following session.

5.2. Stakeholder Perceptions on Adventure Tourism Impacts on Local development:

The analysis and findings will be discussed being centered around the topics which relate adventure tourism and its impact on Pokhara based on several stakeholders. This section is focused on highlighting the positive and negative impacts of economic, social and environmental components as perceived by stakeholders. We have analyzed the impacts of AT based on the guidelines of sustainable tourism development and its managerial practices. The analysis will be focused on different literatures comparing the perspective of stakeholders and development through adventure tourism.

5.2.1. Economic Impacts:

The economic impacts of AT based on several stakeholders' perspectives are highlighted that reveals positive and negative impacts of AT in Pokhara. Most of the stakeholders explained the positive impacts but negative impacts shall also be considered to manage the balanced impacts.

Positive Impacts:

When asking the adventure tourism stakeholders about their perception on the impact of adventure tourism and what kinds of development has it brought along with it, responses were as follows:

“It helps to circulate the economy directly or indirectly. Tourism has a strong positive effect on the economic growth of Pokhara. I don't have specific data now, but around 75% of the tourism investment of the Gandaki region is there in Pokhara which includes hotels, restaurants, cafes', bars, night clubs, tour operators, adventure activities providing companies, shops etc. Local communities benefited from the employment opportunities which helped a lot to increase their living standards”.

- Kabindra Bhatta, Researcher Planning & Monitoring Officer,
 - Nepal Tourism Board

The statements of Bhatta reveal that AT in Pokhara has helped to develop the city economically as many businesses have been opened up to provide service for the adventure travelers, and through that employment opportunities have been created. These developments are somewhat typical of what tourism generally defines tourism's important role on poverty alleviation by creating employment and income opportunities (UNWTO, 2014). Based on governmental stakeholder, the statement of Bhatta gives a glimpse of the positive economic impact that AT in Pokhara has been supporting to intensify the economic welfare of the local people through employment opportunities. Not only the local communities, it has also helped to motivate other investors in mostly adventure activities providing companies because adventure tourism helps in alleviating poverty by creating the employment opportunities, high income and the incentives for the purpose of conservation (UNWTO, 2014)

The majority of participants seem to be explaining various positive economic effects of AT in Pokhara. For the most part, all the stakeholders interviewed have seen the changes in the economic situation and work prospects of locals and other tourism businesses. The tour operator, Acharya, has responded similarly to Bhatta. He thinks communities have benefited from AT because it provides a business channel along with various incomes.

“Of course, adventure tourism has benefited communities as it creates a channel to a business. It creates an income, for example, restaurants selling the food creates a supply chain with the local communities, either buying milk, vegetables from the locals or other necessary goods. Through this everyone is getting benefited from tourism. Even though there might not be a direct link with tourism, everyone is benefitting indirectly in some certain places”.

- Krishna Acharya, Tour Operator
(CEO) Ethical Trekking Nepal

According to him, everyone benefits indirectly at some points, even though there isn't a direct connection with tourism. We can see from his argument that tourism in Pokhara has brought together not only the businesses but also locals through the supply chain of locally produced

vegetables, meats, foods and dairy products. Timilsina, who is also a tour operator, claims that tourism provides similar benefits. According to him, the increased demand for local goods, organic, and local food in Pokhara, on the other hand, reflects the economic gain of other locals who are indirectly involved in tourism. He says,

“[...]lots of restaurants, hotels, clothes shops, jewellery shops and cosmetic shops focused specially to serve the tourists. People in other communities might be benefiting indirectly as resources such as vegetables, meats, and other food all comes from surrounding communities. This helps them in their livelihood”.

Jagan Nath Timilsina, Tour Operator
(CEO) Freedom Adventure Trek

Nonetheless, he emphasizes the importance of job opportunities as he states, *“Many people are getting jobs because of this tourism, small businesses are functioning in tourist sites”.*

The responses from the tour operators were somehow similar to Bhatta’s statement above. Both stakeholders stated the development referring to direct benefit or indirect benefit towards the communities. Moreover, our respondents see these as a positive effect due to AT.

The response of the hotel owner is also similar to other stakeholders explained as above.

“The city has benefited by generating foreign currency and employment opportunities, it has developed as a model city of our country that is why I choose to open my hotel in Pokhara rather than other cities”.

- Rabin Thapa, Owner
Hotel Manaslu, Pokhara

Through his response, we can see the economic motive behind his business, and the reason why he chose Pokhara over other cities. His statement is similar to other stakeholders’ ideas on AT in Pokhara. Our next participant, a local resident, enlightened us by describing how eco-tourism and homestay benefit the local communities and how their lifestyles have changed over the years.

“Locals are slowly becoming more interactive and economically independent with the concept of eco-tourism and homestay. Their earnings have been upgraded in comparison to 5/10 years ago”.

- Mahesh Lamsal, Local Resident

He further added,

“Adventure tourism has increased opportunities for locals. Being the center for adventure tourism, Pokhara hosts thousands of tourists every year and this way locals are being benefited a lot in terms of their income, operating small or large tourism related businesses ranging from operators to local restaurants and local culture and handcrafts and strong aid on promoting the local market and its product. Economic contribution and promoting local business and products are the direct opportunities locals are getting in Pokhara from this sort of adventure tourism”.

- Mahesh Lamsal, Local Resident

Pokhara

The above stated two statements by Lamsal, supplements the concept of other stakeholders regarding AT economic impact. This statement reflects that AT has helped to generate income for the local population and many business start-ups have taken place in Pokhara. The startup business such as local cultural handcrafts and local restaurants providing local menu is not only creating economic benefit, but also promoting the local culture. The promotion of local culture and local authentic food helps the societies to save the local culture, and such benefits are categorized under the social impacts. Lamsal also highlighted how local people are being more interactive is also a social impact that we will discuss further in our next session under ‘social impacts’

One of our participants is a local resident, who introduces herself as a housewife and describes how AT has helped to create a market for the products that she knits during her spare time. She explains,

“Pokhara is very developed due to tourism. Many local people like us get job opportunities and market for our products”.

- Ganga Bimali, Local Resident,

Pokhara

According to Steynberg and Grundling (2005), adventure tourism in the form of economic growth helps in “*the expansion of economic activity in a specific area with the purpose of raising incomes of the domestic population*” (p. 1421). Based on the stakeholders quote and Steynberg and Grundling (2005) concept of economic impact, we can analyze AT has helped to develop Pokhara economically by providing opportunities of raising incomes through different means as stated on our stakeholder’s statements. According to Meyer and Meyer (2015), several developing nations and regions are claimed to have managed to increase their economies through tourism development, and the statement of stakeholders shows that development of AT in Pokhara has led to economic development, as AT helps in alleviating poverty by creating employment opportunities, high income and the incentives for the purpose of conservation (UNWTO, 2014). With the statement above, we can draw a conclusion that due to adventure tourism, most of the domestic population in Pokhara are having employment opportunities which helps them to increase their standard of living. An increase in numbers of hotels, business investments, individual guides, and tour operators reflects the increasing economic benefit in Pokhara, at the same time, an increased living standard improves the quality of life and these impacts are a social impact. Our findings reflect that AT has really helped individuals living in Pokhara. The tourism corporations and everyone engaged directly has been gaining economic benefits. The housewives ‘Bimali’, who says she doesn’t actually have an idea of what adventure tourism is, also found to have been engaged in this tourism indirectly. She uses her spare time to sell the hand knitted clothes to the tourists through third party suppliers and is actually earning indirectly through tourism in Pokhara.

These mentioned economic benefits of AT, also concur with the concept of overall development, where Keyser (2009) states the motive of development is “*to reduce poverty, inequality and unemployment, and also to reduce deprivation in order to broaden choices*”.

Negative Impacts:

Some participants, however, brought up the negative economic effects of adventure tourism. According to Thapa and Subedi, the city is getting more expensive. Subedi continues, “*The adventure tourism market is growing and becoming more opportunistic, and as a result, people*

from other districts of Nepal are coming here to look for work, and as a result, housing capacity is shrinking and becoming very costly".

The identified negative economic impacts of tourism in Pokhara shows that Pokhara has been an opportunistic destination, that tourists come for adventure opportunities and people from other cities of Nepal come for adventure activities whilst some also come for economic opportunities. This movement process has already started shrinking the housing capacity making it more costly and it needs to be controlled and managed sooner else unsustainable and uncontrolled expansions in the tourism industry may have negative effects on the economy (Ross, 1992). The author also adds, negative economic impacts can cause rising import patterns, informal jobs, cost of living, taxation, infrastructure costs, seasonal employment, housing and land prices (rent or purchase). Based on the analysis and literature, Pokhara needs managed tourism before it brings a problem like mass (over) tourism where above stated economic impacts may arise.

Even Though our findings present a high number of AT positive impacts in Pokhara, there are also negative impacts that cannot be left unaddressed. Thus, it is still a challenge to these stakeholders how they plan and think about the sustainability of these economic aspects because Steynberg and Grundling, (2005) claims that right balance between infrastructures of adventure tourism and adventure tourism activities can only lead to its sustainability. Our next session 5.2.4. will discuss furthermore about the stakeholder's initiatives that they carried out to sustain economic benefits.

5.2.2. Socio- cultural Impact

The Socio-cultural impacts of Adventure Tourism has been highlighted by all the respondents and reveal many prevailing social and cultural consequences of adventure tourism in Pokhara. All of the informants see positive and negative impacts on society and culture due to tourism and these impacts will be analyzed in the two following sections.

Deery, Jago and Fredline (2012) states the importance of not underestimating the social impacts of tourism. Furthermore, they explain that governmental departments of tourism, industry, and agencies need to recognize how individuals and host communities perceive the advantages and

disadvantages regarding the tourism of that destination. Thus, our interviews with different stakeholders will address several social impacts of AT in Pokhara. This will give a brief insight into how tourism stakeholders perceive AT social impacts in Pokhara and into its local development.

Positive Impact:

Positive shifts in social behavior, infrastructure, and the building of community services such as bridges, hospitals, and educational institutions seem to have occurred as a social impact to the destination 'Pokhara'. One of our respondents sees the positive changes on the infrastructural development and the enhancement in living standard of the local people due to the tourists.

"[...] it was a small city and now has changed so many things making it a big city now. Not only has the Pokhara landscape changed, but Pokhara has also developed its way of living due to foreigners coming here. In some respects, it is good that they teach so many things."

- Krishna Acharya, Tour
Operator
(CEO) Ethical Trekking Nepal

He further adds

"Things are getting better now as we have: good internet, roads, new restaurants and hotels, bus and biking activities, and varieties of cuisines. I guess we have pretty everything now here in Pokhara."

"[...] all the villages are equally developed in terms of education, motor facilities, telecoms, and internets."

- Krishna Acharya, Tour
Operator
(CEO) Ethical Trekking Nepal

The statement of Acharya reflects that AT in Pokhara has changed the destination in terms of landscapes and improved quality of life because of easy access to infrastructures. Our next stakeholder explained his perspective as:

“When I talk about positive changes there are lots of changes. Many people are getting jobs because of this tourism, small businesses are functioning in tourist sites. People who are directly involved in tourism are learning new cultures, new learning aspects, lifestyles, hygiene, planning procedures, and being systematic.”

- Jagan Nath Timilsina, Tour Operator
(CEO) Freedom Adventure Trek

Timilsina’s statement shows that many people are getting benefited through adventure tourism in the community especially in the sense of empowerment through employment. Society is advancing through the learning of new cultures and lifestyles through tourists. Timilsina’s statement is supplementary to Acharya’s statement that AT has impacted the locals socially, regarding new aspects and lifestyles, people are being more aware about hygiene, planning the activities and its procedure before taking action, and more systematic.

Deery, Jago and Fredline (2012) states, the social impact of AT consists of various dimensions such as quality of life, norms, value, society model, and environmental destruction, whereas the development in social components by Sharpley and Telfer (2002) are improvements in the health, proper education, employment facilities and proper housing opportunities. Based on the stakeholder’s statement, our findings concur that the AT impacts are perceived in a positive way as tourism not only helps in infrastructural development such as: bridges, hospitals, and educational institutions, but also creates many more opportunities within Pokhara.

Locals and people in Pokhara are found learning about new cultures, lifestyles, hygiene and systems with the arrival of adventure travelers, which leads to growth in local’s personal development. These positive social impacts are similar to Sharpley & Telfer (2002) statement, that the development in social components are improvements in health, proper education, employment facilities and proper housing opportunities.

With the construction and infrastructure development taking place in the areas where tourism is prevalent, hotels, restaurants, shops and other businesses have been established and almost

everyone is benefited through the development of tourism. Acharya and Timilsina viewed tourism as a ‘*mean of transition*’ and a step forward that leads to ‘*positive change*’. Their perspective about AT social impact reflects, AT has actually brought a ‘good chance’ in Pokhara. Thomas (2000) in Sharpley and Telfer (2002) also considered development as a ‘good change’ and is a progress that brings the positive transformation, so based on above-described social impacts, Pokhara is having a ‘good chance’ along with positive transformations.

