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DESTINATION MANAGEMENT OF A TREKKING ROUTE
Case Rara National Park, Nepal

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ABSTRACT

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<p>Rapidly growing tourism industries, nowadays, are mostly focusing on the destination management process to introduce or develop many new types of tourism activities and facilities. Destination holds the key role, as good management and planning is essential to make any destination visible and known to everyone globally. Nepal, being a landlocked country, has many potentialities in developing mountaineering tourism in the mountainous regions with an aim to bear the consequences of a tourism product. Managing and promoting any tourism destination means facing new challenges in every step of a development process where it is necessary to plan any development strategy at the beginning of the development process to make management proper and easy.</p> <p>The aim of this study was to know the impact of tourism on the host destination affecting different aspects within the destination as well as to manage any destination by creating sustainability among the host nation and the visitors. The author has used secondary references with the case study of a typical destination which is Rara National Park, Mugu district, Nepal. Secondary data were collected from the National Statistical Bureau in order to examine the current situation of the chosen destination and also to know the famous tourism activities available in it.</p> <p>Since many local destinations have absorbed many benefits through tourism business, they are trying to find new technologies to improve the tourism facilities and services. The promotion of the destination is a very essential factor in the management process to regulate any business established in it. However, for the better future and prosperous destination, government organizations should work together with private organizations in mutual understanding, co-ordinate and lead private sectors to the development path.</p>		
Key words Adventure, destination, information technology, management, marketing, mountaineering, national parks, rural tourism, tourism aspects		

ABBREVIATIONS

ADME	Association of Destination Management Executives
BOD	Board of Director
CRS	Computer Reservation System
DDC	District Development Committee
DHQ	District Headquarter
DMC	destination Company
DMO	destination Management Organization
GDS	Global Distribution System
GLOF	Glacial Outburst and Flooding
MOCTCA	Ministry Of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation
NTB	National Tourism Board
NTB	Nepal Tourism Board
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Corporation
TAAN	Trekking Agencies Association Nepal
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural organization
UNFCO	United Nations Field Coordination Office
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
USAID	United States Agencies for International Development
VDC	Village Development Committee

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1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism development can help in the management process of any destination, as the fact is that it brings some changes into the destination with it. A concept of tourism development can create both positive and negative impacts on every aspect of the destination management process. It also has the potential to generate economic opportunities as well as decrease them. Tourism destinations can be considered tourist attraction points which are totally depending on their geographical structures as well as their surroundings. Mostly the tourism sectors found in a destination are closely monitored by the tourism industries. Destination is seen at the central point in the context of travel and tourism which means destination management is also equally important for tourism development in the destination.

The chapters of this report are mainly focused on some general terms which are relevant in the destination management process such as geographical structure of a destination which resembles a specific tourism sector for the visitor's attraction. Other subsectors are also very important in the destination management process. Good management and planning of the development strategies of tourism destination deals and study about every aspect of tourism impact help to understand the concept of demand and supply. In addition, tourism development mostly focuses on the tourism sectors, tourism demand and economy whereas destination management or developments are concerned with the geographical structure, physical environment and tourism supply. Therefore, with this kind of relation there are more good advantages for both tourism development and the destination management process. The study also shows that the main responsibility of destination management organizations (DMO) is to manage the destination in every aspect of tourism consequences and its better future. The concluding chapter discusses and focuses on the concept that in every tourism destination there must be full co-ordination among local and national organizations for the development purposes that will lead to better policies and gain interests of private sectors.

Hence, tourism development and destination management are two different terms which are related and dependent on each other in the management process. There are some confusing

terms with tourism destination such as destination sites and tourism attractions where destination sites refer to physical and cultural limitation and the attraction could be an object, person, place and a concept that draws people either geographically or through social media. It is a very essential concept for the development of any tourism destination because it holds the key fact which is marketing the destination. Since destination is an important fact in travel and tourism business, good planning and management are necessary in order to provide a good quality of memories which is the life time experience for its consumers. It will also aid the development of the destination and the life standard of local people as well. Even though it is difficult to create sustainability in the destination, due to some vulnerable aspect, it is possible through the management process. Destination management by tourism development is a long term process, therefore, mutual understanding among the host nation and the local people is most important. Many researchers have spent decades in order to research the destinations and have found many key facts as a tool kit for the development process which can be utilized according to the geographical structure of tourism.

The aim of the study is to know the impact of tourism on the destination management process. It involves a thorough study of how tourism has affected different aspects of the destination economically, physically, politically, culturally and environmentally. It further emphasizes a broader concept to know the importance of tourism development in a particular destination. The objective of this report is to examine the potentiality of a certain tourism sector in the destination and to identify the relation between private and governmental tourism sectors on the destination. The impact of tourism development on Rara Lake, Mugu district and the tourist activities, behaviour and attitudes towards trekking in Nepal will be discussed in the research work. The positive and negative aspects of tourism on a destination can aid the better understanding of the subject. Also the geographical structure of tourism and the choice of certain tourism sector on the destination will be considered in the report in accomplishing this task. The author used the secondary based research method such as textbooks, eBooks, secondary data, web pages and journals during the research.

2 MOUNTAIN TOURISM IN RARA NATIONAL PARK MUGU DISTRICT

Rara Lake is situated in Mugu district in the north-west part of Nepal within the territory of Rara National Park. Rara National Park is Nepal’s smallest national park that spreads over an area of 106 square kilometres in Mugu district which is a mountainous district of western Nepal. The main attraction of this national park is Rara Lake itself which is also known as the queen of all the lakes in Nepal. It lies 2990 meters high above sea level and covers about 10.8 square kilometres of the whole area. The data shows that around Rara Lake more than 214 species of birds, 500 species of flowers, including herbs and 20 different species of mammals are found. (Rara Lake, short Trek Nepal 2014.)



GRAPH 1. Map of Nepal (Adapted from google.com 2014)

Graph 1 above shows all the five development regions with red stripe and all the national parks with green marks whereas a red dot represents the administrative capitals of the districts. The Rara National park is situated in the Northwest part of the country and the administrative capital of the area is Jumla. Therefore, the northern part of the country is fully covered with mountains and bordered with Tibet, China. (Nepaltravelcentre.com 2015)

Geographically Mugu district of Nepal is a mountainous region with cultural bio-diversity. The southern part of Mugu has a dense forest with ancient blue pine, spruce and cedar trees. The majority of inhabitants in these parts are Hindus whose ethnical groups are Brahmins, Chhetris and Thakuris. The northern part of Mugu district is a dry land which lies in a vast rain shadow zone and the inhabitants are of Tibetan origin, who follow Buddhism as a religion. Due to its geographical structure and a path to Tibet this region has lots of routes which we can use as a development tool improving the routes for tourists to follow. (Rara and Jumla 2014)



GRAPH 2: Map of Mugu district (Adapted from google.com)

Graph 2 above is the geographical map of Mugu district, a part of Karnali zone, situated in the mountain region of Nepal. Gamgadhi is the headquarter of Mugu district. The biggest lake of Nepal, Rara Lake lies in Mugu District, the whole district is surrounded by mountains and the highest peak has the height of 6053 meter lies in the northern part of the district. Rara Lake can be seen in the middle of the southern part of the district with blue colour, and Karnali river, the longest river of Nepal, can be seen crossing the district from north to south in the middle of the district. (ncthakur.itgo.com 2015.)

2.1 Trekking in Nepal and the impact of climate change in mountain tourism

Renowned worldwide as a land locked country, Nepal is naturally beautiful with lots of mountains, hills, rivers, valleys, forests and cultural bio-diversity. Trekking is the most popular activity in Nepal. It is also a chance to meet new people from around the globe and share the glimpse of beautiful nature along with the paths. Some trekking routes of Nepal are good examples of well managed trekking routes around the world. Mostly the young and adults are seen accepting the challenge to travel or hike on such difficult paths in the Himalayas of Nepal. Not every small village along the routes has sufficient facilities for travelers such as accommodation, which is the most common concern for every traveller. Therefore, camping equipment and an adequate amount of food are very essential in some routes with guides and porters. Trekking is one of the best ways to know or learn about any place, the people, their culture, food, arts and architecture. Trekking here along the path, we will be able to meet different local people, villages and their hospitality towards their guests personally. Getting to know people in person and experience their hospitality is the best way to learn or to know about them. (Welcome Nepal 2014)

Being the first timer to experience trekking in Nepal, it is very important to know every aspect of adventure, which is ultimately found on the way. Since it is a long journey by foot, one must be aware of sudden changes. It would be good for the travelers to plan the trekking before arriving in Nepal and it will be much easier with the group, as it would be a new place with new culture and also for the security reasons (World nomads 2015). Mountaineering tourism in Nepal is the most challenging topic because of its nature which is because of the adverse effect of the climate change. This can affect tourism in many ways. The appeal to visit a destination, transportation, tourist satisfaction, and health and safety issues could be question marked. Climate is one of the most important attributes of mountain tourism or trekking. Most of the types of mountain recreational activities are permanently dependent on climatic condition. There are three broad categories in which the climate affects mountain tourism. One is natural hazards which can bring a destructive impact on the tourism destination. Health is

another important concern for the travellers and it is also important for any tourism destination and bio-diversity which are related to the local people of the destination and the visitors. If a farmer could not harvest their cultivation, then it will also affect the visitors and the appeal of the destination. Therefore some strategies can be adapted in order to cope with disasters created by the climate change in the mountain region of Nepal. (Nepal 2011, 3)

TABLE 1. Examples of climate-induced impacts on mountain destinations in South Asia (adapted from Nepal tourism and development review 2011, 5)

Types of impacts	Geographical region	Tourism implications
Long term glacier melt and retreat	Central and Eastern development region in Nepal, Khumbu and Langtang	Visually less appealing destination, Exposure to natural hazard due to glacial lake outburst and flooding (GLOF)
Seasonal wet weather	Throughout high Himalaya, most notably in central Nepal	Periods of high snowfall triggering avalanches with loss of life and property and damage to roads and trails in surrounding areas, more fuel-wood at higher elevations
Seasonal dry weather	Mountains in western Nepal	Exposure to fire hazard threats to endangered wildlife affecting wildlife-based tourism loss of agricultural productivity affecting linkages between tourism and farm productions

Table 1 shows the types of impacts by a climate change on different geographical regions of Nepal and its consequences on tourism development process. Research shows that the mountains in the western part of Nepal (at the bottom of the table) indicate the climate

impacts. For instance, the seasonal dry weather can cause a fire hazard which is destructive in nature as it also threatens the endangered wildlife. In addition, it also affects the tourism related things such as affecting the productivity of agriculture, which directly or indirectly affect both local people and the tourists. Since Mugu district is a mountainous region in western Nepal it has the impact of seasonal dry weather. (Nepal 2011, 5)

Nepal, on one side, is an under developing country and on the other side has the potential of tourism income generating power hub. Since Nepal is a mountainous country, eight of the world's highest mountains are in Nepal which makes trekking one of the most popular activities in this beautiful country. Most trekkers go through altitudes between 1000 and 4000 meters, while it is not only the beautiful landscapes on the trail that captivate the trekkers but also the local people from different ethnic groups and also the visitors from different nations, as well as an opportunity to experience Nepal's rich cultural diversity in a better way by walking to see and experience (Welcome Nepal 2015). Managing any trekking routes or trails is a challenging subject to handle. Adoption of good strategies can help a lot to cope with these situations, which can be natural disaster, physical environment of the destination and cultural bio-diversity of the local people. Since it is not possible without the help of local people, there are some major responsibilities which they have to consider in every change which tourism brings to the destination. Climate change is the most challenging and important topic in any mountain tourism recreational activities management and it is an unavoidable impact. One must always be prepared to cope with the sudden changes in the destination. Adaptation and mitigation measures are needed to be more realistic, which completely depend upon the local conditions such as economic resources, information infrastructure and data base, which help to determine the adaptation capacity of a destination. It also helps in the preparation of new strategies, as adaptation measures are limited according to the mountain tourism destinations which are located at extreme environments. (Nepal 2011, 6-14.)

