

## Issues and Challenges in Cultural Heritage Tourism in Nepal

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### Abstract

This study examined the issues and challenges in cultural heritage tourism in Nepal. Sustainability of cultural heritage tourism is the dependent variable. The selected independent variables are government policy and regulations, community participation and empowerment, tourist behaviour and preferences, climate change and environmental concerns, technological advancement and innovations and economic factor and market demand. The primary source of data is used to assess the opinions of respondents regarding government policy and regulations, community participation and empowerment, tourist behaviour and preferences, climate change and environmental concerns, technological advancement and innovations and economic factor and market demand for sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. The study is based on primary data of 121 respondents. To achieve the purpose of the study, structured questionnaire is prepared. The correlation and multiple regression models are estimated to test the significance and importance of issues and challenges in cultural heritage tourism in Nepal.

The study showed a positive impact of government policy and regulations on sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. It indicates that strong government policy and regulations leads to increase in sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. Similarly, the study showed a positive impact of community participation and empowerment on sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. This implies that increased community participation and empowerment leads to the increase in sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. Likewise, the study revealed a positive impact of tourist behaviour and preferences on sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. It indicates that positive tourist behaviour and preferences leads to increase in sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. In addition, the study observed a positive impact of technological advancement and innovations on sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. It indicates that the technological advancement and innovations leads to increase sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. Further, the study observed a positive impact of climate change and environmental concerns on sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. It implies that higher level of positive change in climate change and environmental concerns, drives sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. Moreover, the study observed a positive impact of economic factor and market demand on sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. It indicates that the higher economic factor and market demand stimulates sustainability of cultural heritage tourism.

*Keywords:* government policy and regulations, community participation and empowerment, tourist behaviour and preferences, climate change and environmental concerns, technological advancement and innovations

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## 1. Introduction

Tourism is the set of activities engaged in by persons temporarily away from their usual environment, for a period of not more than one year, and for a broad range of leisure, business, religious, health, and personal reasons, excluding the pursuit of remuneration from within the place visited or long-term change of residence. (Smith, 2004) Cultural heritage tourism is defined as travelling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present (Chourasia and Chourasia, 2012). Cultural heritage tourism viewed as travel anxious with experiencing cultural environments, including landscapes, the visual and performing arts, and special lifestyles, values, traditions and events. It is vital to stress that cultural heritage tourism involves not only tangible or visible heritage such as sites, colours, materials, and settlement patterns, but also intangible heritage such as societal structures, traditions, values, and religion (Ismail *et al.*, 2014). Cultural heritage tourism is a rapidly growing segment of the global tourism market. According to United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), cultural tourism accounted for approximately 40% of all international tourism arrivals in 2019, with over 400 million tourists traveling to destinations around the world to experience their cultural heritage (UNWTO, 2021). This highlights the significant economic potential of cultural heritage tourism for destinations. Sustainable tourism practices that balance the economic benefits of tourism with the preservation of cultural heritage are essential. According to World Tourism Organization (2020), sustainable tourism should take into account the economic, social, and environmental impacts of tourism on destinations and local communities. This includes promoting responsible tourism practices, engaging local communities in tourism planning and development, and preserving cultural heritage sites and traditions.

Bulut and Işıkdag (2017) examined several problems related to cultural tourism in Istanbul, including the degradation of cultural heritage sites due to high visitor numbers, the lack of adequate infrastructure and facilities for tourists, and the lack of effective marketing and promotion of cultural tourism in the city. The study stated that the need for better coordination and cooperation among stakeholders in the cultural tourism industry, including government agencies, tourism organizations, and local communities. To overcome these challenges, the study suggested the need for sustainable tourism practices, effective management and conservation of cultural heritage sites, and the development of innovative and creative tourism products and services that can enhance the visitor experience and promote the rich cultural heritage of