Negative Impacts:

However, due to the large amount of income produced by AT, the development is claimed to be unequally distributed within different communities of Pokhara. Our findings show that unequal development has occurred in some areas of Pokhara as those areas do not attract tourists, and those areas must be under the supervision and policymakers to develop it for the sake of the locals. The concept of development by Keyser (2009) suggests that development leads “*to reduce poverty, inequality and unemployment, and also to reduce deprivation in order to broaden choices*”, but with the unequal distribution of development within the same city raises a question if AT has actually benefited the destination ‘Pokhara’? Or has it created a social inequality within the society?

This ensures that wealth is diverted to regions where it is not urgently needed, resulting in a significant divide between wealthier and poorer areas. These arguments are based on the statement of stakeholders and they are described as:

“The other side, southern Pokhara, is still struggling to develop tourism. It is because tourists like to go into villages that have all facilities, views, mountain views, sunrise, sunsets, and different cultural diversity. We also experienced that people who already experienced northern Pokhara are now showing interest in exploring southern Pokhara. Things are changing and it will probably need some more time”

- Krishna Acharya, Tour Operator
(CEO) Ethical Trekking Nepal

The preceding statement demonstrates that Pokhara's people and community have not all been developed equally. In terms of tourism growth, some improvements or novelty are still needed.

In several ways, the development of adventure tourism has perceived the emergence of negative social issues which cannot be denied. We will analyze the negative impacts as follows, based on the stakeholder interview. Various stakeholders see almost the similar negative impacts due to adventure tourism in Pokhara. All of them highlight the similar impacts in different ways.

“[...] it is good that they teach so many things. But, when tourism arises and the city grows, there are also some negative changes such as rise in smuggling and prostitutes.”

- Krishna Acharya, Tour Operator
(CEO) Ethical Trekking Nepal

The preceding statement demonstrates the undeniable social distortions caused by tourism in the society. Thapa, a hotelier, agrees with Acharya's claims, believing that unaccepted practices such as prostitution and crime have increased as a result of tourism. Society and culture are inextricably linked, and tourism in Pokhara has had a negative effect on both. The following assertion demonstrates the cultural effects of tourism.

In terms of cultural impact, our society is highly influenced by tourist's culture. Most teenagers are being influenced by it and try to imitate them. Our classical culture and customs are diminishing.

- Jagan Nath Timilsina, Tour Operator
(CEO) Freedom Adventure Trek

In a different example, the city has grown to the point that it has altered people's lifestyles. These effects have a significant influence on society. Thapa illustrates *[...] there are also some negative changes along with positive, for instance; the city is being more expensive, more crowded, populated and noisy.”*

- Rabin Thapa, Hotel Owner
Hotel Manaslu, Pokhara

Subedi, one of the organic café owners, agrees with Thapa's comment. According to him, overcrowding in cities makes it difficult for residents to live comfortably.

Furthermore, Subedi and a local resident Lamsal have similar views on the negative socio-cultural impacts of tourism in Pokhara. They share their opinion by emphasizing the negative socio-cultural impacts due to Adventure Tourism.

“As a negative change I would say the culture is changing, I mean people are trying to become western, mostly youngsters.”

- Nirjal Subedi, Café Owner,
AM/PM Organic Café, Pokhara

Lamsal sees the impact on the local youths and youngsters as they want to copy the tourists.

“[...] celebrations, alcoholism, and smoking have been a serious problem amongst youth who are being influenced by the way tourists enjoy and celebrate their visit to any places. “

- Mahesh Lamsal, Local Resident,
Pokhara

Aside from these, a stakeholder from a government body, Bhatta expressed his opposing views on the social effects of adventure tourism. He clarifies,

“There are of course many negative impacts due to tourism development. I must say social impacts are still contradictory. Some social and cultural changes have been seen due to the tourists and their activities. Local people, mostly young generations are adopting the tourists’ culture and following their footprints, gambling and prostitution is increasing, night life and criminal activities are seen more often, unacceptable language are being used by young generations.”

He further adds by saying,

“As the development of tourist destinations, the authenticity of local community, their traditions, food, customs are slightly disappearing or being replaced by the western tradition, food (opening of German, French, Italian Cafes in the destination) due to demand of tourists which can be taken as both positive and negative. Tourism is a service industry, so we need to serve according to the demand of tourists.”

- Kabindra Bhatta, RPM Officer, NTB

Above mentioned all statements justify the negative socio-cultural impacts of Adventure tourism in the local community. First and foremost, 'Acculturation' as some of the above informants allude to in the above (Böhm, 2009) has been seen as the major socio-culture impact due to adventure tourism. Their statements show local people are being influenced by the tourist culture and their behavior, mostly younger people are copying from the tourists and influencing them badly. Beside these, prostitution, gambling, criminal and other unaccepted activities are increasing day by day. Pokhara's authentic culture, food and traditions are replaced by the tourist demand.

As we see in the interviews, local businesses present and offer tourists what they want to see and take with them on their journeys. Even though international tourists find it interesting, local and national tourists can sense the differences in how local businesses and people express themselves. This hybridity can be taken as a positive impact on the economy because businesses are getting economic benefits out of this. However, Kithila and Reillys' (1977) notion states that "*concerning the impacts of modern tourism on host societies, tourism leads to commoditization of the life of a community and destroys authenticity of local cultural products and human relations*" (p.1), which means that adventure tourism in Pokhara has benefited the society socially, but at the same time it has been seen as destroying its authenticity. Thus, a sustainable measure to minimize its negative impacts is a crucial consideration while making a tourism policy. Generally, there is a concept that adventure tourism occurs on those regions that are difficult to access and has no mass tourists, nature tourists and eco-tourists (Knowles, 2019) which signifies adventure tourism having least connection with/impact in the societies, but our finding shows that adventure tourism is a broader concept and even though most of its forms are nature-based, adventure travellers does impacts socially and culturally by using the resources available in transit communities during their way to designated place.

Tourism brings positive and negative social impacts at the same time. In a positive light, tourism development in society contributes to a healthier life as stated by Zach & Hill (2017). Contrary to Zach & Hill (2017), Zurick's (1992) notion states that there are still some consequences which can be faced as 'borrowing cultures. We can relate both statements with our analysis here. All the stakeholders have their own views on the positive as well as negative impacts of tourism on society

and culture. On one hand society is developing through tourism in various ways and on the other hand its impacts are unquestionable.

However, Mr. Bhatta's also sees the opportunity in the '*Acculturation*', because cultures are often produced due to tourist demands rather with a purpose to retain traditions, as tourism is also found to have positive social influences in terms of "*self-concept and internalization of group safety values*" (Sand & Gross, 2019, p. 2).

5.2.3. Environmental Impacts

Based on the theoretical perspective constructed above, we have studied that there are several arguments on environmental impacts from adventure tourism. According to Addison (1999) adventure travel takes place 'close to nature', with a purpose to explore, "*study, business, communication, reaction, sport, or sightseeing and tourism*" (Swarbrooke et al., 2003, p. 6). Due to the close connection between the adventure tourist and environment, the number of visitors, their behavior, and the natural environment's resiliency or fragility all have an effect on the environment (Zurick, 1992). We here see how adventure tourism in Pokhara has impacted in terms of environmental aspects.

Tourism has the potential to have positive impacts by helping to preserve and conserve the environment. Even if those impacts are minor, they have the potential to benefit society by promoting environmental protection and restoration (Boo, 1990 in Zurick, 1992). It is very necessary to address the positive impacts or any negative impacts of any tourism form to understand why it should be continued or observed carefully. When we asked the positive environmental impacts,

Timilsina highlights the positive impacts of AT leading to the construction, planning and development of the resources available in Pokhara.

"[...] Maintenance of popular fewa lakes is being done. Road construction is one of the main developments taking place. Water supply and city planning are other developments taking place".

- Jagan Nath Timilsina, Tour Operator

Above mentioned statement shows that there are also positive impacts such as maintenance and development in the sense of conserving and protecting the environment due to AT. In terms of how AT impacts the environment of the tourism destination is still a topic of discussion, because Cohen (1978) argues that tourism is inherently harmful to the environment in the long run, whereas Pigram (1980) claims tourism can be beneficial to the environment. In this project, we have tried to find out which arguments are more connected to our case.

Among the interviewee, Timilsina was the one who expressed the positive environmental impacts along with negative impacts. However, all the interviewed stakeholders mostly expressed more negative environmental impacts of tourism in Pokhara. Kabindra Bhatta, RPM Officer of NTB pointed out the general negative impacts on the environment due to AT, and specially the enormous impacts on Phewa lake due to the pollution and waste. He was further concerned on the impacts *“[...] on local land use, causing soil degradation, pollution, habitat destruction, and increased pressure on endangered species”*.

- Kabindra Bhatta, RPM Officer
Nepal Tourism Board

This statement shows the direct negative impact where due to the number of visitors, their behavior, and the natural environment's resiliency or fragility all have an effect on the environment as Zurik (1992) illustrates the same example of negative environmental impacts related to tourism. Furthermore, Timilsina believes that tourism has had a negative effect not only on the Phewa Lake, but on the entire city of Pokhara. He has highlighted the waste management issue in Pokhara where he claimed that *“When tourists come to Pokhara, consumption of things increases and creates a lot of wastes from houses, hotels and trails. So, the environmental problem in Pokhara is mostly about waste management.”*

- Jaggan Nath Timilsina, Tour Operator
CEO, Freedom Adventure Treks

His statement reveals that tourism has negative environmental consequences, yet the management of those impacts is more challenging. He also believes that the problem of waste management is a major issue. Similarly, another tour operator, Acharya focused more on impacts through air

pollution due to the increment of infrastructure development. He further says. “[...]even when we go to trial and compare them from 10 years before we see noodles, juice and cola’s plastics.”

- Krishna Acharya, Tour Operator
(CEO) Ethical Trekking Nepal

Acharya’s argument contradicts Timilsina’s statement, because Timilsina sees positive impacts on infrastructure and development, while Acharya sees negative impacts on environment, air pollution as a result of infrastructure development. From the tour operators and tourism board representative perspective, we can analyze that adventure tourism has impacted the environment of Pokhara causing the negative environmental effects somehow. Taking Knowles (2019) notion, adventure tourists seek to observe and physically experience several landscapes desiring uniqueness and meaningful connections, and when they access those landscapes ‘tourists can be the cause of increased pollution and wastages’ as stated by Acharya and Timilsina occurs in a destination. Adventure tourists going to those regions that are difficult to access and has no mass-tourists, nature tourists and eco-tourists (Knowles, 2019), may lead to the impacts as Zurick (1992) explained such as litter and vandalism, trail erosion, habitat change, water pollution, poaching, loss of endangered plant and animal species, and resource depletion. To clarify our argument, stakeholders' statement concurs with the adventure tourism impacts in relation to some of its forms such as hiking, trekking, and eco-tourism. They notified that due to increase in tourists,

“[...]the government is planning to build new road connections in the same route by destroying the old one. For instance, we have the world’s highest trekking path ‘Annapurna Circuit’, we have been organizing this trek to Annapurna Circuit for a total of 21 days. Now can you imagine how many days it takes to trek there after the new road? It takes only 5 days to reach there.”

- Krishna Acharya, Tour Operator
(CEO) Ethical Trekking Nepal

According to Acharya, the construction of roadways to trekking trails is an infrastructure initiative related to the development of more or better AT, which could have negative consequences due to increased pollution. According to Bell and Lyall (1998, in Knowles, 2019), AT helps to improve the landscape's remoteness, its ruggedness and uniqueness being centered around the attractions.

At the same time, UNWTO (2014) states that, “*Adventure tourism is attracting attention for its emphasis on rural areas, local culture, and because it can often be developed within existing infrastructure*” (p. 46). In order to accelerate adventure tourism in Pokhara and its environmental impacts, ‘mountains and its trekking trails are being commodified’ as stated by Upadhyaya (2018). As Pokhara is a trail starting point, it attracts a huge number of explorers, mountaineers, general visitors, and specially trekkers, with an aim of direct access to the authentic experience of the destination's culture and nature. But in other ways, it has caused urban forest loss and changed the structures of trees (Upadhyaya, 2018).