2.2 Trekking to Rara National Park

Rara Lake trek can be accessed using both short and long trekking trails; the most famous type is the short trek. This trekking route associates with an hour flight to Nepalgunj city in the western development region of Nepal followed up by a 35 minute flight to Talcha Airport, the northwest part of the country and a two hour trek to Rara Lake, which is the center point. The longest trail is trekking from Jumla, since there are several options while choosing the trail. It fully depends on the trekkers. The most famous tourist activity found in the destination is trekking itself and the only option of accommodation found here is camping and lodging. The features of this trail are similar to other trekking trails of other part of the country. It involves bird watching, wildlife, vegetation and beautiful land scape. The best months for the visitors in this national park are from February to April and October to November. The prices for visitors have been divided as (Nepalese currency) Rupees 25 per person entry, SAARC nationals Rupees 1500 per person entry and Rupees 3000 per person entry for foreigners. (Nepal Tourism Board 2015.)

Trekking to Rara Lake National Park is not as famous as other trekking routes found in the country. The matter of fact behind this is that it is not a difficult trail for the trekkers. Rara National Park is a conservation area and the surroundings of the lake are famous for the view where we can find varieties of vegetation in the forest, rare animals such as red panda, snow leopard and different species of flowers. Here, the people and their living art are totally different from western culture which will surprise any foreigner. The main occupation in this area includes animal husbandry, agriculture and business. The difficulty for the trekkers here is accommodation, since it has been made a conservation area in 1976. The two villages around the lake have been moved to settle in other places. Therefore, trekkers should be fully prepared with all the gears available with them before travelling and with a professional trekking guide. These trails are mostly used for travelling to Tibet by the local people as well as the foreigners. There are two trekking trails from Jumla to reach Rara: one is from Sinjha valley which holds the historical values and the other one is through Chauthapina. Both of the routes are good to observe the life style and the geographical structure of Mugu district. Another option to reach Rara National Park is to take a chartered helicopter. Rara is the must

destination for the trekkers wishing to enjoy pristine environment in an isolated location.
(Forestry Nepal.org 2015.)

3 TOURISM DESTINATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Development of tourism destinations is based on research, planning and management which directly depend upon the different aspects of tourism including both positive and negative aspects. There are different types of tourism impacts in a destination. So, it requires proper planning and strategies that can add value in the economic development of the destination as well as in socio-cultural, environmental and political aspect of tourism. Therefore, some non-profitable organizations with the help of local organizations such as Destination Management Organisation, DMOs, National Tourism Organisation, NTOs and Destination Management Committee, DMCs are always more concerned about forming new development strategies for the destination according to the tourism demand and supply. The main challenge for them is to understand and keep sustainability in the destination despite of tourism impacts in the destination. Tourism comes in different shapes and forms, as it is described in terms of physical, environmental and socio-cultural aspects. (Godfrey & Clarke 2000, 4-5.)

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries around the globe where tourism destination management planning is a step by step process as well as market evaluation with the concept of tourism demand and supply. Their main target is to recognise or identify the gaps in local tourism products or markets and fill those gaps, often called 'system approach'. Therefore, it is a long term goal where the destination is developed systematically through a step by step process. Tourism development in a destination requires careful planning and management, since tourism may not work if wrongly planned or mismanaged. In some destinations there might be great local potential and just need a little guidance on how to plan in a systematic and organised way. According to Godfrey and Clarke although tourism creates significant development opportunities in a destination it might still fail to promote tourism if all the good components of good development strategies are not considered in the process. Here are the important components which should be adopted on a step by step process for tourism development on a destination. The first one is the tourism development strategy, tourism policy and committee structure, tourism resource audit, tourism market analysis, tourism opportunities. It also has the constraints like development goals and objectives, tourism

development action steps, tourism marketing plan and monitoring and review procedures. Hence, the good components of development strategies should always be closely monitor and apply on the destination management process. (Godfrey, K & Clarke, C 2000, vi-vii)

Most destinations develop tourism because of its economic potential, since it creates job opportunities with minimal start-up costs and it can also help to conserve national heritage, protect environment and also contribute to an improvement in the quality of life of local people. However, tourism also has down sides provided the fact that it is seasonal by nature and many jobs are related to it. There are also chances that the profits can leak away to external suppliers, enhance social problems, increase pollution, lead to overcrowding and traffic congestion in different environments. Like any other industry, tourism requires sound knowledge of both opportunities and constraints it represents to a destination and as for the destination management process it is necessary to understand tourism's impacts. (Godfrey & Clarke 2000, 16.)

Thus, besides all the destination management strategies and planning for the development reasons, destination also faces the challenge of other tourism destinations' competitiveness. Most of the destinations have focused on more traditional reviews of competitiveness in economic aspects but the true ability of a tourism destination to compete also involves its social, cultural, political, technological and environmental strengths. In general, tourism destination is properly managed in order to compete and also to increase the tourism expenditure to attract more tourists while providing them with satisfying memorable experiences. It is also important to do so in a profitable way. While enhancing the well-being of local people to preserve the natural capital of the destination for future generations. (Brent & Crouch2015, 2)

3.1 Environmental impacts

According to the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP), the relationship between tourism and the environment is complex whether it is a natural or man-made tourist attraction

or destination. Most impacts are related with the construction of infrastructure such as road, airport and tourism recreational facilities. The environment is the most vulnerable factor for tourism development process, it hampers the natural resources, causes pollution and creates physical impacts in the destination. Tourism also has positive impacts on the environmental factor as it has the potential to create or develop environmental protection and conservation ideas in the destination. The destination's environment in all its forms is often the key reason for a visitor's attraction in an area, as too much change may affect tourism in a destination management process. Both the natural and man-made environment are capable of attracting visitors to a destination. Although it is difficult to deal with the environmental factor in the destination, it is possible to create sustainability among visitors and the environment. Therefore proper planning and strategies should be made and implemented on the destination management process, for both natural and physical environment. (UNEP 2015.)

Tourism development can put pressure on natural resources when it increases the consumption in certain areas where resources are already scarce. The most vulnerable factors are water resources, local resources such as food, energy and other raw materials. It can also cause land degradation in important land resources including minerals, fossil fuels, forests and wildlife. Increased construction of tourism recreational facilities will lead to the pressure on these resources and also on scenic landscapes, where forests often suffer from negative impacts of tourism in the form of deforestation, caused by fuel wood. The negative impacts caused by tourism development in a destination are mainly because of lots of consumption and the increased construction of infrastructures. The United Nations Environment Program UNEP puts it this way:

Negative impacts from tourism occur when the level of visitor use is greater than the environment's ability to cope with this use within the acceptable limits of change. Uncontrolled conventional tourism poses potential threats to many natural areas around the world. It can put enormous pressure on an area and lead to impacts such as soil erosion, increased pollution, discharges into the sea, natural habitat loss, increased pressure on endangered species and heightened vulnerability to forest fires. It often puts a strain on water resources, and it can force local populations to compete for the use of critical resources. (UNEP 2015.)

The above quoted information pointed to the fact that a negative impact of tourism occurs when the level of visitor use is greater than the environment's ability to cope and it can put large pressure on an area which will lead to impacts. However, there are many successful examples of this above mentioned process to control and protect natural environments, to improve environmental management planning and to operate tourism facilities in a way that minimizes the environmental impacts, which can all lead to the development of the destination. Tourism development also helps to create environmental awareness, tourism contributes to the protection and preservation of the environment and also creates alternative employment for the local people. (Godfrey & Clarke 2000, 30-31.)

Thus, knowing the fact that tourism development can affect the vulnerable environment of the destination and proper planning can control the effect, it is necessary for any destination to plan or manage in a way that it can attract visitors without hampering an environment's original state and preserve it for future generations. Tourism industries can contribute to environmental conservation through financial contribution, improved environmental management planning, environmental awareness raising, protection and preservation, alternative employment and regulatory measures of environment and its surroundings. Here, it helps to offset negative impacts on the destination by controlling the number of tourist activities and movement of visitors within the protected areas, and it can limit the impacts on the eco-system and help maintain integrity and vitality of the site. Therefore, an in-depth analysis should be done on the destination about the maximum sustainable visitor capacity and a limit should be established ensuring visitors have little impact on the sensitive environment and animal habitats. (UNEP 2015.)

3.2 Socio-cultural impacts

Travel and tourism often cause socio-cultural impacts on the destination, either positive impacts or negative impacts and we have been seeing this or hearing this since travel and tourism actually started. The study in socio-cultural aspect shows that the host destination is always the weaker party and it is difficult to understand whether it is a positive or negative

impact on the destination. According to the United Nations Environmental Program, UNEP, ‘the impacts arise when tourism brings about changes in value systems, behavior and thereby threatens indigenous identity’ and on the other hand, it also the beneficial points for the destination such as cultural diversity, employment for the local people and rise in education level of the host destination (UNEP 2014). Similarly, the environmental aspect and economic aspect are also difficult to measure, e.g. how far does tourism development influence the host population of the destination. Demonstrating effects and stereotypes are the two challenging issues which go along with the development of the tourism in the destination as local people may tolerate a few tourists who behave as if they were in their home country, for instance, the dress code. If the number increases it may be considered annoying by the host destination. The socio-cultural change can be both real and perceived, and most of the time in tourism, the socio impact develops through straightforward direct interpersonal encounters, or by the result from indirect or secondary association. Therefore it is very important to understand that social encounter has more reasons to get good impression on a destination and its visitors. (Godfrey & Clarke 2000, 23)

TABEL 2. Doxey’s irritation index model (1976) (adapted from googlebook.com)

STAGE OF HOST APPROACH TO VISITORS	WHAT THIS MEANS
Euphoria	Visitors are welcome and there is little planning
Apathy	Visitors are taken for granted and contact becomes more formal
Annoyance	Saturation is approached and the local people have misgivings. Planners attempt to control via increasing infrastructure rather than limiting growth
Antagonism	Open expression of irritation and planning is remedial yet promotion is increased to offset deteriorating reputation of the resort

According to the modified tourism ‘Irridex’ (Doxy’s irritation index 1976) there are certain levels of stages through which a tourist has to go in the destination. The first level is the level of euphoria: the local people believe that tourism will bring prosperity in their economic

standard by creating employment opportunities. The second level is the level of apathy: it is also a certain belief or excitement of local people of the destination to benefit and become more formal with the help of tourism development. The third level is the level of irritation: it begins when tourism industries are allowed to pass the level and the local people are not able to handle the situation or circumstances in the destination. The fourth level is the level of antagonism: when the level of irritation increases in the destination the local people begin to see the tourist as the harbinger that has bad influences, because of an increase in tax, corrupted local youths and the destroyed mutual politeness of the destination. And the final level: in this situation people have forgotten all the prosperity which tourism has brought in their homes, local people have to believe and live with the fact that it is never going to change again. They might still be able to welcome the tourists who are completely different from the ones they were happy with before. If the destination is large enough to handle the mass tourism then it will continue in the destination. (Godfrey & Clarke 2000, 25.)

Unlike any other major aspect of tourism this aspect has its own significance in order to develop and manage a tourism destination. All tourism activities, whether spending holidays, business travel, conferences, adventure travel or ecotourism, they all need to be sustainable, as it is described that tourism respects local people and travellers, cultural heritage and the environment (UNESCO, 2015). Although it is a difficult process to manage and determine the consequences it is possible to reduce the stress created by tourism in a destination. Therefore certain steps can be implemented in the destination, such as cultural conservation program, revaluation of culture and tradition and the local people can also utilize the facilities developed for tourism in the destination. Besides all these factors created by the impacts of tourism on the destination, the most important fact is that it also helps to concentrate on the cultural diversity which has always led to development and prosperity of the destination. The most interesting topic these days is peace tourism which also can add value or benefit the social structure of the destination. UNEP puts it this way:

In the first Global Summit on Peace through Tourism (Nov. 2000), more than 450 world leaders of the travel and tourism industry ratified an "Amman Declaration" that recognized travel and tourism as a global peace industry. The document committed itself to building a culture of peace through tourism that supports tourism as a fundamental human activity, free of undue restriction and respectful of human differences and cultural diversity. "Peaceful relationships

among all people should be promoted and nurtured through sustainable tourism," the document said. It called for protection and restoration of historical monuments and landmarks, accessible to all people, as "valuable assets for humanity and legacies for future generations." Preservation and wise use of the environment, coupled with ecological balance, "are essential to the future of tourism" while acknowledging "ancient wisdom and care for the Earth." (UNEP 2015.)