Istanbul. Similarly, Timothy and Boyd (2006) found that cultural heritage tourism have positive impact on cultural heritage sites, including overuse, overcrowding, and damage to historic structures and artefacts. Additionally, cultural heritage sites may be vulnerable to theft and looting, which can further degrade their cultural significance. These challenges highlight the need for sustainable tourism practices that balance the economic benefits of tourism with the preservation of cultural heritage. Likewise, Timothy and Ron (2013) examined the challenges and issues of cultural heritage tourism in urban destinations. The study explored the relationship between cultural heritage and tourism in urban areas, arguing that urban heritage tourism faces a unique set of challenges, including the preservation of historic sites, the balance between commercialization and authenticity, and the management of visitor flows. The study concluded by emphasizing the importance of balancing the preservation of cultural heritage with the economic benefits of tourism in urban areas. Further, Gossling (2019) analysed the challenges and opportunities of sustainable cultural heritage tourism. The study aims to explore the relationship between cultural heritage and sustainable tourism, and identify the challenges faced by destinations in achieving sustainable cultural heritage tourism. The study showed that cultural heritage tourism has the potential to provide economic benefits while preserving cultural heritage and promoting sustainable development. However, achieving sustainable cultural heritage tourism is challenging due to factors such as over tourism, lack of stakeholder involvement, and inadequate planning and management.

Marušić and Nikolić (2018) accessed the key issues and challenges of tourism and cultural heritage in Croatia. The study aims to explore the relationship between tourism and cultural heritage, and identify the challenges faced by destinations in preserving cultural heritage while promoting tourism. The study argued that cultural heritage is a significant resource for tourism in Croatia, but it is also vulnerable to overexploitation and degradation. The study revealed several key challenges, including inadequate management and planning, lack of financial resources, and insufficient stakeholder involvement. Similarly, Lee and Gretzel (2012) analysed the use of mobile augmented reality (MAR) for cultural tourism in Seoul, Korea. The study aims to explore the relationship between MAR and cultural tourism, and to identify the opportunities and challenges of using MAR for cultural tourism. The study argued that MAR can enhance tourists' experiences by providing them with interactive and immersive experiences of cultural heritage sites. The study stated several key benefits of using MAR, including the ability to provide context and historical information, and to provide a personalized

and interactive experience. However, the study also revealed that there are challenges to using MAR, such as the need for appropriate technological infrastructure and the potential for overreliance on technology.

In the context of Nepal, Acharya *et al.* (2018) examined the lack of effective policies and regulations related to cultural heritage. The study found that tourism has been identified as a problem which can lead to negative impacts such as the unsustainable development and management of cultural heritage tourism, and a decrease in the quality of the tourism experience. Likewise, Pradhan and Nepal (2021) analysed the relationship between tourism and cultural heritage conservation in Chitwan National Park, Nepal. The study found that Chitwan National Park has significant cultural heritage resources that can be leveraged for tourism, but that there are challenges to balancing tourism development with cultural heritage conservation. The study identifies several key challenges, including the need for sustainable tourism practices, the preservation of cultural heritage sites, and the involvement of local communities in tourism development. The study found that the improvement in these key factors will improve the cultural heritage tourism. Similarly, Thapa and Nepal (2017) investigates the challenges and opportunities for sustainable tourism development in the Annapurna Conservation Area of Nepal. The study aims to explore the relationship between sustainable tourism development and conservation of natural and cultural heritage. The study argued that Nepal's Annapurna Conservation Area has significant natural and cultural resources that can be leveraged for tourism, but that there are challenges to achieving sustainable tourism development. The study identifies several key challenges, including the need for appropriate infrastructure, the preservation of natural and cultural resources, and the involvement of local communities in tourism development. They found that there is positive relationship between environmental conservation and sustainability.

Nepal and Banskota (2017) investigates the satisfaction levels of tourists with cultural heritage tourism in Nepal. The study aims to explore the relationship between cultural heritage and tourist satisfaction, and to identify the factors that contribute to tourist satisfaction in cultural heritage tourism. The study argued that cultural heritage is an important resource for tourism in Nepal, and that understanding tourist satisfaction is crucial for the sustainable development of cultural heritage tourism. The study identified several key factors that contribute to tourist satisfaction, including the authenticity of cultural heritage sites, the quality of tourist facilities and services, and the overall destination experience which isn't as good.