The statement by UNWTO (2014) contradicts the idea of Adventure tourism development. Here, the concept of development is a topic to discuss. The general concept of development in terms of economic components looks for wealth and equal access to all the resources that help in overcoming poverty (Goulet, 1992 in Sharpley & Telfer, 2002), and road access is one of the necessary infrastructures to all the locals but UNWTO (2014) claims that AT can be done within existing infrastructures. So, how does this justify the road development in the trials area as a positive impact? Adventure tour operators see this development as a negative impact, but it can still have a positive impact to the locals living in those periphery areas of Pokhara, where trials are conducted. Most of the adventure literature identifies ecotourism, hiking and trekking as major adventure activities and based on these activities, tourists might seek the ‘*rural areas*’ but adventure tourism consists of a broad market consisting of several other activities. There is still a lack of surveys and studies that show how other forms of soft, hard or extreme adventure activities like camping, rafting, paragliding, canyoning, and bungee-jumping impacts the local environment. Our stakeholders also highlighted the environmental impacts of AT based on trekking and backpacking, so our findings are limited within these boundaries and there is more scope to understand how other forms of AT affect the environment in Pokhara.

Here, the adventure tourism concept is questionable if we consider the theoretical concept of Steynberg and Grundling (2005), who claims adventure tourism development should only occur in a place of remoteness. Our case study is a Pokhara city, which lies in the Gandaki Province of Nepal and is the only metropolitan city of that region. This city has been famous for its natural beauty, solidarity and harmony, and cultural attractions. In addition, it is also famous for the adventure activities as it provides several adventure resources for the tourists as explained in

session 'Pokhara and Adventure Resources'. The literature by Zurick (1992) and Upadhyaya (2018) has identified Pokhara as an adventure destination.

From the business owners' perspectives, Thapa, Owner of Manaslu Hotel highlighted that due to adventure tourism increase "*[...]city is being more expensive, more crowded, populated and noisy*", whereas Subedi, owner of AM/PM cafe said "*During peak season the place is overcrowded and also gets polluted. In order to develop adventure tourism, people are destroying nature. For example, the adventure tourism market is getting bigger and opportunist and due to that people from other districts of Nepal come here to seek jobs and due to that housing capacity is getting lesser and they ruin the farming lands to make houses*". This statement is consistent to the statement of Williams and Soutar (2005) that states the natural environment will suffer from overcapacity, litter and trash, erosion of the landscape and trails, deforestation and collection of wood supplies for fuel, disturbance of animal habitats, water pollution, and many other ills unless this degradation is effectively managed.

From the local's perspective, the impacts were addressed as more wastage and pollution, as Bimali, a housewife stated "*[...]when we go hiking to Sarangkot and fewa lakes, we see lots of garbage nearby*". So, all the above statements were consistent that adventure tourism is bringing numerous negative impacts in Pokhara that should be managed quickly or else the environment will rarely have a chance to recover.

5.3. How do the stakeholders collaborate and how do they address the issues?

Stakeholders' involvement as stated by Saito & Ruhanen (2017) is fundamental in order to create Pokhara as a successful Adventure Tourism destination. Therefore, it is significant to analyze the involvement and collaboration of various stakeholders in Pokhara's Adventure tourism in our study. All the stakeholders' we have interviewed seem concerned about their position and responsibilities in Pokhara's overall development. All of them are directly or indirectly connected with each other while performing their duties as public officials, in working with or around tourism or as local residents. After reviewing all of the conversations, we discovered that all of the

stakeholders are aware of their positions in Adventure tourism development and they are getting benefited through the collaboration with each other.

Acharya, one of the tour operators, inspires to provide the local menu to the tourists during treks or camps so that the local community can also be benefited with this. And for this, tour operators and community café restaurants are collaborating with each other. Similar to his views, Thapa, a hotelier, says that hotels also have a collaboration with different tour companies so that they can get the tourists directly while booking from the travel companies. He explains

“Yes, we have collaborations mostly with tourism operators i.e, Tour agencies. They promote us to the tourists, and we give them a bonus back. We also have collaboration with local shops, cafes’, restaurants. We suggest our guests to those places”.

- Rabin Thapa, Owner
Hotel Manaslu, Pokhara

Likewise, one of the respondent stakeholders as restaurant owner is also collaborating with some local farmers. He states

“Yes, we are collaborating with the locals and one of the five-star hotels. The ingredients that we used are provided by locals. The guests from the hotel are recommended to visit our café where we also offer discounts.”

- Nirjal Subedi, Owner
AM/PM Organic Café

Above mentioned statements show the collaboration with each other in terms of business. Also, according to Saito & Ruhanen (2017), this kind of collaboration is a key in terms of strategic and policy level; various stakeholders are involved in the decision-making, planning, and management processes. Through the statement given by Mr. Acharya, we can understand the involvement and collaboration that exists there in tourism development. While interviewed, we get to know that he is also a second vice-president of Trekking Agencies Association of Nepal. According to him there are 165 tour provider companies in Pokhara and with collaboration of all they are planning to create a trip to the less developed / underdeveloped areas of Pokhara. He explains:

“With this collaboration, we try to extend tourism into the underdeveloped areas where people are not connected to tourism. We are planning to create a trip with clients

who seek adventurous travel in Pokhara so that people in underdeveloped areas can create a source of income through enterprises, hotels, guesthouses, or homestays. We are focusing on providing opportunities to people who have never been particularly involved in the tourism industry. For this, we will give them some ideas on how they can be connected to this industry.”

- Krishna Acharya, CEO
Ethical Trekking Nepal

The preceding statement demonstrates the tour operator's commitment to the growth of the local underdeveloped community. The statement's main argument, *"focus on people who have never been particularly interested in tourism"* demonstrates his commitment towards local development through tourism.

Moreover, he further illustrates some recent examples of collaborative programmes with the local authority of Gandaki province, Nepal Tourism Board, Pokhara Tourism Council.

“Recently TAAN organized a program ‘Recce, Tour of Fewa Foot Trail’ in collaboration with Gandaki Province, NTB, and Pokhara Tourism Council on world tourism day to discuss the tourism activities impacts in Pokhara and future strategies”.

“Besides that, TAAN has an upcoming collaboration with Nepal Tourism Board, Western Regional Association, and Pokhara Ward-22 which focuses to study the areas of Pokhara that are under shadow. Our program is to hike those areas and study its potential to increase tourists in those areas”.

- Krishna Acharya, CEO
Ethical Trekking Nepal

Through the above-mentioned example, we can see the collaboration on similar as well as dissimilar groups of stakeholders on tourism planning. Another tour operator, in a similar manner, provides examples of ongoing cooperation on social projects that seek to support communities in the long-term. With the following example, he explains his involvement:

“We also provide a program known as ‘Outdoor Education Project’ organized by freedom social foundation and funded by freedom adventures. This program is an initiative to improve the livelihood of people living in trekking routes by providing proper skills and adventure tourism guides necessary. Our tourism is also focused on sustainable ways. We give our staff proper knowledge about sustainability. For example, our company has a certain policy. When going for camping or trekking, we try to provide local menus, which will help communities of that route”

- Jagan Nath Timilsina, CEO
Freedom Treks, Pokhara

The examples given by Acharya and Timilsina show that, as tour operators, they are very responsible in their work and want to involve everyone in tourism development. Their statements reflect their concern for sustainable tourism as a responsible tourism stakeholder. They seem to be very collaborative on tourism planning and development but at the same time they are not satisfied with the involvement and roles of the government on it.

Acharya adds his opinion to the involvement of the government in adventure tourism activities. According to him, the government collaborates to provide training to the staff i.e., tourist guides & porters yearly which is not sufficient. His views towards the government are very critical. As stated by him, government presence is there but it is too little.

“[...] the government is helping us to organize the training programme but they are not funding it. We at least want them to organize such a kind of training in our own city so that we can at least save travel and accommodation expenses. But besides this, we organize the training in Pokhara once a year in collaboration with the government at an institute called National Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management (NATHM). And we have to pay for them”.

- Krishna Acharya, CEO
Ethical Trekking Nepal

The above statement shows the importance of collaboration between the public and private sectors in achieving the intended goal, as Palmer (1996) suggests, cooperation between the public and private sectors will aid in the achievement of community social goals and the promotion of the

local region. However, there is a conflict over funding because, according to Acharya, the government does not finance tourism-related training or programs, yet they support on organizing.

Acharya goes on explaining the gap in the planning and policy making process and implementation. To answer our question, if the government include the stakeholders like him while tourism planning, he answers as:

“Yes, we are involved in some particular issues, they ask our view while planning but the implementation part is not easy. We used to collaborate with some umbrella organizations and made proper planning, but the implementation is very hard. All the tourism stakeholders should follow the one rule set by the authority, but it is not happening.”

- Krishna Acharya, CEO
Ethical Trekking Nepal

His statement suggests that though there is collaboration with all the stakeholders, there are still some challenges and complications which is similar to Dredge (2006) remarks on the collaboration process. According to her the collaborative process is characterized by conflict and clumsy decision-making among stakeholders (Dredge, 2006). Acharya elaborates with another example which has created an issue among the local community, tourists and tour operators.

“We had a case last year, in Tilicho lake some tourists became naked and exposed everything and took a picture in the lake and posted it on social media, which is totally unacceptable activity for everyone. They do these kinds of things and local people complain and blame us; we complain to the authorities. We raise our voice to the government to make the proper code of conduct on tourism. They hear it, they take notes on a paper, but they don't do it in practical”

- Krishna Acharya, CEO
Ethical Trekking Nepal

This statement clearly indicates certain tourism-related concerns and how local residents respond to them. Not only that, but it also highlights how the stakeholders' dispute occurs. Above mentioned issues arise when the tourists are not aware of the local culture and proper behavior.

Moreover, it happens also because of the lenient policy of the destination. Acharya's main concern here is related to communication chains which sometimes go wrong and don't work properly. Here, a problem arises but to solve the problem stakeholders blame each other and the government is not responding well. One of the potential issues is that some collaborative process participants may not be active enough to work toward a shared goal, so they depend on other members to deliver benefits for all (Bramwell & Lane, 2000). To support this argument, Timilsina's statement can also be evident. According to him, the government is not bringing new strategies regarding tourism development, especially adventure tourism development. He further says,

"[...] we have so many tea houses in trekking trails, but the tourism board is not setting any policies on hygiene's standards, safety measures, communication skills and so on"

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Jagan Nath Timilsina, CEO
Freedom Treks, Pokhara

According to him, the lack of expertise may be the justification for not imposing such policies and not raising tourism standards. Thapa, a hotelier, also thinks that there is collaboration between other tourism stakeholders, but the role of government is not satisfactory. He elaborates his statements by giving the recent example of pandemic.

For now, in this pandemic situation, many people have lost their job, many businesses are bankrupt, we atleast want some compensation or some kind of financial support from the government. If Corona hit us continuously, it is very hard to survive.

- Rabin Thapa,
Hoteller, Pokhara

All of the above statements indicate how they are working together for the overall development of Pokhara's tourism industry, but it also shows how collaboration is not always easy. It is because despite the numerous advantages of collaboration, formed collaboration does not always reach its full potential (Bramwell & Lane, 2000). Further, it clearly shows that all the tourism stakeholders are expecting high from the government. We can see that the government here has an authoritative power where government authorities may exert coercive power through policy making and execution (Lyon et al., 2017). The government's position in tourism development in Pokhara can be seen as critical in bringing all stakeholders together to achieve a common goal through

adventure tourism development with new rules, regulations and policies that apply for a wide range of stakeholders. The local engagement and business owners of cafes and hotels do not have any power to act. Also, tour operators are engaged in several collaborative processes, but they argue that their plans are not implemented in real practices.

In contrast with other tourism stakeholders, the government representative, Bhatta's statement on collaboration addresses that they include the tourism stakeholders in tourism planning but the statement from other stakeholders highlights the collaboration is made, but the decision is highly dependable to NTB. In this case, Bhatta have a say:

“Power relation is a totally informal thing. There is not any validity measurement of the ideas and proposals that stakeholders bring up. All the stakeholders are not the same; they might be biased towards the NTB and they might not like the decision. Main thing is, the Nepal Tourism Board has interaction with various tourism stakeholders on Budget planning. Since NTB is a public private partnership organization, interaction with private and public sectors is equally important for tourism planning.”

He further added:

“We try our best to put the version of private sectors' tourism stakeholders. There are certain conflicts between stakeholders on planning, but we take these conflicts as a positive way. We are guided by the specific documents for instance; government administrative policies, NTB has its own act and regulations which we have to follow. Specific roles of various stakeholders have been documented which helps to guide them all”.

Given statement shows that the tour operators might not either have the power to make decisions or to act. By considering some statements, we can see there is power distribution between the stakeholders and the government that seems to be at a higher level. Though the government seeks feedback and suggestions from tourism related stakeholders, decisions are taken by the government and those plans and suggestions are overlooked. We can also take a reference of Saito & Ruhanen (2017) here, as they state, 'influential stakeholders may use various forms of force, such as persuasion and authority, to enforce their own preferences in order to have the most influence'. He further says, there are certain guiding policies that governmental bodies should also

follow and due to this it is sometimes not possible to address all the plan, feedback and suggestions of stakeholders. Bhatta further adds his points on reasons for conflicts and hurdles among the stakeholders.