The above mentioned quotation clearly mentions that the global summit on peace through tourism has supported tourism as a fundamental human activity, free of undue restriction, respectful of human differences and cultural diversity. This will direct the destination in a peaceful relationship among all people, while it is promoted and nurtured through sustainable tourism. Hence, protecting and restoring the historical monuments and landmarks for future generations and making accessible to all people as valuable assets can redefine the whole definition of cultural diversity. Tourism brings different peoples into contact with each other and as it has the educational element it can foster the understanding between peoples and their cultures and also provide cultural exchange between hosts and guests. Therefore it increases or develops the chances of mutual sympathy and understanding which help to reduce prejudices. (UNEP 2015.)

3.3 Economic impact of tourism on a destination

Tourism industries generate economic benefits to both the host destination and the home country itself. Most of the developing countries are motivated to develop or promote their home country as a tourism destination with the expectation of economic improvement. Similarly as other aspects of tourism in the destination the economic aspect also deals with negative as well as positive impacts, which are as difficult to determine or measure as other tourism impacts. As tourism is a fast growing industry these days and whenever there is a discussion about development, it is these features which still tend to receive the most attention. However, while tourism development undoubtedly supports employment, generates income and helps diversify destination economies, there is still the negative impact of economic aspects on the destination management process, as it affects each community in different

ways; while one place may be highly successful at tourism another may receive very little benefit. (Godfrey & Clarke 2000, 18-19.)

Tourism has many economic impacts on a destination as tourists contribute to sales, jobs, profits, tax revenues and income in an area, where the most direct effects occur within the primary tourism sectors such as accommodation, transportation and retail trades. The economic impact analysis of tourism activity normally focuses on the change in sales, income and employment in a destination or a region, as a result of tourism activity. Tourism activity also involves government costs for the development of infrastructure to better serve tourists as well as congestion and related costs borne by an individual in a community. Therefore, tourism's economic impact is an important consideration in the state, regional and community planning of economic development whereas it is also an important factor in marketing and management decisions, here the destination needs to understand the relative importance of tourism to their region, including tourism's contribution to the economic activity in the area. (Stynes 2015, 1-5.)

3.3.1 Positive impact of economic aspect

Since tourism business is the world's leading business nowadays it has the most benefit in the nation's economy as well as destination economy and it has the most beneficial points among any other incoming generating industries. Since it increases the tax revenue, economic growth and the living standard of local people, improving the balance of payments and employment opportunity in the destination. Employment opportunity is classified into two different categories in tourism business. One is direct employment; this is generated from the tourism business that provides services directly to the tourist such as an accommodation, catering, tourism expo and the business facilities. And the other one is indirect employment; these employments are related with the service provider and producers such as taxi services and shopkeepers. Hence economic benefits are the major motivation for including tourism as a part of a development strategy, as explained by Godfrey and Clarke below:

Relying on just one industry has proven to be problematic for many communities or destinations, particularly when that industry has gone into decline. Tourism is recognized as one industry which can help overcome the difficulties associated with the incumbent economic decline in these places'. As towns and cities are natural destinations for visitors, tourism is often complementary to its other functions and relatively clean in nature compared to more traditional manufacturing and extractive industries. (Godfrey & Clarke 2000, 21)

International tourism activity is often easier to measure than domestic tourism activity, as it involves customs immigration procedures and currency exchange. Many destinations or countries collect information from visitor arrivals at the frontier providing a good source of data relating to the volume of arrivals, country of origin and purpose of visit. They are thus providing valuable information for the economic analysis and due to tourism many services sectors have experienced growth in their economy. Even if tourism development impact on a host economy is generally positive it also carries some negative aspects, it is always important to establish how significant tourism spending is to an economy as it allows policy makers and planners to determine dependency and to develop strategies for the future. (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert & Wanhill 2008, 129-153.)

3.3.2 Negative impact of the economic aspect

Successful tourism relies on establishing a basic infrastructure such as roads, tourist recreational facilities and accommodation facilities. The cost of this usually falls in the hands of government, since it comes out from tax revenues. Jobs created by tourism are often seasonal and poorly paid, tourism also creates high consumer and land prices, which means high prices of basic needs such as food, land, transport and electricity. This may cause inflation thus causing negative impacts on the destination and over dependency on tourism which will lead to leakages of economy for instance tourists have a variety of tastes and they may demand different products which are not produced by the host destination. However, tourism is a multi income generating company and it benefits the whole nation, the local destination as well as the manufacturers of the goods and services. (Usatoday.com 2015.)

The production of tourist goods and services requires the commitment of resources that could otherwise be used for other alternative purposes. When tourism development substitutes one form of expenditure and economic activity for another, this is known as the displacement effect. It should be taken into account when the economic impact of tourism is being estimated as it can take place when tourism development is undertaken at the expense of another industry. Therefore while measuring the economic impact of tourism, it is founded upon series of assumptions, where an unrealistic assumption provides an unrealistic result. Data deficiencies are the most common negative impacts of tourism on the economy of the destination as secondary data are rarely adequate to meet the requirements of the more demanding and advanced economic measuring modes, in which researchers need to spend considerable time, effort and money. Hence, it is clear that measuring the economic impact on a destination is a difficult process and getting an exact result takes more time than expected. (Fletcher et al. 2008, 146-148.)

3.4 Impact on tourism demand and supply

Despite the needs of development and the strategies meant for the management, it is very essential that the nation must have certain goals and objectives which will or should be able to contribute their full strength for the prosperity and the success of the destination through tourism. It is the very initial point to have goals and objectives for any development planning, creating new strategies and even starting a new business. Therefore, any development reason should have certain goals and objectives to achieve for certain destination, it is important to keep in mind the demand of tourism and the potential tourism supply of the destination. Facilities' ownership, economic structure, investment and the nature of tourist facilities are all elements of tourism supply. However, these factors will not alone determine the impact of tourism; they need visitors to complete the supply and demand functions. Every destination is different and they respond differently to the demand and supply and not all tourists have the same impact on every destination. (Godfrey & Clarke 2000, 39-40.)

According to Copper 2008, “the definition of demand varies according to the subject perspective of the author and we need the various subjects and perspectives in order to understand fully tourism demand’.’ Therefore tourism demand actually consists of every perspective of life and the utility of the host destination is to fulfill each and every demand of the destination. In the sense of tourism development in the destination it is very much an important factor to understand because with the help of this understanding we will be able to create new strategies and manage the destination in a way that there will be sufficient tourism facilities, tourism products and financial activeness, in order to fulfill the demands of tourists. The concept of tourism demand has three main components that make total tourism demand clear in the destination. The first one is, effective or actual demand: it is the actual number of participants in tourism or those who are travelling and can be measured easily. The second is suppressed demand: it belongs to the type of people who do not travel for some reasons, it has two elements: as the first one is potential demand which refers to those who will travel at some future date if they there is change in their circumstances, the second is deferred demand in which demand has been postponed due to some problem. The third component of demand is no demand where people do not wish to travel or are unable to travel. (Copper et al. 2008, 33-34.)

Hence, tourism demand means an easy and safe access to the facilities and the services which they are willing to pay for. Since it is a difficult task to configure for the destination whether they are ready for it or not to provide or to fulfill the demand of every tourist they were expecting, it is the reason why a destination must understand the behavior attitudes of tourists and the potentiality of the destination to supply the demand of visitors. Tourism supply consists of four different components: natural resources and environment, the built environment, transportation and hospitality services and cultural resources. Thus we can say that tourism supply is a pulling factor of tourism, that is why it is very necessary to measure tourism demand to actually know the exact potentiality of the destination. Therefore the measurement of tourism demand is the concept of collecting market intelligence and managing information. In tourism, this often means using secondary data as the data produced by national or regional bodies combine with primary data through market survey. (Cooper 2008, 73)

3.5 Tourism sector in management planning

The tourism sector has an important role in the destination management process and it is also very difficult to determine and define as it varies according to the structure of tourism in different places or destinations. The tourism sector for the development of the destination influences and supports tourism demand and supply. In other words a tourism sector refers to every aspect of tourism industries and their products including tourist attraction, accommodation, transportation and the public sector organization. To achieve any goals and objectives for the development of tourism destination it is very necessary to understand the fact about the tourism sector so that we can concentrate on the making of new strategies. It is very important to keep in mind while making any strategies or planning for any tourism development that the reason is to consider any tourism sub-sectors to help or to maintain the main tourism sector on the reason. (Fyall et al. 2008, 303.)

Destination comes in all shapes and sizes and can be found in a variety of geographical settings such as in urban, rural and coastal environments. As with the other part of tourism system destinations are seen as both supply and demand context in that a destination represents a mixture of products and services that come together to meet the needs of tourists as supply of the destination or as places where tourists travel to in order to experience particular features of the destination, representing tourism demand. In the neat definition of destination it is unavoidable to introduce both supply and demand sided viewpoints. Supply definition identifies the destination as well as defines the geographical area which is understood by its visitors as a unique entity, with a political and legislative framework for tourism marketing and planning in the destination. This clearly means that the supply factor of tourism is completely dependent upon the geographical structure of destination. (Fyall et al. 2008, 475)

Thus, it is clear that the individual sectors of tourism are interlinked and to some extent are mutually dependent upon each other. One of the primary objectives of the public sector is to temper overambitious individual providers and sectors and to provide a strategic approach to product development, distribution and marketing for the overall benefits of the destination.

Here destination management organization DMO has a key role in controlling all the individual sub-sectors and managing them systematically in order to keep sustainability in the destination. Even if managing the tourism sector is a challenging and difficult process, it is possible only through proper management and planning which fully depend upon the sub-sectors' willingness to support the regional strategies of the regional tourism board RTB. It is very important to keep the reputation of the destination by all the tourism sectors either private or governmental sector. The tourism sector has to face the visitors directly they have the main responsibility to keep a good impression of the tourism destination among visitors. (Fyall et al. 2008, 304-305.)

4 MARKETING PROCESS FOR TOURISM DESTINATION

We market and promote a tourism destination in order to attract more and more tourists in the destination; it is a very important tool in the context of tourism development in the destination. In order to market the destination we should have a certain process in an appropriate way so that tourism development will be easy during marketing the destination and at the same time planning for the marketing process of the destination. It is obvious that we should have concrete planning for the marketing strategies, and apply marketing in the main tourism sector of the destination by branding the destination, which is possible through changing the traditional marketing to IT marketing today. When developing and planning marketing strategies, it is very essential to understand the market of the destination fully. According to Godfrey & Clarke “those communities which follow a more systematic and strategic approach to tourism development and marketing are more likely to achieve greater long term benefits” (Godfrey & Clarke 2000, 15).

Some believe that marketing is primarily associated with the forms of promotion and communication. The role of marketing is important for tourism organization operating in both public and private sectors, as they continue to strive to protect and improve their market share. Marketing any tourism destination needs a comprehensive evaluation of all aspects of the management, the tourism marketing including strategies and tools that may be applied to deliver the tourism product effectively and efficiently to satisfy the tourism consumer. Tourism marketing planning should be done with the respect of tourism product and also with the help of tactical and strategic planning. Tourism marketing planning refers to an act which is a systematic method of data collection, logical analysis and objective setting of the most appropriate direction for any organization, distributor or destination product. Besides the planning of marketing strategies it is necessary to understand the destination market in order to manage it properly and systematically. The information communication technologies, ICT, developments have changed the best operational and strategic practices for organizations on a global level and altered the competitiveness of enterprises and regions around the world, which also add value to planning marketing strategies. There is also the need to produce a distinctive

identity or brand, which forms the basis of the positioning of a destination area, providing it with a personality and differentiating it from competitors. (Gilbert 2008, 506, 613, 623.)

The understanding of destination image is important for any destination marketing plan since a destination image has two closely related components. One is the perceptive or cognitive evaluations, which refer to the individual's own knowledge and benefits about the destination, and the second one is affective appraisals, which refer to the individual's feelings towards the destination. The marketing of a destination is complex because it is dealing not only with the tangible inventory of physical attributes such as natural geography, built environment and attractions, accommodation and transport facilities, but also intangible social and cultural factors. Traditionally the public sector has been involved in destination marketing through NTO, National Tourism Organization, a regional board such as Destination management organization (DMO) or local authorities but increasingly the trend is emerging where market agencies of conference and visitor bureaus are established for cities as such agencies are often founded by a mix of both private and public means. (Gilbert 2008, 611, 612.)