The above discussion shows that empirical evidences vary greatly across the studies on the issues and challenges in cultural heritage tourism. Though there are above mentioned empirical evidences in the context of other countries and in Nepal, no such findings using more recent data exist in the context of Nepal. Therefore, in order to support one view or the other, this study has been conducted.

The major objective of the study is to examine the issues and challenges in cultural heritage tourism in Nepal. Specifically, it examines the relationship of government policies and regulations, community participation and empowerment, tourist behaviour and preferences, climate change and environmental concerns, technological advancement and innovation and economic factors and market demand with sustainability of cultural heritage tourism in Nepal.

The remainder of this study is organized as follows: section two describes the sample, data, and methodology. Section three presents the empirical results and final section draws the conclusion.

## 2. Methodological aspects

The study is based on the primary data which were collected from 121 respondents through questionnaire. The study employed convenience sampling method. The respondents' views were collected on government policy and regulations, community participation and empowerment, tourist behaviour and preferences, climate change and environmental concerns, technological advancement and innovations, economic factor and market demand and sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. This study is based on descriptive as well as causal comparative research designs.

### *The model*

The model used in this study assumes that sustainability of cultural heritage tourism depends upon cultural heritage. The dependent variable selected for the study is sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. Similarly, the selected independent variables are government policy and regulations, community participation and empowerment, tourist behaviour and preferences, climate change and environmental concerns, technological advancement and innovations, and economic factor and market demand. Therefore, the model takes the following form:

$$SB = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{ GPR} + \beta_2 \text{ CPE} + \beta_3 \text{ TBP} + \beta_4 \text{ CCEC} + \beta_5 \text{ TAI} + \beta_6 \text{ EM} + e$$

Where,

SB = Sustainability of cultural heritage tourism

GPR = Government policy and regulations

CPE = Community participation and empowerment

TBP = Tourist behaviour and preferences

CCEC = Climate change and environmental concerns

TAI = Technological advancement and innovations

EM = Economic factor and market demand

Government policy and regulations was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “The government’s policies have a significant impact on the preservation of cultural heritage sites, which is important for the sustainability of cultural tourism”, “The government’s policies have effectively addressed the challenges of managing large numbers of tourists at cultural heritage sites” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ( $\alpha = 0.713$ ).

Community participation and empowerment were measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “Local community involvement in cultural tourism planning and development is essential for the preservation of cultural heritage sites and the sustainability of tourism”, “The involvement of local communities in cultural tourism planning and development has helped to address issues of social and economic inequality in the tourism industry” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ( $\alpha = 0.835$ ).

Tourist behaviour and preferences were measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “Tourists who prioritize cultural heritage experiences are more likely to be willing to pay higher prices for culturally authentic experiences”, “Tourists who are interested in cultural heritage are more likely to seek out and support local businesses and communities involved in cultural tourism” and

so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha = 0.749$ ).

Climate change and environmental concerns was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include "Tourism development at cultural heritage sites has the potential to contribute to environmental degradation and climate change", "The responsible management of cultural heritage sites can help to promote environmental conservation and mitigate the impact of climate change" and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha = 0.723$ ).

Technological advancement and innovation were measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include "The use of technology can help to address challenges related to overcrowding and visitor management at cultural heritage sites", "The adoption of new technologies can help to promote the preservation and sustainability of cultural heritage sites" and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha = 0.778$ ).

Economic factor and market demand was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include "Market demand for cultural heritage tourism can create economic opportunities for local communities and promote cultural preservation and revitalization", "Economic factors such as competition and pricing can create challenges for cultural heritage tourism development and sustainability" and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha = 0.711$ ).

Sustainability of cultural heritage tourism was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include "Cultural heritage tourism initiatives should be designed to prioritize the preservation and sustainability of cultural heritage sites", "The sustainability of cultural heritage tourism requires the involvement and empowerment of local communities" and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha = 0.872$ ).