“Conflicts are always there and there are many reasons for it. Political instability is one, conflicts due to administrative hurdles is another, and general conflicts among stakeholders can be seen. General conflicts are discussed and addressed through meetings, for administrative hurdles, we work with policy making and corrections of them. They are ‘learning by doing process’”.

- Kabindra Bhatta, Researcher Planning & Monitoring Officer,

Nepal Tourism Board

According to his statements we can analyze the reason behind those conflicts and hurdles. The main reasons stated by Bhatta are political instability, administrative difficulties and other general misunderstandings. So, at this point we can agree that there are of course certain conflicts and some of the stakeholders are not included in the planning and process. Also, according to Bhatta, “[...] addressing all the proposals and implementing them are not possible” and due to this there arose a conflict because every stakeholder wants their plans and suggestions to be heard and implemented. This can be analyzed through the notion of (Bramwell & Lane, 2000). According to them, it is hard to include all stakeholders equally due to the complexity of involving them. Stakeholders with less power may be removed from the collaborative process or may participate with a lower level of power control.

Apart from these, one of the stakeholders has highlighted the point that they don't even know any involvement of locals in decision making processes.

“[...] It is not possible that all the locals put their voice forward, so he represents the whole community. However, I have not seen the local representative asking the locals for any suggestions regarding this”.

- Mahesh Lamsal, Local Resident,
Pokhara

According to Lamsal, a resident, local representative attends the meeting with the authority and is responsible for presenting all of the community's tourism-related projects, challenges, concerns, and suggestions. However, he claims that the local representative never asks the residents for any ideas, recommendations, or opinions on the matter. We can sense a gap between the local government and the people through his statement above. The representative is unreliable, and he never expresses the opinions of the locals. Here, we can analyze the Saito and Ruhanens' (2017) notion of collaboration among stakeholders is possible when: *“a group of autonomous stakeholders of a problem domain engage in an interactive process, using shared rules, norms and structures, to act or decide on issues related to that domain”* (p. 190). These issues related to ‘funding’, and ‘proper policies’ in stakeholders collaboration highlights how different stakeholders have their own perception and issues that they want governmental engagement in solving those with a common understanding.

6. DISCUSSIONS

In this chapter, we discuss the main aim and objective of the case on the basis of literature review and our findings and analysis. The main aim of this thesis is to understand how various stakeholders view Adventure tourism development in Pokhara and how they perceive their own role in such development. The other objectives of this paper are to understand the social, economic and environmental impact of Adventure tourism in Pokhara and to examine the stakeholders' collaboration and their role in Adventure tourism development.

Throughout the whole analysis, the several stakeholders of Pokhara seek to take part in organizing the adventure tourism industry in Pokhara. The word 'organized' is understood individually from each stakeholder's opinion, as some perceive themselves as being on the top of the pyramid signifying the meaning of tourism development. Based on the stakeholder's interviews, it has been a great topic of discussion on how these stakeholders perceive the tourism development in Pokhara, as their answers were directing where AT should be leading, and which key players play a role to lead the AT. Tourism research included in the above chapter reflect the distinct nature of development and AT development, where they had their agreement on the positive impacts through AT and disagreements on some developments such as road construction was a negative impact to some tour operators which could be a positive development for the locals living that trail areas that will be described briefly below. The distinct nature of development means different types of development, that can be either economically, socially or environmentally. In this matter, several stakeholders presented their perspectives on AT impacts on Pokhara socially, economically and environmentally. Thus, we have analyzed our findings in the above chapter with the support of literature. Here, we will further discuss AT development in Pokhara as a local development initiator, and how stakeholder's role and collaborations help the sustainability of AT in Pokhara.

Based on the analysis, Adventure tourism in Pokhara has had positive as well as negative impacts on its local communities economically, socially and environmentally. AT in Pokhara showed positive economic impacts such as job opportunities, income generation, and a supply chain creation for the local farmers. The start-ups business has helped to the development of local communities economically, whereas some of its negative effects are shrinking the housing capacity

and increased cost of living. The positive social impacts of AT in Pokhara are increasing living standard, construction of roadways, increased interactive skills, knowledge of hygiene, and improved infrastructures. The negative social impacts are unequal development amongst several communities, influence of western culture over local culture and local cuisines.

Social impacts are evaluated in different ways depending on stakeholders in the tourism sector. Because, on one hand it is taken as a positive note to adapt the tourist culture, language, lifestyles, which is considered as hybridity. But on the other hand, negative impacts such as destruction of authenticity are identified by stakeholders. 'Hybridity' can be taken as both a positive and negative note because though the local culture and languages are commodified, businesses are getting benefits out of this. However, as Kithila & Reilly (1977) states "*concerning the impacts of modern tourism on host societies, tourism leads to commoditization of the life of a community and destroys authenticity of local cultural products and human relations*" (p. 1).

Some of the social negative impacts can be taken as positive economic impacts too. For example, the development of roads is perceived as a positive development for the locals, while it is a negative impact for the tour operators and tourists that their length of journey is minimized and possibility of experiencing local culture may not be achieved. We see it as a positive impact for the locals as the construction of roadways helps locals to access markets, hospitals, schools and universities and other basic infrastructures in a shorter time. According to Goulet (1992, in Sharpley & Telfer, 2002), the economic dimension of general development looks for wealth and equal access to all the resources that help in overcoming poverty. Thus, access to all infrastructure has a positive economic impact, if it helps to reduce poverty.

The AT environmental impacts were mostly negative in comparison to positive. The only positive environmental impact identified in this paper is maintenance of popular lakes, and proper city planning. The negative environmental impacts are wastages, increase in plastic usage, pollution, local use of land for housing, and trail constructions. In terms of environmental impacts, the negative outweighs the positive impacts.

Our finding shows that the social, environmental and economic impacts are interconnected. For example, poor environmental quality has an effect on economic development and social well-being

by reducing the quantity and quality of services available, or by causing health problems, among other things. As stated by Steynberg and Grundling (2005), sustainability of economic, social and environmental dimension is based on the right balance between infrastructures of adventure tourism and adventure tourism activities. Based on our analysis, we agree with the statement of Knowles (2019), “*Adventure tourism is not innately sustainable*” (p. 3). Sustainability is a highly contextual term in adventure tourism which varies according to adventure destinations and activities. Due to the wide range of adventure subforms, which activities bring the higher impact into the destination is a subject of future research.

Thus, it is very essential to follow different principles of development plan by stakeholders to make AT as a tool for local development. The principles such as are an examples: it should focus on the conservation of the attractions which adventure tourism is based on; it should encourage the active local participations; it should focus on tourism development with environmental awareness; it should provide proper guidance on how to develop and provide tourist accommodations and other available touristic facilities; and it should make the policies prioritizing for new adaptation and experiments under proper supervision avoiding monopoly interests (Harris et al., 2002 in Tshipala & Coetzee, 2012)

Stakeholders' collaboration and their role in Adventure tourism development

Our data analysis shows the various perceptions of different stakeholders towards the development of AT. All the stakeholders perceive AT as the fastest growing tourism activities in Pokhara as the area has huge adventure resources. To address and minimize the impacts of AT in local communities and other challenges, collaboration among various stakeholders is essential to AT development in Pokhara. It is important to include the perspectives of all stakeholders during the process of collaboration with different stakeholders in order to recognize the source of conflict and communicate with the impact of tourism on them in the specific region.

It is evident from the analysis that stakeholders are putting a lot of efforts on participation and promoting AT in Pokhara. The collaboration process involves the government and private sectors,

tour operators, hotel and restaurant owners, and locals' residents in the development of AT. They all seem to be at least conscious of their roles and responsibilities and they are connected to each other while performing their functions. The collaboration can be seen between hotel owners and tour operators, café owners and locals, governments and all the private tourism operators. They all are also working together and involved in the AT planning and implementation. All the tourism stakeholders see the opportunities in Pokhara's AT whereas locals do not seem so active in the development whether they are linked directly or indirectly.

Locals can be seen participating in the tourism development of Pokhara, whereas their participation in AT can be seen as very neutral. Because our analysis shows that the locals are not included in the AT development. Locals are connected in AT of Pokhara, only because they experience it in their daily lives, and they have been impacted because of it. There is no direct connection between the locals and other AT stakeholders, and locals are also not considered as important stakeholders by other stakeholders. Locals as a stakeholder are overlooked but they can be in different forms playing an essential role which shall not be ignored. Locals are connected to AT as a part of it in their everyday life either because they can see it or be a part of the impacts that AT has on the area in terms of social, economic, and environmental changes. For instance, *'seeing paragliding in the sky of Pokhara everyday'* can also be a part of AT as they are sightseeing and participating in it. If not, *'using the spare time and knitting the clothes to sell it in the market'* is one example for economic gain, as explained by Bimali. However, the participation of locals in certain events (as seeing them every day) that are not related to economics is sometimes ignored. Furthermore, we were unable to locate relevant literature to support the viewpoint of 'locals participating in tourism for reasons other than economic benefit.'

One thing is clear from the literature and our analysis that the position of the government is more complex than that of the other stakeholders. The government sees things from the top down, while other stakeholders see more deep-rooted issues and want to find their own way from the bottom up. The prospect of the interviews and analysis is that the government is attempting to be more understandable when it comes to the problems related to AT. They appear to discuss and listen to concerns and feedback about AT development from other stakeholders at some level. They are also seen as a medium between various tourism stakeholders in order to generate popularity in AT,

which has an impact on development. However, based on interviews with some stakeholders, we can see that government involvement is still uneven. They criticized the government's participation as not enough in the development of AT. Therefore, we can say that stakeholder collaboration is not always going to be the outcome because it is more of a means than an end.

Stakeholder involvement in tourism development is inevitable as the number of adventure tourists visiting Pokhara grows, but cooperation between tourism stakeholders has fallen behind. We can see this conflict through the analysis of the interview with different AT stakeholders. Tour operators and the hotel/café owner claim that the government is not either supporting them or including their suggestions, plans on the AT development of Pokhara. And most of the stakeholders look forward to the government initiation in most of the projects. Where the government claims that all stakeholders are involved equally in tourism planning and policy making. However, our analysis shows involvement is not the same as collaboration and not all the stakeholders are addressed and involved in the collaboration process. Policy making and governance, according to Dredge and Jamal (2015), is about negotiation, but it is clearly seen that not all the stakeholders are included in the negotiations.

However, Nyanjom et al. (2018) states that all stakeholders do not need to be equally active in the decision-making phase of a tourism development because they play different roles in the process (Nyanjom, Boxall, & Slaven, 2018). This justifies that not all the stakeholders can be equally involved in the decision-making process. This is also seen in our research. As one of the tour operators says, the government asks for various stakeholders' plans, suggestions and feedback, but they never address them while making a decision. Government representatives comment on the same as it is impossible to include all the stakeholders in the planning and decision-making process. This also shows uneven power relations; because other tourism stakeholders such as tour operators might not either have to make a decision or to act. Further, the locals are also not included in the process.

As we can see from the discussion above, the stakeholders of Pokhara's AT are diverse, but inter-reliant. Stakeholders are instrumental in bringing people together for the common goal of minimizing impacts and improving society as a whole through AT development. It can be

concluded that by bringing all stakeholders together, AT development has the potential to establish collaboration and partnership among the stakeholders. It can be successful only if all of the different stakeholders are responsible and play their roles in the AT development as needed.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Throughout this study, we have attempted to investigate how Pokhara's stakeholders view and contribute to adventure tourism development. We have examined how AT is affecting the local development and how stakeholders are working together to resolve the impacts and issues related to AT. We further have analyzed how stakeholders collaborate in connection to tourism development, as well as how stakeholders perceive their involvement in the decision-making process.

In order to answer our research question, we conducted interviews with different AT stakeholders i.e., Nepal Tourism Board representative, tour operators, hotel and cafe owners, and Pokhara residents who are directly or indirectly involved in AT development. These are all various stakeholders who are involved in the AT of Pokhara in some way. In order to back up our findings from our qualitative data collection, we performed additional data research (online, desk, literatures). The interviews gave us insight into how stakeholders feel about being involved (or not) in the tourism development process, as well as how certain stakeholders hope to get involved and how the collaboration process happened.

It has been examined that all the tourism stakeholders see the prospects of AT development in Pokhara. They are found to be aware of Adventure Tourism development and its impacts on the local community. They are also involved in various AT activities in their own way. However, they perceive AT, more as a significant economic tool to develop the city. Many opportunities can be seen along with the AT development in Pokhara. They want to preserve the local tradition, culture and authenticity of the destination and at the same time want to get benefit through commercialization of tradition, culture and food, which contrast the concept of authenticity.