Tourism marketing these days prefers to brand a destination in order to attract tourists and their spending. The brand that is developed will use the destination's existing tourist attractions, distinctive cultural features, natural beauty and heritage. To brand any destination we must understand the unique features of tourist segmentation, including day visitors, business travellers and traditional tourists. Here the producer needs to analyze the target group of visitors, research their needs or demands and develop a promotional plan. The destination's main features such as tourism services and images should be carefully discussed or monitored, since a destination as a product is essential for developing successful marketing strategies. However, marketing any tourism destination is a step by step process, as at first it is necessary to know the brief history of the destination and understand the potentiality of the destination through research and take advantage of it. This means analyzing the information from the environmental analysis and the product analysis for strategic marketing opportunities, verifying tourists through tourist segmentation and knowing the behavioral attitudes of the tourist and understanding their needs and lastly branding the destination and promoting it. (Bonita 2006, xv-xvi.)

4.1 Planning marketing strategies

Generally, it is important that while planning strategies for the development of the destination, we should first monitor the competitive edge of tourist destinations worldwide. With the help of this, we will be able to analyse the market of our own and identify the strengths and weaknesses. And we can also create new strategies for marketing and even develop the potential marketing opportunity (Victor, Fyall & Morgan 2009, 159.). Too often marketing is seen by the destination as synonymous with promotion or communication activity, in fact marketing is a strategic process that aims to fit the resources of the destination to the opportunities existing in the market. Without the preceding analysis and strategic framework the result is often a series of inconsistent communication campaigns that confuse the tourist and do nothing to develop a solid proposition. According to the Godfrey & Clarke 2008 “Essentially there are two different time scale attached to marketing plans and the nature of these plans will vary accordingly”. The strategic marketing plan sets the direction for the annual plans and the broad outline for activities, whereas another one is the annual or tactical marketing plan, which sets the detailed actions and methods of monitoring achievement and the sum of the annual plans should meet the objectives set in the strategic marketing plan for the relevant time period. (Godfrey & Clarke 2008, 125-126)

Planning is the most important activity of marketing management; it should provide a common structure and focus for all of the organization’s management activities. It is therefore essential to understand planning in its context as the key function of management. The true art of planning is to understand both the human aspects and procedural necessities involved. The marketing planning system offers a structured approach to organizing and coordinating the efforts and activities of those involved in deciding the future of an organization. The most common feature of a marketing planning fail are that there is no one right system for any particular tourism organization, since organizations differ in size and diversity of operations and also the value of senior management and the expertise of those involved in the planning exercises. Hence the plan should act as a working document which can be updated and

modified to take into account new opportunities, challenges or unanticipated problem situations. (Gilbert 2008, 547-552.)

Hence, to plan any tourism destination marketing it is essential to understand and monitor every potential aspect of the destination at first. Analyzing a tourism destination on micro and macro levels, a situation analysis and a SWOT analysis will help to understand the current value and situation of the destination. Destination marketing objectives refer to where we want to be in the future and how we get there is about strategies and tactics from the marketing point of view. To know if the destination has achieved its objectives or not monitoring, evaluation and control is necessary every time (Godfrey & Clarke 2008, 127). Destination marketing plans not only focus on developing strategies but they also deal with the destination competitiveness. These include the supply or controllable side, demand or uncontrollable side, tour operator operations, emergence of new destinations and emergence of substitute products and services. While planning marketing strategies the availability of supply based factors distinguishes one destination from another and is regarded as a significant factor in maintaining competitive advantage. The competitors should be monitored on the regular basis on effective factors such as analysis of customer's characteristics, structure of marketing channels, destination image and tourist satisfaction, availability of tourist resources and their performance level and competitor's strategies. This might enable destinations to reinforce the analysis of their markets and identify their own as well as other destination's strength and weakness. The findings of competitiveness analysis may help destinations to develop correct positioning strategy. (Kozak & Baloglu 2011, 69-70.)

4.2 Applying marketing in tourism sector

Generally, DMO is responsible for the marketing and management of tourism sectors in the destination. Their role is to manage or develop every tourism sector such as accommodation, transportation, tourist attraction and the destination itself. Therefore they also control the whole tourism process in the destination as they are responsible to manage and also to promote the destination worldwide as well. Marketing is a useful tool for the development of the destination as the number of tourists is increasing these days and their main choice for the

travelling purpose is safe and easy access to every possible facility for which they are willing to pay. (Victor, Fyall & Morgan 2009, 204.).

Applying marketing in tourism sector simply refers to a concept that every tourist nowadays wants all the facilities included together and also easy access to the destination. The tourism sector provides a combination of different products and activities, which range from a small taxi firm and guest house to the largest airline or hotel group. The concept of change and survival are as important to a small business as they are to a major international hotel chain or airline. Anyone who wants to purchase a tourism product has probably been influenced by a promotional campaign, assessed the product offer, considered whether he or she is willing to pay the price and finally thought about how easy it would be to buy it. Each of these aspects of purchase is carefully planned by tourism marketers in an attempt to convince potential tourists to buy their products, as they are the basic ingredients of the marketing mix. The fundamental starting point for the creation of a successful marketing mix strategy is to ensure the target market, although the target market is not a part of the marketing mix, its role in dictating the different ways the mix is used makes it indistinguishable from the concept and of paramount importance. The market for a product is made up of actual and potential consumers, where the target market acts as the focus for tailoring the mix so that target customers will judge the overall product to be superior to that of the competition. (Gilbert 2008, 577-578)

In the current environment the marketing of the destinations is of considerable importance as rivalry for tourists grows and private and public sector marketing strategies become increasingly sophisticated. When the term product is used in marketing, it can refer to a tangible physical good, an intangible service, an idea or an experience. Most products that are marketed are physical goods, so while purchasing a tangible good, the customer buys an actual product. Marketing an intangible product means selling an idea or services, which is a difficult process as it deals with the behavior of customers. Even if the successful branding of the destination has all the answers about it, about the true potentiality of the destination itself and the attitudes of the visitors towards the destination, similarly it is important to brand any tourism destination to be able to stand right on the competitive edge. Developing a brand takes time, effort, and creativity, but branding offers the consumers certain advantages, including

that branding minimizes the risk of purchasing by providing consumers with easily obtained information of the destination and benefits. (Bonita 2006, 219,229-230.)

4.3 From traditional marketing to IT marketing

Today, we can find many good marketing examples using Information Technologies (IT) which is also a good tool for marketing a destination. This tool has become a very useful link and it is easy for the consumers to meet the products which producers have produced for the tourism facilities as today's packages can be easily found on the internet and consumers are able to find the destination or the tourism facilities of their choice, which are also easy to purchase through the internet. Therefore, we can see that has been a dramatic change in the marketing sector of the destination from traditional to the new modern technologies IT, which also make an easy and possible link between consumers and the producer. That is the reason why the entire local destination as well as nation itself are using this tool for marketing purposes today. Businesses seem highly ambitious to set up new IT applications which will enable customers to manage their own information gathering and booking arrangement. Avoiding the use of IT may keep one destination behind its competitors. Using it may help to keep the gap between competitors narrow, but trying to increase its capability and spread its functionality may help to distinguish it from others and bring competitive advantage over them. (Kozak & Baloglu 2011-194, 195.)

Information communication technology, ICT, development has changed the best operational and strategic practices for organizations on a global level and altered the competitiveness of enterprises and regions around the world. Similarly ICT has changed the best strategic and operational management practices that lead organizations to shift their orientation from product orientation to consumer orientation that customizes products and services and adopts flexible and responsive practices to the marketplace. The internet provides the ability to expand the customer base to cover the global population with minimum cost, destinations could develop virtual representations and boost their image globally. ICTs include not only hardware and software but also groupware, net-ware and the most importantly intellectual

capacity which is human-ware to develop programs and maintain equipment. (Gilbert 2008, 623-626.)

The rapid growth of the travellers as well as the requirements for personalized, complex, specialized and quality products impose the need for ICT utilization, as a tourist has become more demanding and requesting high quality products and value for their money. New travellers rely heavily on the internet to seek information about the destinations and experiences, such as price and availability, as well as to be able to communicate their needs and wishes to tourism suppliers rapidly. The internet has enabled consumers to access this information rapidly and increasingly, and the development of domain search engines has introduced utter transparency in the marketplace. Since the early age computerized networks and electronic distribution have been leading dramatic structural changes within the tourism industry, and becoming central to the distribution mix and strategy. A computer reservation system (CRS) is basically a database, which enables tourism organizations to manage its inventory and make it accessible to its partners and distribute their capacity as well as to manage the drastic expansion of global tourism. Here CRSs often charge competitive commission rates while enabling flexible pricing and capacity alterations, in order to adjust supply and demand fluctuation. After a decade CRSs developed into a global distribution system (GDS) by gradually expanding their geographical coverage as well as by integrating both horizontally with other airline systems, and vertically by incorporating the entire range of principles, such as every aspect of tourism sectors and destinations. (Gilbert 2008, 628-630.)

Generally, the internet with current and emerging multimedia features provides ample opportunities, particularly useful for informational and transactional strategies and to gain a competitive advantage. The internet contributes the five main components of marketing: promotion, product distribution, communication, management and research. To capitalize on the opportunities, tourist destinations design their websites for ease and convenience, personalized appeal and emotional features. A destination web page should be interactive, stimulating and attractive to engage potential visitors in interactive communications and provide a destination experience before their visits. It should also include different links for multiple stakeholders and be further customized to multiple visitors segments. Here travel

blogs have several advantages over web-based content, as they can be easily updated, relatively flexible in structure, encourage interaction between authors and readers and allow people to participate in information exchange. (Kozak & Balogu 2011, 210-212)

Similarly the new technology applications for mobile users are the new and innovative challenge for tourism industries to develop transaction based and location and situation based applications. In the future tourism destinations may find it necessary to expand their social media efforts significantly as social media will play a large role in all future marketing. Hence, social media are creating a new world of storytelling and idea sharing, where new social media content uses the latest internet technology to showcase product offerings and destinations in the digital world. Marketing has changed dramatically for DMOs because of the latest technology developments and adoption of online technics. However the majority of current websites provide only brochures with little attention in attracting the attention of users on an ongoing basis, where the internet has been used only to gather information and send email rather than make transactions. (Kozak & Balogu 2011, 213)

According to Kolb 2006, “The internet has become an important source of information for so many people that it is now as essential for a tourism office to have a website and an email address as it is for the office to have a telephone”. The main purpose of a website for a tourism office is to advertise the destination features and benefits, as it is also a useful tool for the tourism marketers to communicate information to the destination’s potential tourists. Designed websites allow each individual potential tourist to access just the information needed. In addition, online marketing can function as a public relations communications tool to provide information to the media. (Kolb 2006, 273.)

5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

It is important to understand tourism fully, as according to Smith, before conducting any research related to tourism. According to him it is also necessary to look at tourism from many different subject perspectives, from anthropology to economics. Since tourism is the most complex topic among any social science's topics, it resembles the human behaviour, a social phenomenon, an economic sector, a policy field, environmental and economic change. He agreed with the term "All tourism research is fundamentally shaped by how the researchers define tourism". Therefore, tourism has two basic ways for definition, one is supply-side and the other is demand-side, here supply-side mostly focuses on the businesses and the organizations that provide tourism services and demand-side is related to the tourism consumers. (Smith 2010, 1-2.)

Travel and tourism research is related to and completely based on social science, making it complex to understand as well as to predict, which is totally different from the physical or natural science, which deals with people and their social behaviour. People can change their behavioural attitudes according to the research subject matters and people from different parts of the world act differently. According to the Veal (2006) there are three different types of research which can be identified through their functions. First, descriptive research; finding out and describing what the matter is; second, explanatory research; explaining how or why these tools are used to predict the research objectives; and third, evaluative research; evaluation of policies and programs. (Veal 2006, 3.)

The term case study is a well-established research method and increasingly popular in tourism studies as it can provide a richer understanding of interesting and important phenomena that could not be achieved through other methods. A case study is a tool to produce deep insights into some phenomena, including conclusions based on the context of the topic being studied and it also involves the use of multiple research methods and data sources. The main characteristic of this method is intended to tell a story that provides in-depth insights in a specific case, it provides insights into the core issues and develops a research protocol that

anticipates and outlines the key tasks. Many authors have described the term case study in many ways but the content of those descriptions is the same. (Smith 2010, 186-189.)