The following section describes the independent variables used in this



study along with the hypothesis formulation.

### *Government policy and regulations*

Government policy and regulations as the national laws, regulations, and policies that shape the development and promotion of cultural heritage tourism, including funding and tax incentives, planning and zoning regulations, and heritage preservation laws (Li and Wang, 2017). Timothy and Weeks (2010) examined the relationship between government policy and the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. The study found that government policy played a crucial role in ensuring the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism by implementing regulations and guidelines for preserving heritage sites. Similarly, Cheer *et al.* (2013) examined the relationship between government policy and the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism in Southeast Asia. The study found that government policy has a significant impact on the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism, as it influenced the development and management of heritage sites. Likewise, Abson *et al.* (2017) found a positive relationship between government policy and the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism in the UK. They found that government policies that prioritized the preservation and conservation of heritage sites were essential for ensuring the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. The government policies that promoted sustainable tourism practices and protected heritage sites were critical for the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism (Kim *et al.*, 2018). Bhandari and Khadka (2015) analyzed the relationship between government policy and the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism in Nepal. The study stated that government policies that prioritize the preservation and conservation of heritage sites, while promoting sustainable tourism practices, are essential for ensuring the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. Likewise, Bhandari *et al.* (2019) examined that government policies that support sustainable tourism practices and protect heritage sites are critical for the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism, and that the government needs to take a more proactive role in developing and implementing such policies. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a positive relationship between government regulation and policies and sustainability of cultural heritage tourism.

### *Community participation and empowerment*

Kim and Uysal (2013) defined community participation and empowerment as the involvement of local communities in the decision-making process, as well as their engagement in the planning, development,



and management of cultural heritage tourism activities. Gursoy *et al.* (2004) analysed the relationship between community participation and sustainability of cultural heritage tourism in Samos. The study argued that community participation and empowerment are crucial for ensuring the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. The role of community participation in sustainable tourism planning. The study argued that community participation and empowerment are critical for ensuring the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism (Jamal and Getz, 1995). Similarly, Gursoy and Rutherford (2004) examined the relationship between community attitudes and the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. The study argued that community participation and empowerment can improve community attitudes toward tourism, and thus contribute to the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. Likewise, Sharpley (2002) explored the role of community participation in diversifying tourism in Cyprus. The study argued that community participation and empowerment can facilitate the development of sustainable cultural heritage tourism. Subedi and Nepal (2017) analysed the impact of community participation on the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism in Nepal. The study found that community participation and empowerment can contribute to the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. Likewise, Bhandari *et al.* (2021) examined the relationship between community participation and the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism in Bhaktapur, Nepal. The study argued that community participation and empowerment are critical for ensuring the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism, and that local communities need to be involved in decision-making processes related to tourism development. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H<sub>2</sub>: There is a positive relationship between community participation and empowerment and sustainability of cultural heritage tourism.

### *Tourist behaviour and preferences*

Bieger and Wittmer (2006) defined tourist behavior and preferences as the activities, attitudes, and preferences of tourists in relation to cultural heritage tourism experiences. Tourist behavior, as an independent variable, refers to the decisions, actions, and experiences of tourists in relation to cultural heritage tourism activities and attractions, including the selection of destinations, the evaluation of experiences, and the formation of attitudes and opinions (Wang *et al.*, 2016). Kozak (2002) examined the relationship between tourist behaviour and sustainability of cultural heritage tourism, the study argued that understanding tourist motivations and preferences can contribute to the development of sustainable cultural heritage tourism.