AT has had a huge impact in Pokhara, which all stakeholders seem to be aware of. Both positive and negative impacts can be seen due to the AT development. But negative environmental impacts outweigh the positive ones. Positive impacts on the economy are seen as very significant in the local development of Pokhara. However, negative impacts on the economy by rising import

patterns, informal jobs, cost of living, taxation, infrastructure costs, seasonal unemployment, housing and land prices (rent or purchase) cannot be denied. It has been discovered that the growth of adventure tourism provides economic and social benefits to the local community in the form of job opportunities, increased wages, the creation of small and medium-sized businesses, and an increase in land prices. However, it may also contribute to acculturation of the destination, as locals adapt to visitors' traditions and their own culture fades away. Also, socioeconomic discrepancies between tourists and locals can have an effect on the rise in violence, prostitution, gambling, and drug-related conflicts. AT is a flourishing and emerging sector that has both positive as well as negative economic, environmental, and sociocultural impacts in the local community. Thomas (2000) claims that tourism brings a development that is considered as a 'good change', but our findings shows that not every tourism form brings a good change specially when Adventure travellers use nature as its main tourism infrastructure. Thus, sustainable initiatives by stakeholders must be of utmost importance if AT is expected to bring local development.

Some stakeholders are found to be involved in tourism operations in any shape or form, but their participation is disproportionately at lower levels of organizations, reflecting unequal involvement. Based on our findings, we may say that all AT stakeholders want to be involved in AT development of Pokhara. Despite various stakeholders having been already involved in AT, some believe that they are passive partners in this development process because they are unable to participate actively as they expected to. They feel excluded from the decision-making processes. Which means, they are seen as being removed from the policy-making process, and even though they attempt to participate, their efforts are always discounted. The government's bureaucratic strategy is mostly responsible for this.

Despite the fact that government officials communicate with AT stakeholders when developing policies, they usually take a closed-door approach to decision-making and exclude their version. Also, during the implementation process, locals and other stakeholders have few opportunities to express their opinions because local representatives are usually uninterested in listening to them. Due to this, conflicts and disputes among the stakeholders can be seen visibly or invisibly. However, we cannot overlook the government's perspective on it. Because according to the government representative, to include all the stakeholders in the policy making and planning

process is not possible due to the limited budget, unavailability of resources and administrative complexities.

Based on our findings, most of the stakeholders are blaming and claiming the government as they see the government in a bureaucratic position. From the analysis, we can guess that some stakeholders might not be consistent in their demands and concerns regarding the AT development, and as a result, they may feel ignored and claim that they are not involved in the tourism development decision-making process. To resolve the conflicts & misunderstanding, all the tourism players should communicate and should try to realize the complexities of the government's position, and also make an effort to collaborate from their side as well.

According to our findings, different stakeholders have different priorities and interests, and the government as a key player, should involve all the stakeholders including locals in the AT planning and development process in Pokhara to collaborate as a unit. Since all the stakeholders are more self-contained and their goals and priorities differ, only collaboration can enable them to achieve a win-win situation. Stakeholders relying on the government approach for 'organized' AT is not an option but involving themselves in it for the betterment of AT can actually organize AT more properly in Pokhara. This could help the stakeholder gaining significant benefits from AT and pre-assess the negative impacts of AT in the local community which they can avoid on time from their individual initiation or collaborations if needed. A good stakeholder collaboration is crucial in order to find a common ground. Thus, other stakeholders must be given a leading role in the policy making and implementation of activities by the government. This will allow other stakeholders to form alliances in order to maximize the variety of benefits available from adventure tourism growth while minimizing conflicts.

Furthermore, collaborations between stakeholders should aim to draw on stakeholders' mutual skills, allowing them to learn from one another and engage in events that strengthen the benefits of adventure tourism in Pokhara. This could be achieved by bringing together different stakeholders on common ground to discuss issues such as impacts, rules and regulations, policies, and conservation.

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Appendix 1.

Name of Interviewee: Krishna Acharya

Name of Organization: Ethical Trekking Nepal

Organizational Position: CEO

Name of Interviewer: Kopila Pudasaini Panday,

Mode of Interview: Whatsapp

Date/Time of Interview: 7 April 2021, 9.30 am (Local time of Denmark)

Interviewer: What are your opinions about tourism in Pokhara

Interviewee: Pokhara is a main tourism hub in Nepal. We have so many things. It is one of the adventurous destinations. Tourists can enjoy adventure activities like bungee-jumping, climbing, mountain biking, rafting, hiking, trekking in Pokhara. It has 3 world highest mountains that can be enjoyed from every corner of Pokhara. Pokhara has numerous adventure tourism activity, cultural tourism. This place has many diversities in every aspect of tourism. Such as adventure activities and different cultures. That is why I see Pokhara as one of the best places in Nepal to travel.

Interviewer: What is your perspective on Adventure Tourism? Do you think adventure tourism is good for Pokhara?

Interviewee: There are a variety of tourism activities available, but adventure tourism has the greatest potential for generating revenue and introducing Pokhara or let's say Nepal to the rest of the world. This increases job prospects for trek guides, safari guides, and other daring activity guides such as kayaking, paragliding, bungee jumping, and rafting. It also aids in the promotion of local marketization in remote areas, allowing people to earn money.

Pokhara is a gateway for adventure tourism. There are so many mountains around Pokhara. We have some of the mountains that come under the top 10 mountains of the world which can be seen from Pokhara. Dhaulagiri, Manaslu and Annapurna that are 7th, 8th and 10th highest in the world respectively can be seen from Pokhara. Above 7000 meters, Pokhara has around 100 peaks, and

above 6000 meters, Pokhara has more than 200 peaks. Not only mountains, but bungee jumping, rafting, hiking, trekking and rafting, ecotourism makes it an adventure tourism hub.

Interviewer: Please tell me something about your job? What adventure tourism activities do you provide for tourists?

Interviewee: My name is Krishna Acharya. I am the director of Ethical Trekking Nepal Pvt. Ltd. I have been working in the tourism industry and organizing trips and tours for 25 years. I basically organize trips to mountains, cultural trips around the Pokhara city and other parts of Nepal as well. My duty is to organize everything for the people who are looking for adventure activities. We focus more into trekking facilities, but we do provide facilities like mountain climbing, rock climbing, and other extreme activities. Our basic services are to organize for bungee-jumping, paragliding, and hiking. However, our main focus is to provide extreme activities such as trekking to the world's highest pass, world's highest lake-tilicho, trekking to Annapurna base camps and so on.

Interviewer: How has Tourism changed the city in terms of development? Examples related to economic, social, environmental and others if possible.

Interviewee: Yes, it has changed a lot when I compare Pokhara to 25 years ago. Pokhara was a small city and now has changed so many things making it a big city now. Not only has the Pokhara landscape changed, but Pokhara has also developed its way of living due to tourists coming here. In some respects, it is good that they teach so many things. But, when tourism arises and the city grows, there are also some negative changes such as rise in smuggling and prostitutes. Air pollution due to infrastructure development has increased. Even when we go to trial and compare them from 10 years before we see noodles, juice and cola's plastics.

Interviewer: How is development taking place in Pokhara?

Interviewee: It is going really good now. When we had a crisis before and development was not taking peak, we struggled but now things are getting better as the political situation has been stable and settling down. Things are getting better now as we have: good internet, roads, new restaurants and hotels, bus and biking activities, and varieties of cuisines. I guess we have pretty everything now here in Pokhara.

Interviewer: How are different communities of Pokhara benefitted from Adventure-based Tourism? Are all the communities benefitted? If yes how, or why not?

Interviewee: Of course, adventure tourism has benefited communities as it creates a channel to a business. It creates an income, for example, restaurants selling the food creates a supply chain with the local communities, either buying milk, vegetables from the locals or other necessary goods. Through this everyone is getting benefited from tourism. Even though there might not be a direct link with tourism, everyone is benefitting indirectly in some certain places.

But, in terms of equal development, I think tourism doesn't go right away everywhere. For e.g., tourism has reached Ghorepani and Ghandruk that are the northern part of Pokhara, a Gurung village which has been lying there for decades. The other side, southern Pokhara is still struggling to develop tourism. It is because tourists like to go into villages that have all facilities, views, mountain views, sunrise, sunsets, and different cultural diversity. We also experienced that people who already experienced northern Pokhara are now showing interest in exploring southern Pokhara. Things are changing and it will probably need some more time.

Overall, Pokhara is equally developed in terms of education, motor facilities, telecoms, and internets. However, villages where tourism has been moving there for a long time have nice businesses and their standard has changed compared to the southern part.

Interviewer: What is your organization's/individual role in tourism planning development in Pokhara or to reduce its negative impacts?

Interviewee: We are in a private business, so we need to provide what our customers' demands. This leads us to take tourists more into northern Pokhara. But I am also a second vice-president in trekking agencies TAAN WRA Pokhara (Trekking Agencies Associations of Nepal, World Regional Association). There are about 165 companies in Pokhara. With this collaboration, we try to extend tourism into the underdeveloped areas where people are not connected to tourism. We are planning to create a trip with clients who seek adventurous travel in Pokhara so that people in underdeveloped areas can create a source of income through enterprises, hotels, guesthouses, or homestays. Recently TAAN organized a program 'Recce, Tour of Fewa Foot trail' in collaboration with Gandaki Province, NTB, and Pokhara Tourism Council on world tourism day to discuss the tourism activities impacts in Pokhara and future strategies. Besides that, TAAN has upcoming

collaboration with Nepal Tourism Board, Western Regional Association, and Pokhara Ward-22 which focuses to study the areas of Pokhara that are under shadow. Our program is to hike those areas and study its potential to increase tourists in those areas.

Me, being the CEO of my tour company 'Ethical Trekking Nepal', we are focusing on providing opportunities to people who have never been particularly involved in the tourism industry. For this, we will give them some ideas, knowledge and networks on how they can be connected to this industry.

Interviewer: Do you think the role of government in (adventure) tourism development is good for Pokhara?

Interviewee: Obviously, the government plays an important role in development and promotion of tourism industries, but they are not playing the role as we expect from them or as they have to do. We now have so many issues in mountain tourism and other adventure activities, like maintenance, infrastructure development in rural areas in which the government is supposed to focus developing but haven't taken any measures till now. May be due to the lack of expertise and technology but the government hasn't played that much role as we expected. Although Nepal has a lot of natural resources to use them and create tourism activities and attractions, the Nepalese government is not utilizing properly all these resources we have.

Interviewer: So, what kind of support would you like to get from the government?

Interviewee: The most important thing is that governments are the one who is responsible for tourism planning and policy making. Though they made a series of codes of conduct (in different issues) on tourism years ago but they haven't revised, revisited and changed them. In mountain tourism there are so many issues on a trek. I organize the trek and we are trying to do our best to serve and keep our authenticity alive. We want to do the trekking and promote them as much as we can without destroying anything. We want to keep the old trail/trekking routes as it was before for the next generation. But unfortunately, what is happening now is, the government is planning to build new road connections in the same route by destroying the old one. They are in the process and they destroy everything there. So, for instance we have the world's highest trekking path 'Annapurna Circuit', we have been organizing this trek from Pokhara to Annapurna Circuit for a

total of 21 days. Now can you imagine how many days it takes to trek there after the new road? It takes only five days to reach there. So even they are planning to make the road all the way to the top 5000/ 6000 meters which was recently shared by the government. We also have the world's highest lake of 5000 meters called 'Tilicho', for this also the government is planning to take the road there which is not a good idea. We really would like to save these kinds of old trekking routes and places as a sacred place. It is not good for the people who seek adventure experiences.

Even at this current pandemic, other nations are funding the enterprises to stay strong but, in Nepal our nation has not provided help, this is making it hard to survive our business. There are about 1500 tourism laborers in Pokhara, but due to Covid-19, their situation is worsening. March is a peak season for these tourism laborers to earn, but restrictions are making it difficult to work in construction sites or other daily wages works. If these people return back to their hometown, Pokhara will lack human manpower into the tourism industry. Maybe there will be new manpower's, but there might not be skilled manpower which the tourism industry needs, and in this case, the government doesn't seem to care. We expect the government to provide an alternative way to make us survive. For e.g., providing mortgages for certain periods without any security.

Interviewer: So, I got your point and I know you are getting benefit from this old trekking style and tourists are taking the adventure activities also, but don't you think local communities will be benefited if the new road and bridges are built?

Interviewee: Of course, we understand the people who have been living there for years but we are not saying that building roads and bridges is a bad idea, but these could be done another way for example through alternative development. For example, they can keep these routes as a trekking trail and may build another route from the other side without destroying the older one. Old route connection is through the villages, and tourists can experience the authentic culture and tradition, cousins of that place and also villagers can have some income through their homestay and small shops on the way. If the new road is built this opportunity will no longer be there.

Interviewer: What kind of training facilities are offered by the government for adventure tourism activities?