Secondary data can play a variety of roles in a research process, from being the whole basis of the research to being a vital or incidental point of comparison. The difference between primary and secondary data is that primary data are new data specially collected in a research project whereas secondary data already exist and were collected for some other purposes. According to Veal (2006) “In undertaking research it is wise to use existing information where possible rather than embarking on expensive and time consuming new information collection exercises”. There are both advantages and disadvantages in this method as it has the advantage of timing: data may be instantly available; cost: cost of collecting new data avoided; scale: secondary data may be based on larger samples and serendipity: data may not have arisen with primary purposes. The disadvantages of secondary data are design in such a way that data might have been designed for another purpose and may not be ideal for the current project. Another disadvantage is analysis limitations: this means that access to the raw data for re-analysis is not possible and manipulation of the data for the current project may be limited. (Veal 2006, 147, 148.)

The author of this thesis is applying secondary data based research methods. In a case study the secondary data are used for data analysis and textual analysis of Rara national park and Mugu district of Nepal as well as the trends of mountaineering tourism in Nepal. A case study of Rara Lake will be presented with some sophisticated subject matters such as the relation between the host community and the visitors as mountaineering tourism in Nepal deals with the study of some famous tourism activities found in the host destination. A data analysis will be discussed about the economic standard of Mugu district and the tourists affecting economy of the local people. It also describes the purpose of tourism development in the western development region of Nepal and the textual analysis will study the current structure or stage of the destination. Therefore, the result of the research as well as validity and reliability of the findings with suggestions will be presented at the end of this chapter.

6 CASE STUDY OF RARA NATIONAL PARK AND THE MOUNTAINEERING TOURISM IN NEPAL

Nepal is a small land locked country in Southeast Asia, which lies between the two biggest and most populated countries of the world; China in the north part and India has a border in the south, east and west part of the country. Tourism has become the second most economy generating sector for the country after agriculture; therefore it is the main reason why the country is developing tourism in all the parts and regions. As Nepal is possessing 8 of the 10 biggest mountains of the world, Nepal is a suitable destination for mountaineers, rock climbers, people seeking adventures, wilderness hiking and trekking. The art and architecture of Hindu and Buddhists heritage, warm and cold weather are also a strong attraction of the nation. There is a total number of 10 national parks, 3 wild life reserves, 1 hunting reserve and 6 conservation areas, 11 buffer zones covering an area of 34,186,62 km that is 23.23 percent of the total area of the country. This is only possible through Nepal's extensive and effective parks and reserve system and it was the reason why the country is able to protect or has been able to preserve more endangered species of flora and fauna than any other country in Asia. (Welcomenepal.com 2015.)

In general, Nepal has many potential reasons to attract many types of tourists, as due to the different types of geographical structures found in Nepal it has many scopes in tourism business. The major tourist activities include wilderness and adventure activities such as mountain biking, rock climbing, bungee jumping, hiking, trekking and bird watching, exploring the waterways by rafting and kayaking and jungle safaris. The Nepal tourism board puts it this way:

Nepal is a land of extreme contrasts in climate and geography; it has a unique topography ranging from lowlands with sub-tropical jungles to arctic conditions in the Himalayan highlands. Within a mere 150 kilometers the land rises from near sea level in the south to over 8000 meters in the North. This, together with the monsoon rainfall along the south facing slopes, has resulted in compacting virtually all climate zones found on planet Earth. As a result, Nepal has been endowed with a great diversity of life-zones providing a home for a large variety of plants, birds and animals. (VisitNepal.com 2015.)

The above mentioned quotation shows that Nepal being a small country has many potentials to attract many different types of tourists and can offer a variety of experience in a single package through its natural beauty. The Terai region or lowlands are defined by a belt of well-watered floodplains stretching from the Indian border, it has the richest habitat in the land with tall grasslands interspersed with riverine and hard woods, and here we can find wildlife such as the swamp deer, musk deer, black buck blue bull, and royal Bengal tiger. Higher in the midland of the country between 2000 and 3500 meters, lies the wide range of hills, covered with moist temperature forests of oak, maple and birch and are the habitats for deers, leopards and monkeys. A significant number of endangered birds are found here in this area including Nepal's national bird Lophophorus (Daphne), whereas higher lands more to the north are covered with big mountains, where Langtang, Mount Everest, Shey-Phoksundo and Rara national parks are protected high altitude areas of Nepal. (VisitNepal.com 2015)

Rara national park is located in the northwest region of Nepal and it is the smallest national park found in Nepal, where most of the area is covered with Rara Lake, the biggest Lake of Nepal, which is also the main attraction of the park. The elevation of the park ranges from 1800 meters to 4048 meters; the lake is in a deep basin at the northern and eastern rims of the lake boundary, the lake drains to Mugu Karnali river via Nilja Khola (stream), the lakeside pasture in the south gives way to the steep slopes of Gurchi lake, its crest culminating at chuchemara in a horse-shoe shaped opening to the south drained by the Juin river. In the west, river valleys cut through a ridge which forms the natural boundary to the park. (VisitNepal.com 2015.)

6.1 Features of Rara National Park

This national park is famous for its vegetation and wildlife, the park contains mainly coniferous forests, the area around the lake is mostly covered with blue pines up to 3200 meters, Rhododendron, black juniper, west Himalayan spruce, oak and Himalayan cypress are other species. Above this elevation the vegetation is replaced by mixed coniferous trees of pine, spruce and fir. A small part of the park serves as an ideal habitat for some animals such

as musk deer, Himalayan black bear, leopard, jackal, wild dog, wild boar, yellow throated marten and others. The park is a favorable place for resident gallinaceous birds and migrant birds, whereas some birds such as mallard, gull, red-crested and common teal are seen during winter. The most common birds seen in the park are snow cock, chukor partridge, impeyan pheasant and blood pheasant. (VisitNepal.com 2015.)

The main tourist attraction in this National Park is Rara Lake the most beautiful and interesting site in the park where bird lovers enjoy winter with the migratory birds. Hundreds of varieties of ground flowers form a colorful carpet in summer, Conventional flow of water current do not allow the lake to freeze in winter. Chuchemara peak which is 4048 meters high on the southern side of the lake presents a magnificent scene with gleaming blue water within a basin of well forested hills. Other summits are Ruma Kand 3731 meters and Malika Kand 3444 meters to the north of the lake. From these peaks one can enjoy the view of the lake, peaks to the south and beautiful Mugu Karnali river valley to the north. Summer is pleasant, however, the winter brings cold temperatures and heavy snow fall up to one meter, the best time to visit is October to December or March to May. The winter is quite severe with ground frost occurring from October, December through March is the time of snowfall with the temperature dropping to below freezing point and high passes remain closed by heavy snowfall during this time. The month of April brings the warmer weather and monsoon season is June to August. (VisitNepal.com 2015.)

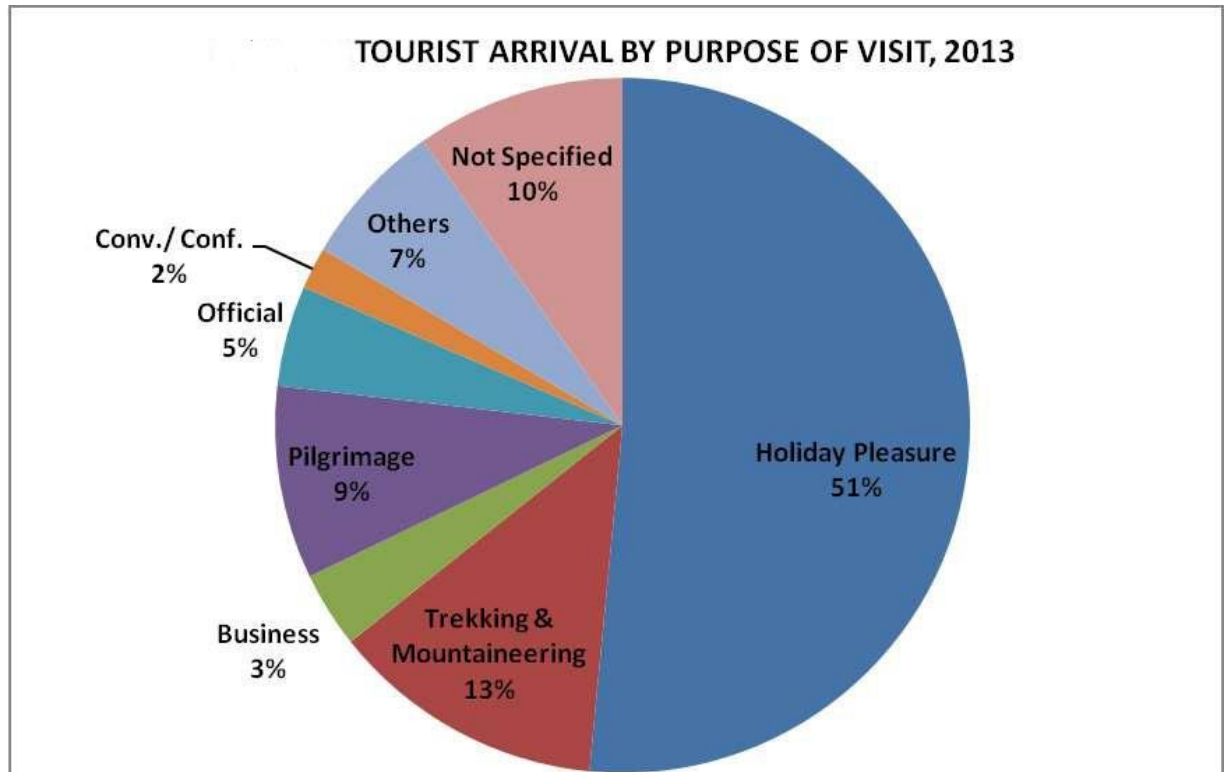
Flora and fauna are fully protected and must not be disturbed in this park, visitors entering the park should be self-sufficient in fuel supply as use of firewood is strictly prohibited, camping inside the park except in designated areas is strictly prohibited and movement inside the park before sunrise and after sunset is prohibited. However, there are no settlements inside the park. The residents of two villages, Rara and Chhapru, were moved out 1976 and resettle in Bardia district. The villages around the park are Jyari, Pina, Topla, Tuma, Ruma and Murma, the local economy is based on agriculture such as primarily potatoes, buckwheat, beans, barley and wheat. Hinduism and Buddhism are two main religions found in the area. Rara national park can be visited from Jumla a 2.5 day trek or from surkhet a 10 day trek. Thus, all the

visitors must pay a park entry fee at Bhulbhule guard post at the park headquarters.
(VisitNepal.com 2015.)

6.2 Tourism impact on mountains of Nepal

Mountain areas in poor countries are a popular subject for research on the part of public authorities and international organizations. As study quite rightly underlines the bio-diversity of such areas as well as the poverty of most mountain communities and the environmental and socio-economic stakes involved in the recent advent of tourism. Action has been taken at all possible scales to safeguard the future of these mountain territories, in particular through the creations of protected areas and the promotion of sustainable tourism development. In Nepal such development has taken the form of trekking, but sometimes those who practice it or commercialize it described it as ecotourism. Nepal has been establishing itself as the archetype of trekking destinations in the world; the country has become a testing ground for environmental and tourism policies that have evolved significantly for over 30 years. The blame for ecological crisis has been jointly attributed to trekking and to the agricultural, stockbreeding and forestry practices of the mountain people. Nepal has created protected areas with the purpose of preserving the Himalayan environment and promoting sustainable tourism in the areas concerned. However, this policy has interfered to varying degrees with the role of mountain communities in local tourism development, a role that has often been greatly underestimated. (Sacareau 2009, 2)

Trekking can be described as a tourist activity involving travelling on foot from place to place either individually or in a small group accompanied by guides and porters, often along trails in mountainous areas entirely without infrastructures. In Nepal mountains communities in the high valleys have been involved in trekking since the activity first began, working as porters for trekkers, providing accommodation in camp sites, lodges and inns in villages along the trails, which help bringing the revenues through a permit system. Since early 60s onwards Nepalese people began to set-up trekking agencies with the help of foreign guides, and from the beginning of the 1980s, this activity started to develop on the international tourism market with the appearance of small tour operators specialized in adventure tourism, catering and environment and this marketing led to a rise in tourist numbers. (Sacareau I 2009, 3)



GRAPH 3. Total numbers of tourist arrivals by purpose of visit in percentage (adapted from Ministry of culture, tourism & civil aviation, Nepal 2012)

The pie-chart above clearly shows the percentage of tourist arrivals in the country with the purpose of visit. Here the highest percentage of tourists arrived is for holiday pleasure, which is 47 percent and followed by the tourists whose purpose of visit was pilgrimage with 14 percent, which is closely followed by tourists interested in trekking and mountaineering with the difference of 1 percent. The lowest types of tourist arrivals in the country are tourists attending meetings and conferences which is 2 percent. (Ministry of culture, tourism & civil aviation, Nepal 2012)

Thus, tourists are the main actors in this system. However, the purpose of the visit may vary from person to person. Tourism, after all, is a very human experience, enjoyed, anticipated and remembered by many as some of the most important times of their lives. For most of the tourists in the world, from the beginning of travel and tourism holiday, pleasure and recreational activities were the most demanded or chosen tourism activities. Therefore, the definition of tourism is also closely related with these activities. (Cooper et.al, 2008, 15.)