Similarly, Woo *et al.* (2015) stated that sustainable cultural heritage tourism requires an understanding of tourist behaviour and the development of strategies to manage tourism impacts. Likewise, Bhandari *et al.* (2021) assessed the tourist behaviour and sustainable cultural heritage tourism development in Nepal: A case study of Bhaktapur. The study argued that understanding tourist behaviour and preferences is essential for the development of sustainable cultural heritage tourism. Similarly, Banskota and Nepal (2016) examined the relationship between tourist behaviour and sustainability of cultural heritage tourism in Nepal. The study argued that understanding tourist behaviour and preferences is essential for the development of sustainable cultural heritage tourism. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H<sub>3</sub>: There is a positive relationship between tourist behaviour and preferences and sustainability of cultural heritage tourism.

#### *Climate change and environmental concerns*

Environmental concern, as an independent variable, represents the level of awareness and concern that individuals have for the natural environment, including the ecosystems, flora, and fauna that are affected by cultural heritage tourism activities (Choi and Sirakaya, 2006). Gössling and Hall (2006) examined the impact of climate change on cultural heritage tourism destinations. The study found that climate change could have a significant impact on the sustainability of these destinations, particularly in terms of their ability to attract tourists and generate revenue. Likewise, Jamal and Robinson (2010) examined the relationship between climate change and cultural heritage tourism in developing countries. The study found that cultural heritage tourism could be used as a tool for sustainable development. Similarly, Ruggiero and Buckley (2013) explored the ways in which climate change was affecting the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism sites in Australia. The study found that rising sea levels and increased storm activity were having a significant impact on these sites, and that action was needed to mitigate these effects. Further, Kim and Ko (2015) found that tourists are becoming increasingly aware of the impact of climate change on these destinations, and that this was influencing their travel decisions. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H<sub>4</sub>: There is a positive relationship between climate change and environmental concerns and sustainability of cultural heritage tourism.

### *Technological advancement and innovations*

Xiang *et al.* (2017) defined technological advancement, as an independent variable, encompasses the development and use of new technologies, such as virtual reality, mobile applications, and social media that have the potential to transform cultural heritage tourism experiences and improve the sustainability of tourism operations. Lee and Gretzel (2012) analysed the impact of mobile technology on cultural heritage tourism. The study found that mobile technology had the potential to enhance the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism by providing visitors with interactive and personalized experiences. Similarly, Kim and Ko (2013) analyzed the relationship between social media and cultural heritage tourism. The study found that social media could be used as a tool for promoting sustainable tourism practices and enhancing the visitor experience. Likewise, Zhang and Li (2021) assessed the use of blockchain technology in cultural heritage tourism. The study found that block chain technology could be used as a tool for promoting sustainable tourism practices by enhancing transparency and accountability in the management of cultural heritage sites. Similarly, Kavoura *et al.* (2019) examined the use of mobile applications in cultural heritage tourism. Based on these, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H<sub>5</sub>: There is a positive relationship between technological advancement and innovations and sustainability of cultural heritage tourism.

### *Economic factors and market demand*

Chen and Chen (2010) defined economic factor as the economic conditions and policies that affect the viability and profitability of cultural heritage tourism businesses and destinations, including access to financing, labour markets, and infrastructure. Kozak and Rimmington (2000) analysed the relationship between the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism and economic factors was examined in the context of Turkey. The study found that economic factors, such as employment and income, were positively related to the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. The study suggested that sustainable tourism policies should focus on maximizing economic benefits while minimizing negative impacts on cultural heritage sites. The economic factors, such as tourism expenditures and employment, had a positive impact on the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. Similarly, Yüksel and Yüksel (2007) investigated the relationship between economic factors and the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism in the context of the Cappadocia region of Turkey. The study recommended that local authorities

should adopt policies that encourage responsible tourism practices in order to enhance the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. Similarly, Aas and Ladkin (2010) analysed the relationship between economic factors and the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism in the context of Norway. The study found that economic factors, such as tourism revenues and employment, has a positive impact on the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. Likewise, Wu and Stone (2019) examined the relationship between economic factors and cultural heritage tourism was examined in the context of China. The study found that economic factors, such as tourism expenditures and employment, are positively related to the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

$H_6$ : There is a positive relationship between economic factors and market demand and sustainability of cultural heritage tourism.