Interviewee: Yes, we are getting certain help and support from the government which is not enough. For example, we have 10 tourist guides and more than 24 porters; some are full time and

some are not. Before taking them into work we need to train them. To do so, we need to send them to Kathmandu for a certain training (of 45 days) at our own cost. The government is helping us to organize the training programme but they are not funding for it. We at least want them to organize such kind of training in our own city so that we can at least save travel and accommodation expenses. But beside this, we organize the training in pokhara once a year in collaboration with the government at an institute called National Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management (NATHM). And we have to pay for them.

Interviewer: You as a tourism entrepreneur often meets other stakeholders (e.g., people, companies, NGOs, INGOs, governmental bodies) every day. What kind of situation arises while planning/working together? Could you give us some examples?

Interviewee: Sure, when you do a business of course there will be some conflict arousal between the stakeholders. We organize the trip and tourists are not aware of the culture and stereotypes of the local community, they do some unethical things which are totally unacceptable for the local people. We had a case last year, in Tilicho lake some tourists became naked and exposed everything and took a picture in the lake and posted it on social media, which is totally unacceptable activity for everyone. They do these kinds of things and local people complain and blame us; we complain to the authorities. We raise our voice to the government to make the proper code of conduct on tourism. They hear it, they take notes on a paper, but they don't do it in practical.

Interviewer: Are you also taking part in planning tourism on Pokhara? Or let's say, are you also a part of planning of code of conduct of tourism in Pokhara? Does the Government include you while planning?

Interviewee: Yes, we are involved in some particular issues, they ask our view while planning but the implementation part is not easy. We used to collaborate with some umbrella organizations and made proper planning, but the implementation is very hard. All the tourism stakeholders should follow the one rule set by the authority, but it is not happening.

Appendix 2.

Name of Interviewee: Jagan Nath Timilsina

Name of Organization: Freedom Adventure Treks

Organizational Position: Founder / CEO

Name of Interviewer: Anu Khatri

Mode of Interview: Whatsapp

Date/Time of Interview: 10 April 2021, 3.45 pm (Local time of Denmark)

Interviewer: What are your opinions about tourism in Pokhara?

Interviewee: I see Pokhara as a tourism hub of Nepal. There are different kinds of activities tourists can enjoy. I think around 60 percent of Nepal's tourism is specially in Pokhara, either domestic or international tourists. Pokhara is a great destination that has many adventure activities. People who don't like adventure activities also come to Pokhara for sight-seeing and to enjoy the natural resources, as there are lakes and mountains that can be viewed from the city. Besides all these, Pokhara has a well set up logistics for tourism business, such as hotels, resorts and all the foundation needed.

Interviewer: Do you think adventure tourism is good for Pokhara?

Interviewee: Adventure tourism is a good option for Pokhara because this city has numerous adventure activities tourists can enjoy. Some of the activities are boating, hiking, trekking, bungee-jumping, paragliding, and mountain-biking. Pokhara's tourism history is not very old but growth is rapid. It may be due to suitable/stable weather, landscapes, natural beauty, transit point, and maximum adventure activities provider in whole Nepal. Pokhara is also a transit point for trekking to Annapurna Base Camp.

Interviewer: Please tell me something about you and your job? What adventure tourism activities do you provide for tourists?

Interviewee: My name is Jagan Nath Timilsina. I have two companies related to the tourism industry. One of them is Himalayan Trail Running Pvt. Ltd, and the other is Freedom Adventure

Treks. I am founder and CEO of both. We provide facilities such as running trek/trip focuses to create running events from Himalayan Trial, whereas from Freedom Adventures we provide commercial facilities such as trekking and mountain climbing. We take long treks to Ghandruk, Sikles , Ghorepani, Upper Mustang, Lower Mustang, Dolpa and Annapurna Base Camps. All these treks start from Pokhara. We also provide short day hikes to Stupa, Nirmalpokhari, and Sarangkot.

Interviewer: How has Tourism changed the city in terms of development? Examples related to economic, social, environmental and others if possible.

Interviewee: There are lots of changes in Pokhara that are positive and negatives. I see the negative impacts into two aspects: social impact and environmental impact. When tourists come to Pokhara, consumption of things increases and creates a lot of wastes from houses, hotels and trails. So, the environmental problem in Pokhara is mostly about waste management. In terms of cultural impact, our society is highly influenced by tourist's culture. Most teenagers are being influenced by it and try to imitate them. Our classical culture and customs are diminishing.

When I talk about positive changes there are lots of changes. Many people are getting jobs because of this tourism, small businesses are functioning in tourist sites. People who are directly involved in tourism are learning new cultures, new learning aspects, lifestyles, hygiene, planning procedures, and being systematic.

Interviewer: How is development taking place in Pokhara?

Interviewee: Many developments are taking place in Pokhara. Maintenance of popular fewa lakes is being done. Road construction is one of the main developments taking place. Water supply and city planning are other developments taking place. The city is rapidly growing and also its developments.

Interviewer: How are different communities of Pokhara benefitted from Adventure-based Tourism? Are all the communities benefitted? If yes how, or why not?

Interviewee: Especially the central touristic site is lakeside of Pokhara. There are lots of restaurants, hotels, clothes shops, jewellery shops and cosmetic shops focused specially to serve the tourists. People in other communities might be benefiting indirectly as resources such as

vegetables, meats, and other food all comes from surrounding communities. This helps them in their livelihood. To access these resources, there is development of infrastructure.

Interviewer: In your opinion, what is your organization's role in tourism planning development in Pokhara.

Interviewee: We noticed a communication gap while delivering the service between the customers, guides, staff, and assisting gap. This lacks the professional approach. So, we are focusing on making the manpower skilled. We are giving them the knowledge on how to respond to customers (tourists), and how to make reports if something is needed.

We also provide a program known as 'Outdoor Education Project' organized by freedom social foundation and funded by freedom adventures. This program is an initiative to improve the livelihood of people living in trekking routes by providing proper skills and adventure tourism guides necessary. Our tourism is also focused on sustainable ways. We give our staff proper knowledge about sustainability. For examples, our company has a certain policy. When going for camping or trekking, we try to provide local menus, which will help to save authentic cuisine of communities on that route. Our 200/300 employees are based on route wise. We don't use one route staff in another way in order to distribute equal job opportunities.

Interviewer: Do you think the role of government in adventure tourism development is good for Pokhara?

Interviewee: Nepal Tourism Board, as a governmental body is responsible for tourism activities. They are trying hard, but they are not so impactful in case of adventure tourism. They invest the fund but are not properly utilized. We already have our products to offer but I don't see tourism boards trying hard to maintain those activities and provide higher and better experiences to tourists. They are not bringing new strategies regarding adventure tourism. For example, we have so many tea houses in trekking trails, but the tourism board is not setting any policies on hygiene's standards, safety measures, communication skills and so on. They are not making such policies, and are not raising tourism standards, and that may be due to lack of expertise. Besides cultural shows, there should be other programs to attract all adventurous of the world. For example: some of the other countries are particularly branded as their product. People visit there for specific

activities but in case of Nepal/Pokhara, the government should try to do in depth analysis on why tourists come to Pokhara and innovate new ideas. Currently, there is a common conception that Pokhara is a place for sightseeing, enjoying quality hotels and taking soft adventure activities, but there are many other activities in Pokhara which are not promoted properly by the government.

Interviewer: What kind of support do you receive from the Government and what kind of support is expected from the government?

Interviewee: I don't see the government helping us or supporting us as needed. Government thinks that we work with tourists and receive a lot of foreign currencies which is not true to much extent. We expect several helps from the government. We need help to take the loans from the banks and the government should make the criteria loosen for tourism entrepreneurs like us. There are no proper policies regarding the tax or vat system. We are ready to pay these, but the miscommunication makes us pay double. For e.g., when tourists pay us online, we pay 13 per cent tax, and when we don't collect the bills, we are bound to pay an additional 25 per cent from our income. There should be a proper online system to track these things. We also expect the government to make the visa permit system more flexible. We are dealing with international tourists, but when we need to take a permit to go mustang, there must be an original passport and not a copy of it. This procedure waste's tourists' time for 2 to 3 days. Making this easier will not only help us function easier, tourists will also not hassle more. Besides all these, we also expect the government to finance us, but these things are far more than we can ever imagine as we didn't receive any monetary help during this pandemic Covid-19. Government should also publish a new proper trail map structure to trek because old trails have been destroyed due to road construction. I feel that we and tourists can develop new trail routes to trek, but the government should support us promote those trails and involve in new map structures.

Interviewer: You as a tourism entrepreneur meets other stakeholders (e.g., people, companies, NGOs, INGOs, governmental bodies) every day. What kind of situation arises while planning/working together? Could you give us some examples?

Interviewee: With other tourism businesses, it is quite ok. But there are some conflicts and tension between us and the government. Last time, I had a meeting with NTB officials, but they didn't give much attention to my tourism plan.

Interviewer: Are you also taking part in planning tourism on Pokhara? Or let's say, are you also a part of planning of code of conduct of tourism in Pokhara? Does the Government include you while planning?

Interviewee: Yes, they include us but our plans are not prioritized.

Appendix 3.

Name of Interviewee: Kabindra Bhatta

Name of Organization: Nepal Tourism Board

Organizational Position: Researcher Planning & Monitoring Officer, NTB

Name of Interviewer: Anu Khatri/Kopila Pudasaini

Mode of Interview: Facebook Messenger

Date/Time of Interview: 17 April 2021, 13:30 pm (Local time of Denmark)

Interviewer: Can you tell us about your organization?

Interviewee: Nepal Tourism Board is a Nepalese national tourism organization established in 1998 by an Act of Parliament as a collaboration between the Nepalese government and the private tourism industry to develop and promote Nepal as a desirable tourist destination. By combining government commitment with the private sector, the Board provides a forum for vision-driven leadership in Nepal's tourism sector. We play the role as linkers between private stakeholders and the government. NTB receives funding in the form of a Tourist Service Fee from departing international passengers at Kathmandu's Tribhuvan International Airport, allowing it to remain financially self-sufficient, thus we are an autonomous/independent body.

Interviewer: How long have you been associated with the tourism board of Nepal?

Interviewee: I have joined Nepal tourism Board in December 2027, so it has been almost three and half years.

Interviewer: Can you tell us something about your job?

Interviewee: I am working in the Department of Research, Planning and Monitoring as an Officer. The main duties of this department are to explore new tourism destinations, existing market study,

and product study, tourism-based research planning and monitoring, data and statistics management.

Interviewer: How do you see Pokhara as an Adventure destination? When did it start and at what development stage is it? What are the most demanded tourism activities?

Interviewee: Pokhara is regarded as the tourism capital city of Nepal though it is unannounced. It is also called gateway to Annapurna. Data says that most of the visitors who come for nature tourism, visit Pokhara the most as compared to other touristic destinations. Major trekking trails are located in the periphery of Pokhara. If we talk about adventure tourism in pokhara, we can say it is the paradise of soft adventure tourism. Visitors can experience so many adventure activities, for instance; trekking, paragliding, para hawking, boating, bungee jumping etc. Among them paragliding is the most demanding adventure activity.

Interviewer: These examples that you have given to us are soft adventure tourism, do you also have hard/extreme adventure tourism in Pokhara?

Interviewee: No, I must say that hard/ extreme adventure does not exist in Pokhara. Because we categorize extreme/ hard adventure needs high altitude. Low altitude trekking is a soft adventure, high altitude like mountaineering is regarded as a hard / extreme adventure.

Interviewer: How has Tourism changed the city in terms of development?

Interviewee: If we talked about tourism; economic activities come automatically. It helps to circulate the economy directly or indirectly. Tourism has a strong positive effect on the economic growth of Pokhara. I don't have specific data now, but around 75% of the tourism investment of the Gandaki region is there in pokhara which includes hotels, restaurants, cafes', bars, night clubs, tour operators, adventure activities providing companies, shops etc. Local communities benefited from the employment opportunities which helped a lot to increase their living standards.

Interviewer: What are some impacts due to adventure tourism in terms of economic, social and environmental?

Interviewee: I already mentioned about development above and those are mainly economic. There are of course many other impacts due to tourism development. I must say social impacts are still contradictory. Some social and cultural changes have been seen due to the tourists and their activities. Local people, mostly young generations are adopting the tourists' culture and following their footprints, gambling and prostitution is increasing, night life and criminal activities are seen more often, unacceptable language are being used by young generations. As the development of tourist destinations, the authenticity of local community, their traditions, food, customs are slightly disappearing or being replaced by the western tradition, food (opening of German, French, Italian Cafes in the destination) due to demand of tourists which can be taken as both positive and negative. Positive in an economic way but is negative in a social way because local culture is diminishing. But Tourism is a service industry, so we need to serve according to the demand of tourists.

Let's talk about environmental impacts, the tourism industry in Nepal is nature based mostly so it is obvious to have huge environmental impacts on nature-based tourism. We can see the direct impact of pollution and waste in the most famous lake of Pokhara i.e., Phewa lake. Tourism has put huge stress on local land use, causing soil degradation, pollution, habitat destruction, and increased pressure on endangered species.