TABLE 3. Tourist arrivals by the purpose of visit 2000-2013 (adapted from Ministry of culture, tourism & civil aviation, Nepal 2013)

Year	Holiday Pleasure	Trekking & Mountaineering	Business	Pilgrimage	Official	Conv./ Conf.	Others	Not Specified	Total
2000	255,889	118,780	29,454	15,801	20,832	5,599	17,291	-	463,646
	(55.2)	(25.6)	(6.4)	(3.4)	(4.5)	(1.2)	(3.7)	-	(100.0)
2004	167,262	69,442	13,948	45,664	17,088	0	71,893	-	385,297
	(43.4)	(18.0)	(3.6)	(11.9)	(4.4)	(0.0)	(18.7)	-	(100.0)
2006	145,802	66,931	21,066	59,298	18,063	0	72,766	-	383,926
	(27.7)	(12.7)	(4.0)	(11.3)	(3.4)	(0.0)	(13.8)	-	(100.0)
2008	148,180	104,822	23,039	45,091	43,044	6,938	99,634	29,529	500,277
	(29.6)	(21.0)	(4.6)	(9.0)	(8.6)	(1.4)	(19.9)	(5.9)	(100.0)
2009	140,992	132,929	22,758	51,542	24,518	9,985	87,134	40,098	509,956
	(27.6)	(26.1)	(4.5)	(10.1)	(4.8)	(2.0)	(17.1)	(7.9)	(100.0)
2010	263,938	70,218	21,377	101,335	26,374	9,627	52,347	57,651	602,867
	(43.8)	(11.6)	(3.5)	(16.8)	(4.4)	(1.6)	(8.7)	(9.6)	(100.0)
2011	425,721	86,260	17,859	63,783	24,054	10,836	37,311	70,391	736,215
	(57.8)	(11.7)	(2.4)	(8.7)	(3.3)	(1.5)	(5.1)	(9.6)	(100.0)
2012	379,627	105,015	24,785	109,854	30,460	13,646	48,540	91,165	803,092
	(47.3)	(13.1)	(3.1)	(13.7)	(3.8)	(1.7)	(6.0)	(11.4)	(100.0)
2013	410,934	102,001	28,183	71,610	37,386	15,552	54,326	77,263	797,616
	(51.5)	(12.8)	(3.5)	(9.0)	(4.7)	(1.9)	(6.8)	(9.7)	(100.0)

The table above shows the tourists arrival by the purpose of visit from the year 2000 to year 2013. As we can see there are lots of changes during these years in the total number of tourist arrivals in the country and their purpose of visit. The year 2000 was the most celebrated tourism year in the history of Nepal, as the total number of tourists reached the peak which is 463,646 in numbers and 25.6 percent of the total visitors, which is 118,780 tourists were trekking and mountaineering. These purposes of visit were increased nearly by 3 percent in the following year, whereas the total number of tourists in the country was in its best speed in increasing. However, this rapid growth was interrupted by the intensification of Maoist activities during the following years from 2003 till the year 2006 when peace was restored in the country. Tourist numbers had fallen to just 383,297 and it directly affected the purpose of

tourists for mountaineering. Since these activities are closely related to the rural areas of the country, it takes lots of time to recover although peace was restored in the country. The numbers of tourists are increasing day by day in the country together with the tourist activities. During the final year 2013 in the table, the number of tourist in the country decreased from 803,092 to 797,616, whereas the tourist purposes of trekking and mountaineering increased from 11.7 percent to 13.1 percent closely following the visiting purpose of pilgrimage to be the country's second most famous tourist activity after holiday pleasure. (Ministry of culture, tourism & civil aviation, Nepal 2013.)

Thus, Ministry of tourism and civil aviation (MOTCA) has organized many tourism years in the country with an ambitious plan to attract tourists from all over the world. This kind of event may increase the number of tourists and change or develop the tourism strategy of the country. Tourism year 2011 was organized by Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), with the motive or purpose of promoting the tourism sector in Nepal and the other purpose of this event was to highlight the Nepalese culture, art, bio-diversity and stakeholder business through E-marketing globally. These kinds of events create many opportunities as well as have to face many challenges at the same time. Through this event Nepal tourism board has opportunities to develop the infrastructure such as roads, electricity, water supply, hospitals and communication, as well as develop the per capita GDP of Nepalese people, develop the tourism product and increase employment opportunities. But at the same time they had to face some vital challenges also such as lack of human resources, international airport and lack of proper training centers and risk of sex tourism as well as political instability and chaos making the destination unpopular. However, these kinds of events help to understand their own capacity and potentiality in the country in total. (Adhikari 2015, 84.)

6.3 Trekking trend in Nepal and its scope

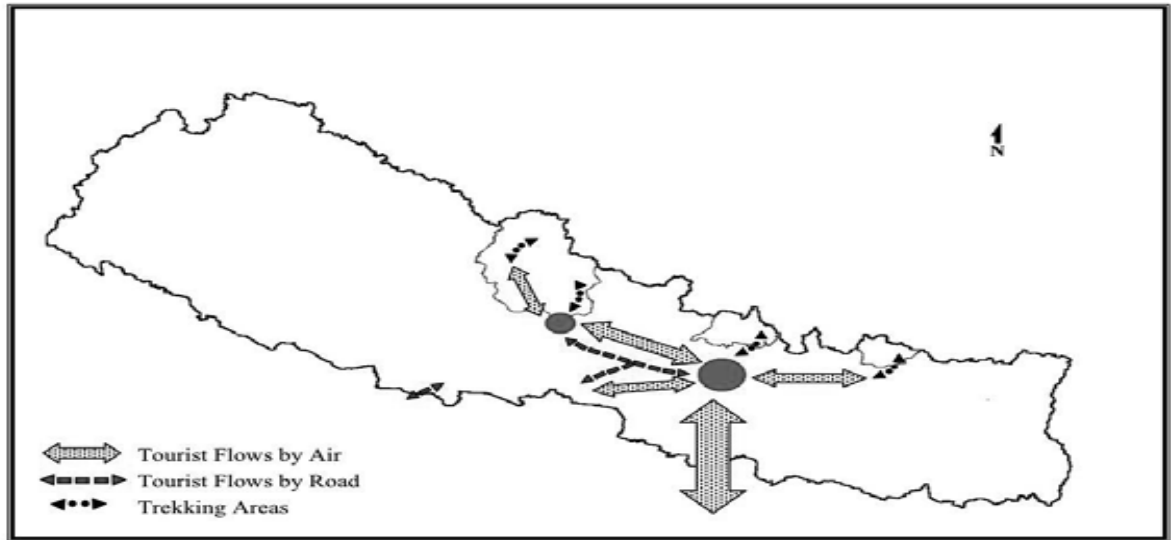
The most common concept of trekking resembles a journey on foot, especially hiking through remote areas such as mountains and hills. Due to the geographical structure of Nepal, it has become a meeting point for trekkers from all over the world. Most of the mountains in Nepal

lie in remote areas, northern part of the country. In Nepal only GHT spans the entire length of the country from Darchula and Humla district in the Western region to Taplejung in the Eastern region. Thus, high altitude routes offer adventure trekking, combining high pass crossings, trans-Himalayan scenery and alpine valleys. According to Lisa Choegyhal (2011):

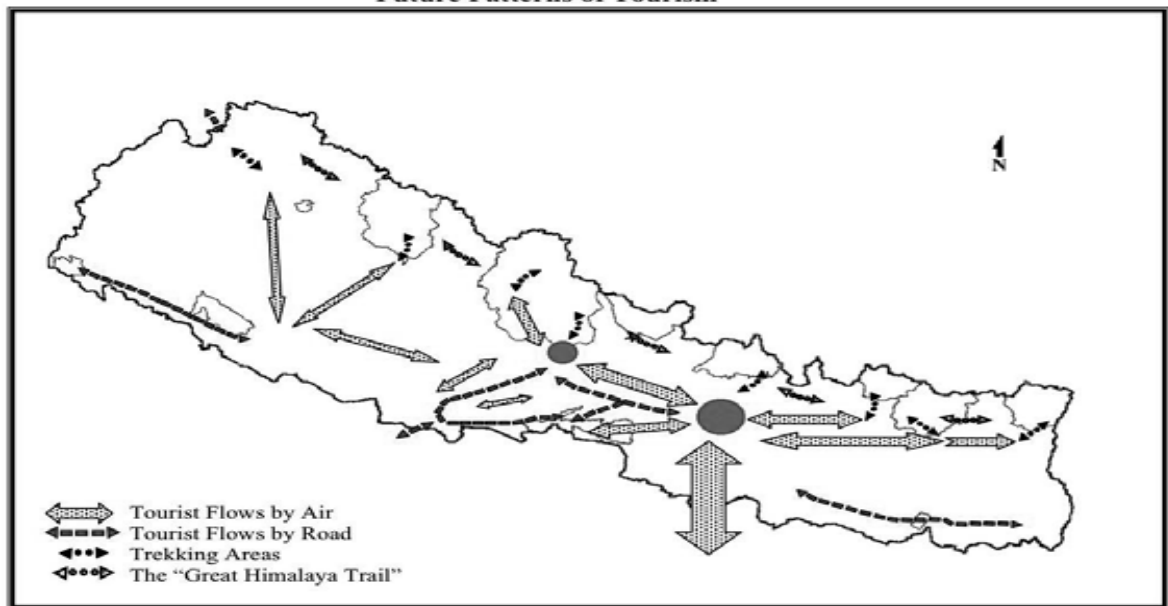
The great Himalayan Trail (GHT) is a new and challenging long distance trekking route through some of the most breathtaking mountain landscapes on Earth. It is made up of some of a network existing trails and trade routes that connect neglected valleys and ridges between and beyond the established trekking areas Langtang, Annapurna and Sagarmatha (Everest)". (Choegyhal 2011, 72.)

The lower green GHT routes are for less extreme trekkers, featuring a diversity of scenery, people and cultures, as this lower route is the major focus for development activities, where the most needy mountain villages are located and with the widest appeal to softer nature and culture visitor market. These GHT sections are designed to attract the majorities of trekkers, both domestic and foreign who have only a few weeks for holidays, encouraging repeated visits and interesting new circuits. Nepal GHT has already generated considerable stakeholder's interest, led by the Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), Trekking Agencies Association of Nepal TAAN and Nepal Association of Tour Operators NATO, as it has been offered in trek and adventure operators' brochures and has attracted extensive media coverage in Nepal, Australia, the USA, the UK, Germany and other major source markets. Development agencies and non-governmental organizations are seeking to build on this marketing momentum and private sector commitment, grasping the unique opportunity for public-private partnership to help poor and disadvantaged people living in the hilly regions of Nepal. (Choegyhal 2011, 72.)