How does the Government/NTB address and minimize these problems? Can you give us some examples?

To address the environment related issues, we do the Environmental Impacts Assessment (EIA) and Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) according to the scale of the project. EIA is done for the big scale tourism where IEE is done for the small-scale tourism projects. EIA examines the impacts before starting the development project, evaluating the overall impacts before to guide the overall process. IEE study and identify what kind environmental problems will occur and what

will be the preventing measure. Both of them are taken as a mandatory process by the government. For example, if someone has a hotel project in Pokhara, he needs to fulfill an EIA and IEE requirements before starting the project. He needs to do according to the recommendation of environmentalists of the EIA & IEE. NTB helps to implement the EIA & IEE by funding the tourism/development projects related to the government. Further, we help tour operators to take the initiation on the voluntary mechanism (e.g.: responsible tourism; less pollution, avoid plastics) Environmental Code of Conduct recommended by UNWTO's Global Code of ethics. The local authority of Pokhara is responsible for a major part of environmental issues, i.e., solid waste management. Sometimes, if they need our help on a minor level, we help them through funding, for instance; NTB has helped them by keeping the garbage bin all around the city. Another recent major task that NTB has initiated is the 'Clean Mountain Campaign' cleaning of 5 Mountains in collaboration with the various tourism stakeholders including local body, conservation organization, solid waste management organizations and so on. Nepal Army has led the campaign and we are helping them. We are further conducting the environment related awareness raising programmes and capacity building training.

Considering the Social impacts that I said before, regarding the adaptation of tourist cuisine, the regulation of keeping authentic Nepali food in a menu with other (food on tourist demand) food is mandatory for the restaurants and hotels. Local authorities are responsible for monitoring the implementation of these kinds of regulations. To preserve the cultural authenticity, traditional houses and customs, CBT villages like Ghandruk, is strictly making some mandatory regulations, for example, villagers are not allowed to make a modern designed house, not even allowed to buy a land if you are not from same area, villagers need to wear their own traditional costumes. Moreover, the local authority and police authority of Pokhara is responsible to address the problems occurred due to the night life, clubbing, casinos, gambling, prostitution. To minimize these kinds of problems, NTB has initiated through the tourist police as their helping body.

Interviewer: With an interview with other stakeholders, we came to know that there is unequal development of tourism in northern and southern Pokhara. How does the Tourism board see these unequal developments? Do they agree on stakeholders?

Interviewee: Obviously, an unequal development exists there. Places that have direct beneficiaries of tourism have been developed and places which have indirect beneficiaries have been least developed. For example, in Pokhara also the places like Lakeside, Ghodepani trek, are fully developed and the areas where local communities live are less developed. Pokhara is in the phase of expansion, development is ongoing in the places where tourism activities are zero.

To answer 'how does the tourism board see these unequal developments, the Tourism Board is not responsible for infrastructure development, it is fully associated with tourism promotion still we give feedback to the government for the infrastructure development of tourist destinations.

Interviewer: How is the tourism board or Nepalese government trying to equalize these developments in the overall community of Pokhara? What strategies are being implemented till now, or what has been done before?

Interviewee: We are putting an effort to make the government aware of these inequalities and also working with various tourism stakeholders for tourism planning and executing. We have some strategies which are in the implementation phase. We are now promoting Pokhara as a Wedding destination, Honeymoon destination. We also have a plan to develop Pokhara as a Mice tourism destination.

Interviewer: How do Nepalese tourism boards/govt. collaborate and participate with other stakeholders of Pokhara in tourism development processes? Some examples of collaborative programs? How many types of stakeholders took participation? What were the end results?

Interviewee: There are not so many (19 to 20) stakeholders in Tourism. Major stakeholders, Nepal Tourism Board and government collaborate in the development process. We integrate the ideas and views of private stakeholders, we do the different tasks with them related to tourism research & planning, we take feedback from them. We collaborate with all the stakeholders from planning, designing, monitoring, to implementation. We also take feedback on tourism budget planning, policy making and promotion strategies. So, our main task is stakeholder collaboration.

One of the recent examples is, NTB, Pokhara organized a planting programme at Mandharepark or Dungaghat near Begnas Lake in Pokhara. Secretary at the Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Forest and Environment, members of Civic Society, Kaski, and local stakeholders also supported this initiative of Nepal Tourism Board Gandaki Province office to promote Begnas Lake as a potential hiking destination, while surrounding areas as a promising tourism destination. We are also always supporting regional tourism boards, while they give any skill training to the tourism stakeholders.

Interviewer: Please explain about the tourism strategies decision taking process of NTB. What kind of power relation exists in the decision taking process?

Interviewee: Power relation is totally informal thing. There is not any validity measurement of the ideas and proposals that stakeholders bring up. All the stakeholders are not the same; they might be biased towards the NTB and they might not like the decision. Main thing is, the Nepal Tourism Board has interaction with various tourism stakeholders on Budget planning. Since NTB is a public private partnership organization, interaction with private and public sectors is equally important for tourism planning.

Interviewer: We also heard about the power gap between the stakeholders. Why so? Why are all stakeholders not taken into consideration for strategy development? How do the Tourism board/ Nepalese government try to create a stable environment amongst different stakeholders? (e.g., how do government reduce conflicts amongst them)

Interviewee: NTB has its own morality and duties or let's say system to follow. If someone proposes a plan with us before accepting it, we need to see the administrative parts, budgets, available resources and so on. Sometimes it is not possible for us to accept the stakeholders plan and implement accordingly though it is a very good concept. Which is due to limited budget, unavailability of resources and administrative complexities. As I am working in the planning department, we collect the feedback from each and every tourism stakeholder during budget planning. We receive so much feedback including new proposal concepts, if we try to calculate the budget it will be much more than the budget provided by Nepal Government to the Tourism

Board. So, addressing all the proposals and implementing them are not possible. But of course, new ideas which are agreeable and agreed by all the stakeholders on Board can be implemented, still there might be unavailability of resources. We try our best to put the version of private sectors' tourism stakeholders. There are certain conflicts between stakeholders on planning, but we take these conflicts as a positive way. We are guided by specific documents for instance; government administrative policies, NTB has its own act and regulations which we have to follow. Specific roles of various stakeholders have been documented which helps to guide them all. Conflicts are always there and there are many reasons for it. Political instability is one, conflicts due to administrative hurdles is another, and general conflicts among stakeholders can be seen. General conflicts are discussed and addressed through meetings, for administrative hurdles, we work with policy making and corrections of them. They are 'learning by doing process'.

Interviewer: One of the stakeholders said, construction of ABC trekking roadway has reduced authentic experience amongst the tourists. How do Nepalese Tourism Board perceive this?

It is all due to development and the changing priority of development. Where there is tourism, there is development. In the latest period, the road network has been so extensive and most of the trail has been developed into roads. If we see the perspectives of trekking trails, roads are being missed but at the same time if we see the perspective of local development, it is very necessary. We have also been talking about the alternative development of trekking routes but have not started working on it. We need to have a planned development mechanism to have alternate routes development. There might again arise conflict where to migrate or settle the local communities in a planned way if we think of alternative roads development. There is still a positive side of this development; people from very rural areas can have the opportunity to travel in a developed motor road, it has also increased the flow of domestic tourists because of reduced traveling period.

Interviewer: As you said NTB is a private government partnership organization, what do you think is the role of Nepalese Government in Tourism?

Interviewee: Tourism is a fully service-oriented industry so without the private sector there is nothing in it. Government plays an important role in bridging between service receivers and a service provider. Government helps to establish certain policies regarding the economy and environment; taxation/revenue collection, monitoring, planning process and budgeting, facilitation, investment, infrastructure development are some of the important roles of government in tourism.

Interviewer: What does Nepalese tourism/Government expect from other tourism stakeholders?

Interviewee: As tourism is a service-oriented industry, providing quality service is the most important factor. We invite many guests / visitors every year and we want them to come back again. So, our task is to invite guests, promote tourism, infrastructure development and at the same time we want our stakeholders to provide quality service & hospitality, provide good experience to make the guest satisfied, develop hassle free regions and make a very excellent impression on them. Mainly, we want them to deliver quality service to guests and suggest feedback to us at a policy level.

Interviewer: In the current pandemic, the tourism industry of Nepal has diminished, what are alternative tourism strategies of the tourism board to make this industry go on.

Interviewee: As COVID came, global tourism has been constant. We had announced the Nepal Tourism Year 2020 campaign which came as failure due to this pandemic. It has greatly impacted our tourism industry. Main impact is seen in the arrival of tourists (increased badly), around 700000 people lose their job, around 10 billion NR has been deficit every month to the government, all the investment in tourism has been at risk due to the pandemic. To address this situation the Nepal Government is working on how to revive tourism and how to make the people survive. They have recently initiated a Programme to provide the loans in minimal interest. We have formed the domestic tourism revival committee in all the seven regions. This committee focuses more on domestic tourists; motivates them to travel & visit the tourist destination within the country. The

Nepal Government has recently introduced a campaign called 'Desh Darshan' to motivate people to travel one destination to another.

Interviewer: What are the future strategies for Pokhara (overall and also regarding adventure tourism)?

Interviewee: As we cannot predict until how long this pandemic goes, so we have made a first draft of how to revive tourism back again. Afterwards we are focusing on a strategy to develop new products of adventure activities around the Pokhara city.

Appendix 4:

Name of Interviewee: Rabin Thapa

Name of Hotel: Hotel Manaslu, Pokhara

Organizational Position: Owner

Name of Interviewer's: Anu Khatri/Kopila Pudasaini

Mode of Interview: Watsapp audio

Date/Time of Interview: 09 April 2021, 9:30 am (Local time of Denmark)

Interviewer: Please tell us something about you and your occupation/business. What position do you hold?

Interviewee: I have been associated with this industry for 5 years and running this hotel since then. I am the owner of this hotel.

Interviewer: What do you think of Pokhara as a tourism destination? Also, as an adventure destination.

Interviewee: Pokhara is one of Nepal's most visited tourist destinations. Pokhara attracts many visitors who come to see the Himalayan range and lakes. Adventure activities like boating, trekking, rafting, and other adventure sports like rafting, canoeing, and bungee jumping are famous in Pokhara. When we ask tourists their purpose to visit the Pokhara, they often say hiking and trekking as their main goal.

Interviewer: What is your opinion on how tourism has helped Pokhara to develop more?

Interviewee: Through the small or large development of the tourism sector, the city has benefited by generating foreign currency and employment opportunities, it has developed as a model city of our country that is why I choose to open my hotel in Pokhara rather than other cities.

Interviewer: Have you noticed the changes in Pokhara due to tourism? Please give some examples how it has changed? Positive change or a Negative change?

Interviewee: There is obvious that tourism comes with development. I can see development in infrastructures, roads, trails, accessibility of water, drain, improvement in health and sanitation,

more job opportunities. There are also some negative changes along with positive, for instance; the city is being more expensive, more crowded, populated and noisy.

Interviewer: How has tourism affected the lives of locals living in the Pokhara? (social, economic and environmental)

Interviewee: Tourism has definitely affected locals' lives here. On one hand we are getting economic benefits, infrastructural development, employment due to tourism development, but on the other hand, we have been affected badly, for example, locals are highly influenced by tourists' culture and their lifestyles, criminal activities are also increasing due to tourism. In some corner of city prostitution can also be seen. We are living with air and noise pollution. Beautiful lakes are being polluted, there is a hurdle in waste management. Many hotels and resorts are being built in the area where there used to be greeneries. Pokhara is being so expensive for tourists as well as locals.

Interviewer: What do you think is the role of hotellers like you in the local development of the pokhara region?

Interviewee: We as hotellers can help the local development through job opportunities, we promote the local products such as vegetables, dairy products, meats by bringing directly from the local farmers. We also promote local foods and encourage guests to buy our local products from the local markets.

Interviewer: How do you work with other stakeholders of tourism? Are there any types of collaborations to receive your new guests?

Interviewee: Yes, we have collaborations mostly with tourism operators i.e., Tour agencies. They promote us to the tourists, and we give them a bonus back. We also have collaboration with local shops, cafes', restaurants. We suggest our guests to those places.

Interviewer: What is your opinion about other stakeholders' role in tourism development in Pokhara? How and Why?

Interviewee: Every stakeholder is responsible because we cannot succeed if one obeys the guidelines to follow and another does not to follow. If we don't work together, it is hard to survive in this competitive market.

Interviewer: What is your individual/organizational role as a business owner to reduce negative impacts or develop tourism in Pokhara?

Interviewee: We participate in a meeting with different tourism stakeholders. They ask us for feedback, suggestions, issues and problems on our sectors and we provide them the feedback needed. As a hotel owner, we didn't do it purposefully for the sake of diminishing environmental impacts but, as you know Nepal had lots of load shedding before, so we implanted a solar panel for electric access to tourists which we use till today.

Being engaged in the tourism business, we are planning to work on our new project which aims to promote hand sewed hay carpets in every room rather than modern carpets. But it is yet to be decided after our small survey on customers because it can cost a lot of budget to change our interior plan as we also need a stable manufacturer of hay carpets.

Interviewer: Do you think the role of government in (adventure) tourism development is good for Pokhara?

Interviewee: Yes, I think so. Because the government has played a crucial role in infrastructure development and promotion of Pokhara as an adventure tourist destination.

Interviewer: So, what kind of support would you like to get from the government?

Interviewee: For now, in this pandemic situation, many people have lost their job, many businesses are bankrupt, we atleast want some compensation or some kind of financial support from the government. If Corona hit us continuously, it is very hard to survive.

Interviewer: What kind of training facilities are offered by the government for businesses like you?

Interviewee: we have been offered training related to health and hygiene, service and management and also the managerial training.

Appendix 5:

Name of Interviewee: Nirjal Subedi

Name of Hotel: AM/PM Organic Café, Pokhara

Organizational Position: Owner

Name of Interviewers: Anu Khatri/Kopila Pudasaini

Mode of Interview: Whatsapp audio

Date/Time of Interview: 08 April 2021, 15:15 pm (Local time of Denmark)

Interviewer: Please tell us something about you and your occupation/business. What position do you hold?

Interviewee: I am an owner of an Organic café, where we offer organic coffee, fresh juices and many more. We use organic products that are grown locally. We only use the ingredient that has been grown without using any chemicals or pesticides.

Interviewer: What do you think about overall tourism in Pokhara? Can you elaborate to us about adventure tourism also?

Interviewee: I think Adventure or let's say overall tourism is a synonym for Pokhara. We have a lot of international as well as local tourists. The major source of income is tourism in Pokhara. Small businesses like ours will not survive in the long run without the tourists. Adventure tourism is about experiencing the destination through physical participation. I have guests, they mostly come for hiking and paragliding.

Interviewer: What kind of opportunities did you see in this city so that you are running your business here?

Interviewee: This city has a mesmerizing landscape that attracts lots of tourists. The business is stable during off seasons and boomed during peak season. So at least if we manage to run our business during peak season then we don't have to worry for the rest. I think there is an opportunity for growth.

Interviewer: What kind of opportunities can local people have due to tourism in Pokhara?

Interviewee: Employment opportunity for sure as well as personality growth. For example: As a tourist guide, I have seen a lot of growth in their personalities as well. People who do not have an education & they speak English very well.

Interviewer: What kind of changes have you seen in Pokhara due to tourism? Can you offer examples of how things have changed? An example of a positive change? An example of negative change?

Interviewee: Pokhara has been changed massively during the years. The infrastructure and technology have been developed due to tourism. There are many five-star hotels, pitch road, cycle lanes and a lot of tourism activities like paragliding, bungee, etc.,

As I mentioned before the growth in people and employment are the positive changes.

As a negative change I would say the culture is changing, I mean people are trying to become western, mostly youngsters. During peak season the place is overcrowded and also gets polluted. In order to develop adventure tourism, people are destroying nature. For example, the adventure tourism market is getting bigger and opportunist and due to that people from other districts of Nepal come here to seek jobs and due to that housing capacity is getting lesser as well as expensive and they ruin the farming lands to make houses.

Interviewer: How do you work with other stakeholders of tourism? Are there any types of collaborations to receive your guests?

Interviewee: Yes, we are collaborating with the locals and one of the five-star hotels. The ingredients that we used are provided by locals. The guests from the hotel are recommended to visit our café where we also offer discounts.

Interviewer: What is your opinion about other stakeholders' role in tourism development? How and Why?

Interviewee: Stakeholders like local residents, competitors, media, government, etc. have a vital role in tourism development. Without them we cannot survive, and we help each other at times.

When I opened my café, I took help from the media partners for a promotion. Likewise, in order to promote the place, the media and government plays a huge role.

Interviewer: Do you think the whole community of Pokhara is benefitted from Adventure-based Tourism? And if so, how (example). If not, why do you think it is so? (all the communities of Pokhara, equal development or unequal development) ...

Interviewee: I think to some extent yes, they are benefitted. For example: development of infrastructure, technology has helped them. But at the same time not everyone is into tourism. People here are also dependent upon other occupations like agriculture. And when the land is being destroyed it is difficult for the people for farming. Sometimes the place gets overcrowded which is uncomfortable for the locals.

What is your individual/organizational role as a business owner to reduce negative impacts in tourism development in Pokhara?

Interviewee: As an owner I try not to destroy nature as much as possible and the customer whoever visits us, they can read our story about it. Once in a month we from the café, go to collect the trash from touristic places. Even in our cafe, we divide the degradable wastages and plastic wastages. From the degradable wastage's, we make it compost and exchange it with our organic supplier that I mentioned above. This is a win-win situation and reduces the cost for both parties.

Interviewer: Do you think tourism is enough to develop a community?

Interviewee: In my opinion, a place like Pokhara that is full of natural beauty is being destroyed when people have to build hotels for the tourists. That is why I don't think it is enough but yes in an adequate amount it is very helpful.

Appendix 6:

Name of Interviewee: Mahesh Lamsal

Local Resident

Name of Interviewers: Anu Khatri/Kopila Pudasaini

Mode of Interview: Watsapp audio

Date/Time of Interview: 12 April 2021, 13:00 pm (Local time of Denmark)

Interviewer: What do you think about tourism in Pokhara?

Interviewee: Pokhara has always been one of the most famous tourist destinations not only in Nepal but also in south Asia for its natural beauty, cool weather and economic tour packages. In addition to this Pokhara is the gateway for most adventurous tourism including more than 10 trekking's and hundreds of one day hiking spots. I believe Pokhara is one of the most visited places in Nepal every year by both national and international tourists.

Interviewer: What do you think about development in Pokhara? Do you think the existing development is due to tourism?

Interviewee: Talking precisely as of Nepal, Pokhara is the second developed city after Kathmandu in terms of basic infrastructures like health, education, transportation and many more. Tourism makes the highest contribution to the overall revenue that Pokhara city alone makes yearly. I agree that the existing development is contributed more than 60% by the tourism industry in Pokhara.

Interviewer: How has Tourism changed the city in terms of development? Examples related to economic, social, environmental and others if possible. (Positive or negative changes).

Interviewee: Positive changes: locals are slowly becoming more interactive and economically independent with the concept of eco-tourism and homestay. Their earnings have been upgraded in comparison to 5/10 years ago.

Negative changes: celebrations, alcoholism, smoking have been a serious problem amongst youth who are being influenced by the way tourists enjoy and celebrate their visit to any places.

Interviewer: Do you know about Adventure tourism? Have you seen and experienced any kind of adventure tourism in Pokhara?

Interviewee: Pokhara is ranked no. 1 in terms of adventure tourism in Nepal. Adventure tourism in Pokhara includes Nepal's second highest bungee jumping, only canyoning, zip flyer and paragliding in Nepal. Additionally rafting, mountain biking and gateway Annapurna circuit trek which is believed to be the most adventurous and most visited trek in Nepal. Personally, I have made 4 major trekking's as a part of adventure tourism.

Interviewer: Do you think adventure tourism in Pokhara has increased more opportunities for locals? And if so, how (example). If not, why do you think it is so?

Interviewee: This is for sure. Adventure tourism has increased opportunities for locals. Being the center for adventure tourism, Pokhara hosts thousands of tourists every year and this way locals are being benefited a lot in Terms of their income, operating small or large tourism related businesses ranging from operators to local restaurants and local culture and handcrafts and strong aid on promoting the local market and its product. Economic contribution and promoting local business and products are the direct opportunities locals are getting in Pokhara from this sort of adventure tourism.

Interviewer: What role do you think you have in tourism development in Pokhara?

Interviewee: I am personally not related to the tourism field but to develop tourism in Pokhara, I encourage my friends from other regions to visit here. I also go to tourism cultural programs conducted every year. I can do nothing more than that because it's the duty of tourism related officials.

Interviewer: What is your role as a responsible citizen to reduce negative impacts of tourism in Pokhara?

Interviewee: As a responsible citizen, I understand we need to help the government and follow their guidelines on proper waste management, but it is not possible that only I take the initiatives forward and others not take it. They do the good things for one day and the next day, they leave it. I don't think my individual activities count.

Interviewer: What do you think about the role of government in development?

Interviewee: I think the government is the one who makes every decision on this country so it must be the government to see tourism. Government should be responsible for the infrastructure development, strategy making, funding and implementing the plan and policies related to tourism development.

Interviewer: Do you think that tourism stakeholders such as tour operators, hotellers, guiders are contributing to local development?

Interviewee: Yes, because they are providing job opportunities to locals, paying tax to the government. And not at the same time because business is self-centered in most of the cases and we don't have any strict laws regarding the stakeholders and how they can contribute to local development like sustainable environment policy, EIA, pollution, etc.

Interviewer: Is there any community involvement in adventure tourism development planning procedures? What types, when and how?

Interviewee: Yes, I can see the local representative attending the meeting with the authority, and he is the one who presents all the initiatives, problems, issues, and suggestions related to tourism development in the community. It is not possible that all the locals put their voice forward, so he represents the whole community. However, I have not seen the local representative asking the locals for any suggestions regarding this.

Appendix 7:

Name of Interviewee: Ganga Bimali

Local Resident: (Self empowered women)

Name of Interviewer: Anu Khatri/Kopila Pudasaini

Mode of Interview: Messenger audio

Date/Time of Interview: 12 April 2021, 9:00 am (Local time of Denmark)

Interviewer: Can you tell us something about you, your education and your occupation?

Interviewee: My name is Bimali, I am a local resident of a small village in western part of Pokhara. I don't have much education. I just had a secondary education and got married. I am a housewife with two children of age 5 and 3. My husband works as a tourist guide in Pokhara and I utilize my free time by knitting Scarves and shawls.

Interviewer: How did you learn it and where do you sell them? If yes, where? Or are you doing it for yourself?

Interviewee: At the very beginning I started knitting for myself and for my kids. Later on, the Women Empowerment Organization and local government initiated a training for women who want to empower themselves. So, I took three months of training and started it as a small business from home.

A friend of mine has a Local garment shop in Pokhara city and she has so many tourist customers who want to buy handmade things. So, I sell them through my friend's shop and earn income and sometimes my husband's sell them on the way while taking tourists to the destination.

Interviewer: How did this NGO and local government help you further? Did they help to find the market to earn the income by selling them? Or how did they help you in general?

Interviewee: They only helped us by providing the training. Further, they did nothing for us. I, including all the trained women, didn't find the market to sell our products. Some women, later on find jobs in garment by themselves in the city (Pokhara) and some women like us are doing something while staying home.

Interviewer: How does it help you in your livelihood?

Interviewee: Through selling those items on a local market I got some income back through which I can spend the money on my own. I am independent now and do not need to ask my husband for money.

Interviewer: What is your future plan? Do you want to open your own business, or you don't have any plans yet?

Interviewee: I have a dream to be a shop owner in Pokhara and see my products directly to the tourists if I get some business loan from the government. I want to work in partnership with those women who really want to do the business. Through which I can also employ some women who can knit and who are in need of a job.

Interviewer: Do you know about Adventure tourism? Have you seen and experienced any kind of adventure tourism in Pokhara?

Interviewee: I don't know much about adventure tourism, but I have some knowledge on it because my husband is a tourist guide and he sometimes tell me about trekking, mountaineering and other activities. Most of the tourists come for trekking, so I believe tourists are more fascinated by these kinds of adventure activities. Every day I can see so many paragliders in the sky, which is also an adventure.

Interviewer: Do you think tourism in Pokhara helps you to uplift your income?

Interviewee: Yes, because tourists buy my products directly through the shop and benefit indirectly through them. I also ask my friend regarding the demands of tourists as well so that I can knit more items according to their demand. Many of our friends from our village do the same because they also want to generate some income through selling them in a tourist market. On the other hand, my husband also works in this sector through which he is earning for the family.

Interviewer: What do you think about development in Pokhara? Examples related to economic, social, environmental and others if possible. (Positive or negative changes).

Interviewee: Pokhara is very developed due to tourism. Many local people like us get job opportunities and market our products. There is an improvement in schools and education, health system, transportation, availability of water and so on. I don't know about these terms but yes when we go hiking to Sarangkot and fewa lakes, we see lots of garbage nearby.

Interviewer: What kind of opportunities can the local community have due to tourism in Pokhara?

Interviewee: Local people are getting job opportunities in a tourism sector, like my husband. Local products for example, dairy products, vegetables, garments have been promoted through tourism. It has a great effect on agriculture development also. Local villagers are more keen to do their own farming i.e; dairy farming, vegetables, fruits and so on. Their products also get a place in the local market for instance; local people collaborate with hotels and restaurants to sell their products.