Existing Patterns of Tourism



Future Patterns of Tourism



GRAPH 4. Patterns of tourism movement existing and future patterns (adapted from Nepal tourism and development review 2011, 73)

The graph above show the tourism patterns, tourist flows through international flights with a big arrow, tourist flows by road with an arrow with dark square boxes, trekking areas were indicated with a dark dots in the middle of an arrow and GHT with three dot in the middle of an arrow. The first graph shows the tourism patterns which are existing in the country and the second graph shows the future tourism patterns within the country occupying the entire

country. As we can see in the first graph which is the existing tourism patterns, only the famous trekking trails have the most tourism flow. In both graphs of the map of Nepal, the big dark circle is the country's only international airport, which is in the capital city Kathmandu, from where most of the tourism activities were conducted. The second graph has an extra arrow of patterns, which is an arrow of GHT, when this feature is applied in the country's tourism policies, then we can see that most of the country's areas will be occupied with tourism patterns. (Choegyal 2011.)

To provide a significant boost to Nepal's tourism industry, the main idea deals on channeling more tourists and proper tourism investment to under developed districts and also stimulating a range of private sector business, employment and production opportunities for poor mountain communities and providing links with Nepal based on an international tourism operators as well. New and locally managed small and big enterprises providing tourism facilities to the visitors can add value to the local business and increase the living standard of the people living in the remote areas. (Choegyal 2011, 72-73.)

Nepal, also known as a hiker's paradise, has an extensive range of trekking trails and routes to choose from. As trekking is an adventure tourism activity, it has some difficulties, e.g. high altitude-sickness, whereas on the other hand trekking has many intangible rewards, such as spectacular natural beauty and rich cultural experiences of the local people living in the remote areas of Nepal. Among Nepalese trekking routes there are many world famous trekking trails, which are Everest Base Camp (EBC), this trek can become an experience of a life time; another one is The Royal Trek, it is a soft trek for those who enjoy a laid back lifestyle attitude and are surely going to enjoy this hiking. The trek can be enjoyed during fall, winter or spring but not during monsoon. According to Sunil Sharma (2011) "While trekking in Nepal there is always a reward in the form of a sense of achievement and closeness with the nature, overall Nepal offers a warm welcome to visitors". Famous trekking routes of Nepal such as Rara trek will be introduced to or will be known by many tourists who are willing to trek in Nepal, after the establishment of the Great Himalayan trail GHT, as the starting point or the ending point of it is at the far western development region of Nepal. (Sharma 2011, 130)

6.3.1 Trekking and environmental issue

Trekking has been established in Nepal since 1964 when Nepal government first allowed foreign visitors to make multi-day hiking tours and in connection to the country's diverse geographical features, adventure and trekking tourism was seen, which was later used as viable strategies for the rural development. According to Martin Tranberg Jensen (2011), "Mountain related tourism activities are undoubtedly the core of tourism in Nepal and around 43 percent of all international arrivals participate in trekking". Thus it is an important sector with a delicate economic, social and environmental state of destination to manage. Tourism has brought many changes since it has started in the country, it has altered traditional patterns of natural land and resource management and put pressure on general environment. Therefore local people living in the area have also equal responsibilities to protect the natural environment. Local people should change their habits of using forests as the local accumulation of rubbish and pollution from human waste. Forest degradation and damage to alpine vegetation can invite natural disasters. (Jensen 2011, 42.)

The first policies about Nepal's mountain environmental conservation led to conflicts, since they did not have much concern about the traditional rights of rural communities which did not have the capacity to manage themselves their territorial resources. From the 1980s onwards a complete turnaround began to take place in the method of the government, to ease the conflicts with local communities buffer zones with less strong regulations were created around the periphery of national parks. It was on the basis of the principle that conservation areas were created in Nepal in the context of sustainable development recommendations and under the growing influence of environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO), from the developed countries and local offices in the developing world. Each conservation area was divided into zones with different levels of protection at different times of the year. Payments were required for reserve areas or limited harvesting of certain species. The originality of conservation areas is that they combine environmental protection with the integral use of entry

fees in programs to improve the living condition of local people, and local populations help to manage the projects through the creation of special local communities. (Sacareau 2009, 5.),

TABLE 4. Numbers of foreign visitors to national parks and protected areas 2008-2013 (adapted from Ministry of culture, tourism & civil aviation, Nepal, 2013)

National Park	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Bardiya National Park	2,790	3,087	3,727	4,765	5760	12,974
Chitwan National Park	82,723	78,682	84,518	122,332	126484	153,776
Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve	55	21	26	28	47	88
Khaptad National Park	29	2	12	22	6	19
Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve	238	231	456	181	441	4,446
Langtang National Park	9,533	10,535	10,315	13,838	12649	13,370
Makalu Barun National Park	1,371	1,828	1,323	1,501	1520	1,523
Parsa Wildlife Reserve	-	49	-	14	48	192
Rara National Park	104	146	135	174	49	164
Sagarmatha National Park	31,201	29,036	32,084	34,645	36518	36,750
Shey Phoksundo National Park	678	325	558	512	679	620
Shivapuri National Park	8,344	11,178	11,798	15,921	82935	165,904
Shukla Phata Wildlife Reserve	59	161	115	190	144	471

The table above shows the total number of foreign tourists who visited the national parks and protected areas of Nepal, from 2000 till 2013. Here we can find big differences between the total numbers of foreign visitors according to the national parks and protected areas. As we can see the world famous mountain Everest, which lies inside Sagarmatha National park, due to its popularity globally there are more visitors than in any other national park in Nepal. Another famous national park in Nepal is Chitwan National park, due to jungle safaris on elephant back, variety of wild animal habitat and also tourism recreational facilities. Therefore it is the second most visited national park in Nepal. According to the data, wildlife reserves are not as famous as national parks of Nepal among the foreign visitors. However, the numbers of foreign visitors are increasing in every national park and protected areas gradually, therefore more attention should be given in the field of marketing of less famous protected areas, through electronic media in order to reach every part globally, to increase the flow of tourists. It was the concept of the organizers of Visit Nepal in 2011, Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), to

promote the new and less famous areas of Nepal to develop new tourist activities and also to develop more infrastructure to those areas which are developmentally backward. (Adhikari 2015, 84.)

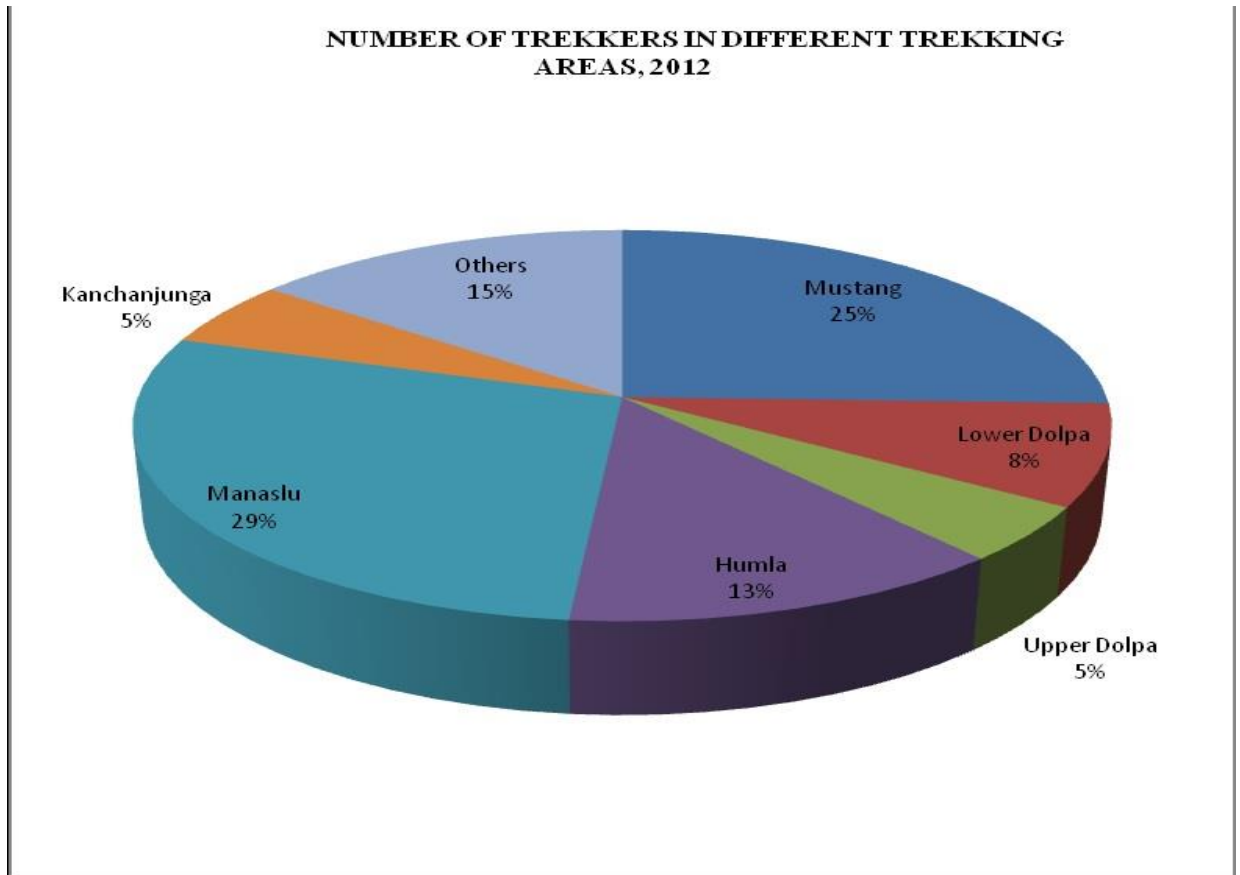
6.3.2 Tourism impact on economic and social aspects of the destination

Mugu district is situated in the Karnali zone in the mid-western development region of Nepal; it is a remote and developmentally challenged area of the country. Around 46.5 percent of people live below the poverty line, this district comprises 24 Village Development Committees (VDC) and its District Headquarters (DHQ) are in the town of Gamgadhi in shree Nagar VDC. The total population of this district was just above 55 thousand people in 2011, of which 49 percent were women and the majority of the people, 91 percent are Hindu and 9 percent are Buddhist. The education level in Mugu has improved, however the district still lags far behind the national average level on various measures, in which Mugu holds the lowest literacy rate of 13 percent. The employment opportunities are still limited in Mugu district to traditional occupations, such as agriculture, animal husbandry and herbs collection, 74 percent of the total population depend on agriculture for their substance and 10 percent on other traditional occupations. (United Nations Field Cooperation Office (UNFCO) 2013, 1-3.)

In Nepal the most popular trekking routes have been the Everest, Annapurna and Langtang regions, whereas nowadays the Kanchanjunga in the extreme east and Dolpo in the north west Nepal are gaining popularity as new trekking destinations in the country. The government of Nepal is now interested in developing many new heritage trails in different parts of the country, a combination of trek with a peek into the cultures of local communities. And those who love extreme and have time can join the Great Himalayan Trail (GHT), which stretches 1700 kilometers from Kanchenjunga in the east to Humla, the Far-western development region of Nepal. (VisitNepal.com 2015.)

Rara national park, is located in a remote mountain area of Nepal and is suitable for various tourism activities, although it is not so popular among other world famous trekking areas in

Nepal. The government were trying their best to establish new and systematic trekking trails in the remote areas of Nepal. It is the best trekking trail as it is an easy trekking trail and one can choose a short distance, while a combination of culture, wild life, forest vegetation and artifacts are attracting more tourists to the destination. (WisitNepal.com 2015.)



GRAPH 5: Number of trekkers in different trekking areas in percentages, 2012 (adapted from Ministry of culture, tourism & civil aviation, Nepal, 2012)

The graph above shows the total number of foreign visitors that visited the top trekking destination from east Nepal to the western part of the country in percentages. As we can see in the year 2012 Mansalu trek is the most visited by the visitors with 29 percent. It is located in the western region of Nepal, whereas another most famous trekking trail in the country is Mustang valley trekking with 25 percent of the total visitors and it is also located in the western region of the country. Here we can see that mid-western region's trekking was not famous among these western trekking trails, which are Kanchanga 5 percent, upper Dolpa 5 percent, Lower Dolpa 8 percent and Humla 13 percent. However, these trekking areas are the

famous trekking areas of the country and each of them has its own unique value, norm and qualities within them. (Nepal tourism board 2012.)

TABLE 5. Gross foreign exchange earnings from year 2000-2013 (adapted from Ministry of culture, tourism & civil aviation, Nepal, 2013)

GROSS FOREIGN EXCHANGE EARNINGS, 2000-2013

Year	Total Earning			% Change in US \$	Average Expenditure Per Visitor US \$	Average Expenditure Per Visitor Per Day US \$
	Rs.('000)	Annual Average Exchange Rate	US \$ ('000)			
2000	11,827,403		166,847	-0.7	453.7	38.2
2001	10,468,205		140,276	-15.9	472.4	39.6
2002	8,300,553		106,822	-23.8	512.0	64.8
2003	14,508,396		192,832	80.5	765.9	79.1
2004	13,146,534		179,941	-6.7	609.8	45.1
2005	10,600,345		148,441	-17.5	532.0	58.5
2006	11,784,644		162,790	9.7	561.0	55.0
2007	15,185,071		230,617	41.7	535.0	45.0
2008	24,802,195		351,968	52.6	860.3	73.0
2009	31,428,650	77.14	407,424	15.8	798.9	70.6
2010	25,420,250	72.88	348,796	-14.4	578.6	45.7
2011	28,612,350	74.33	384,937	10.4	522.9	39.9
2012	30,109,470	85.06	353,979	-8.0	440.8	36.2
2013	40,028,686	93.26	429,216	21.3	538.0	42.8

The table above shows the gross foreign earnings from the years 2000-2013, as we can see the total earnings from the year 2000 to 2009 were in an increasing rate and there was a little fluctuation in the year 2010 to 2012 but the year 2013 has the most foreign exchange earnings in US Dollar. These foreign earnings are directly related with the average expenditure per visitor and the exchange rate in US Dollar as well as the total number of foreign visitors in the

country. Therefore, the total number of visitors who spend per day multiplied by the total stay by the visitors is equal to the earnings of the nation as according to the exchange rate. Here a foreign tourist visiting by purpose also matters for the record of a destination and also to find the famous tourist activities available in the destination. (Ministry of culture, tourism & civil aviation, Nepal 2013.)

6.4 Findings of the research

The research was completely based upon the role of tourism on a development process of a destination, where the act of a local people reflects every move and selection of the destination by the foreign visitors and the behavior attitude of the visitors towards the destination reflects the current situation and status of the destination. The research was conducted with the help of the secondary based research method, where a case study of Rara National park and mountaineering tourism in Nepal was focused on.

According to the research project, trekking in Nepal is the most famous tourism activity, due to the geographical structure of the country, still un-touched natural beauty in the remote areas of Nepal, favorable climate which varies according to the altitudes, century old norms and culture as well as arts and architectures are the pulling factors. According to Nepalese Tourism Board NTB, "Tourism is valued as the major contributor to a sustainable Nepal economy, having developed as an attractive, safe, exciting and unique destination through conservation and promotion, leading to equitable distribution of tourism benefits and greater harmony in society" (Tourism vision-2020 2009, 5). Therefore, with this statement of a representative of the entire tourism management of the nation, it was clear that their objective is to improve the livelihoods of the people across the country by developing integrated tourism infrastructure, increasing tourism activities and products, generating employment in the rural areas enhancing inclusiveness and other deprived communities and to develop tourism as a broad-based sector by bringing tourism into the mainstream of Nepal socio-economic development (Tourism vision-2020 2009, 9). Thus, the promotion of the destination has the main role in today's

tourism development strategies as many tourism destinations on the world today have accomplished as a destination brand with the help of these tactics. Nepal has also organized an event visit Nepal 2011 with the co-ordination of National tourism Board and various tourism agencies across the globe in order to promote national tourism and was able to achieve recognition among them.

Millions of foreign tourist visitors are visiting Nepal every year for many different purposes, as we can see in table 3 and graph 3, most of them are visiting Nepal in order to spend their leisure holiday pleasure, which means most of them like all inclusive packages. We can also see on the data that there are different types of tourists visiting Nepal for different purposes. Here, we can say that Nepal is a suitable destination for every tourist activity such as holiday pleasure, adventure, pilgrimage, ancient art and architecture, culture, official and business. Among these tourist activities, trekking and hiking take tourists coming to Nepal to a very different perspective of Nepal, far away in high mountains and the natural surroundings with the social life of people living in a high rural mountain region of Nepal, giving them many opportunities to improve the living standard including their education, health, wealth, modern culture and most importantly public awareness to decrease illiteracy rate in the region.

During the research, it was clear that the famous trekking destination of the country has the most tourist flows compared to the new and promotional trekking destination, as we can see in graph 4. The main reason behind this is the lack of information provided by that destination electronically as well as the lack of the tourist infrastructure available in the destination. However, the government of Nepal is trying to develop and promote those less famous trails via electronic media, social network and by organizing a tourism year with the hope of maximum tourist flows in the country. Graph 3 shows the current and future trends of tourist flows in the trekking areas of Nepal, here we can say that developing the Great Himalayan Trail (GHT) it will help a lot to introduce and promote many still un-touched and less famous trekking trails and destinations.

Nepal has many tourism potentialities and is trying to conserve and protect as many as possible areas of the country in order to develop tourism in those destinations. Nepal has

natural gifts of which Nepal should take advantage; a possible way to develop tourism is to promote the destination through electronic media and also co-ordination with international tourism agencies. As Rara national park is at the rural area of Nepal and lacks of both promotion and infrastructures it is a less famous destination for the tourist, but it has the potentiality to develop tourism and generate tourism income which will help to increase the social economy of the destination. However, the government of Nepal is trying to increase tourism activities and develop infrastructures as well as tourism recreational facilities in the rural areas, hoping to increase tourist flows in the country.

6.5 Validity and reliability

Generally, the research project of this thesis is completely based on the aim and the objectives of this report, where validity and reliability of the research are important facts to verify the result of the research conducted. As according to Veal (2006), “Validity is the extent to which the information collected by the researcher truly reflects the phenomenon being studied” and reliability “is the extent to which research findings would be the same if the research were repeated at later date or with a different sample of subject” (Veal 2006, 41.). The research of this report completely relies on secondary resources and has been presented through a case study of the desired destination.

Validity of the research means the most challenging and difficult aspect of the research, where the researchers have to be more concerned with the people’s behavior and their attitudes during the whole process. It is obvious that responses of different people for the same reason are not always the same. While measuring the accuracy level of the primary data with the secondary data the secondary data sources have the pre-established level of validity. As secondary data may be used by the researcher for some other purposes than its original form, the research may not be absolutely valid. (Veal 2006, 41, 117.)

Reliability of the research as according to the definition of Veal (2006) mostly focuses on the research findings than the research process. A research is the real case in the social sciences,

because they deal with human beings in differing and ever-changing social situations. It means that researchers should be more cautious while making general, theoretical statements on the basis of empirical research. The fact that there has been little dramatic variation in the findings of the various surveys which were using secondary data resources during the research process is that erratic and unexplainable fluctuations in the result would have led to suspicions that the surveys were unreal, but this has not happened. (Veal 2006, 41, 117.)

In fact, the research method used in this report is a secondary based data analysis with the help of a case study; the research is both valid and reliable. The secondary data collected for the research purpose makes the research partially valid and the data that were used in this research were extracted from the most reliable sources such as governmental websites making the research reliable. Hence, the data collected and presented in the research process may not be for the same purposes and might not relate to this particular hypothesis. However, the outcome of the research matches the aim and objectives of the research carried out.

6.5.1 Recommendations

Tourism industries nowadays are mostly focusing on the destination management process, to develop many new types of tourism activities and facilities in the destination in order to attract more and more tourists in the destination. Good management and planning are essential to make any destination visible and known to everyone globally. Nepal being a landlocked country has many potentialities in developing mountaineering tourism in the mountainous regions, with an aim to bear the consequences of a tourism product. Managing and promoting any tourism destination is like facing a new challenge in every step of a development process where it is necessary to plan any development strategy at the beginning of the development process, to make the management proper and easy while processing the development work.

The research was mostly focused on the development of tourism in a certain destination, measures and strategies to keep sustainability among the visitors and the host destination was the main concern. Since Nepal is an under-developing nation its rural areas are in a more

backward situation than the rest of the country, so it is necessary to develop tourism in certain rural areas of Nepal. As tourism brought many changes to the host destination, they could be both positive and negative. Hence it is very important to have good planning and management to keep sustainability among those areas, as well as it is also important to keep tourist flows at the same time. Marketing the destination has the leading role in the process of tourism development and management planning, to maximize the number of tourist in a certain destination. Rara National Park in the far western mountainous region of Nepal has the potentiality to involve many tourists willing to have multiple adventures at the same time such as trekking, art, architecture, wilderness, forest vegetation and flora and fauna. They are possible in this particular region or the destination.

According to the data and text analysis in the research process of this thesis, Rara national park is situated in the rural area of Nepal and it is totally new and less famous among tourists visiting Nepal. The development of Great Himalayan trail (GHT) can bring some changes in the patterns of tourist flows in this area, create many opportunities for the local people of this area such as development in health, education, culture, livelihood, economy and living standard. Since this rural mountain district has the potential to develop tourism and attract tourists, it is necessary and very important to plan new strategies before conducting any tourism activities. The development and maintaining of infrastructure has an equal part in the tourism destination management process, as tourism demands vary according to the type of tourist. The government of Nepal is trying to promote new tourist activities and develop new strategies to keep sustainability in the various tourism destinations of Nepal, via electronic media, therefore it is necessary to analyze the destination from the very beginning point of the planning process. Thus, Rara national park has the potential and can generate many social economic opportunities from the development of tourism, for the local area and the people living around it, to change the situation.

7 CONCLUSION

The development of tourism in a certain destination has not only a positive economic impact but it also has to face many difficulties and challenges. Proper planning of tourism strategies without hampering the natural state of the destination and the habitat around it, managing and keeping the records of tourists visiting those areas, promoting the destination and tourism supply according to the tourist demand are the main challenges in the destination management process. As the rural mountain areas of Nepal have the potential to attract many types of tourists such as adventure, trekking, hiking, mountaineering, wildlife, wilderness, bird watching and many more, therefore it is necessary to have a good vision while making any development strategies.

The research process of this thesis was related to the main aim and objective, as tourism can bring many changes with it to the host destination and it could be both positive and negative at the same time such as a change in social economy and the living standard of local people. It affects the culture, values and norms of the local destination, it can hamper the natural state of the local environment and at the same time it can also protect the environment by creating protected areas and most importantly tourism can change the habits of local people e.g. in education level and lifestyle. Good planning and management of it can take one destination to a prosperous and developed stage. As trekking is one of the most adventurous and famous tourist activities found in Nepal, it has the capacity to attract many foreign visitors and bring social economy with it. Most of the rural areas of Nepal are in lack of infrastructures, tourist recreational areas and job opportunities, therefore the development of tourism in those areas can create many opportunities for the people living in those areas, as well as they can utilize the infrastructures.

Rara national park is famous for its vegetation and wildlife, the park contains mainly coniferous forests, the area around the lake is mostly covered with blue pine up to 3200 meters, rhododendron, black juniper, west Himalayan spruce, oak and Himalayan cypress are other species. Above this elevation the vegetation is replaced by a mixture of coniferous pine,

spruce and fir. A small part of the park serves as an ideal habitat for some animals such as musk deer, Himalayan black bear, leopard, jackal, wild dog, wild boar, yellow throated marten and others. The park is a favorable place for resident gallinaceous birds and migrant birds, some birds such as mallard, gulls, red-crested and common teal are seen during winter. The most common birds seen in the park are snow cock, chukor partridge, impeyan pheasant and blood pheasant. Therefore this protected area of the far western development region of Nepal has the potentiality to attract many types of tourists at the same time. Thus, marketing of this destination is very important to make this destination available to everyone around the world and the private tourism industries to invest developing many new tourism activities and facilities in this area.

Thus, destination management is always an ongoing process in the context of tourism; and has many difficulties and challenges, where the promotion of the destination plays an important role to help produce many tourism products according to tourism demand and to help analyze the destination's potentiality. The research process helps to understand the situation or the current state of Rara national park, as it has the potentiality to attract tourists. Destination management organizations (DMOs), should be more concerned in the planning process as well as in the need to develop new strategies related to the promotion of the destination. Developing tourism in the destination management process has an important part, since it can contribute a lot in many segments of a destination such as infrastructure, income level and social structure. There are many tourism destinations around the world that have become a brand according to their features. Nepal has many sources to promote trekking tourism internationally.

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