### 3. Results and discussion

#### *Correlation analysis*

On analysis of data, correlation analysis has been undertaken first and for this purpose, Kendall's Tau correlation coefficients along with mean and standard deviation has been computed and the results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

#### **Kendall's Tau correlation coefficients matrix**

This table presents Kendall's Tau coefficients between dependent and independent variables. The correlation coefficients are based on 121 observations. The dependent variable is SB (Sustainability of cultural heritage tourism) and the independent variables are GP (Government policy and regulations), CP (Community participation and empowerment), TB (Tourist behaviour and preferences), CC (Climate change and environmental concerns), TA (Technological advancements and innovation) and EM (Economic factors and market demand).

Variables	Mean	S.D.	SB	GPR	CPE	TBP	CCEC	TAI	EM
SB	3.921	0.811	1						
GP	3.235	0.820	0.076**	1					
CP	3.144	0.873	0.337**	0.353**	1				
TB	3.036	0.812	0.324**	0.311**	0.521**	1			
CC	3.279	0.831	0.242**	0.396**	0.540**	0.517**	1		
TA	3.155	0.900	0.338**	0.322**	0.441**	0.518**	0.508**	1	
EM	3.319	0.865	0.187**	0.352**	0.410**	0.463**	0.466**	0.519**	1

Note: The asterisk signs (\*\*) and (\*) indicate that the results are significant at one percent and five percent levels respectively.

Table 1 shows that government rules and regulation is positively correlated to sustainability of cultural heritage tourism indicating that strong

government rules and regulation increases the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. Similarly, community participation and empowerment are positively correlated to sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. It implies that higher the community participation and empowerment, higher would be the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. Further, tourist behaviour and preferences are positively correlated to sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. It indicates that better the tourist behaviour and preferences, better would be the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. In addition, climate change and environmental concerns are positively correlated to sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. It shows that change in climate and environmental concerns leads to change in sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. Further, technological advancement and innovation is positively correlated to sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. It indicates that higher the technological advancement and innovation, higher would be the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. In addition, economic factors and market demand are positively correlated to sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. It indicates that increase in economic factors and market demand, would lead to increase the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism.

*Regression analysis*

Having indicated the Kendall’s Tau correlation coefficients, the regression analysis has been carried out and the results are presented in Table 2. More specifically, it shows the regression results of government policy and regulations, community participation and empowerment, tourist behaviour and preferences, climate change and environmental concerns, technological advancement and innovations, economic factor and market demand on sustainability of cultural heritage tourism in Nepal.

The regression results of government policy and regulations, community participation and empowerment, tourist behaviour and preferences, climate change and environmental concerns, technological advancements and innovation, and economic factors and market demand on sustainability of cultural heritage tourism is shown in Table 2.

Table 2

**Estimated regression results of government policy and regulations, community participation and empowerment, tourist behaviour and preferences, climate change and environmental concerns, technological advancements and innovation, economic factors and market demand on sustainability of cultural heritage tourism**

The results are based on 121 observations using linear regression model. The model is  $SB = \beta_0 + \beta_1 GPR + \beta_2 CPE + \beta_3 TBP + \beta_4 CCEC + \beta_5 TAI + \beta_6 EM + e$  where the dependent variable is SB (Sustainability of cultural heritage tourism) and the independent variables are GPR (Government policy and regulations), CPE (Community participation and empowerment), TBP (Tourist behaviour and preferences), CCEC (Climate change and environmental concerns), TAI (Technological advancements and innovation) and EM (Economic factors and market demand).

Model	Intercept	Regression coefficients of						Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	SEE	F-value
		GPR	CPE	TBI	CCEC	TAI	EM			
1	2.940 (9.664)**	0.294 (3.287)**						0.076	0.569	10.801
2	1.764 (5.531)**		0.583 (6.846)**					0.277	0.503	46.865
3	2.039 (7.124)**			0.513 (6.678)**				0.267	0.507	44.600
4	2.269 (6.759)**				0.453 (4.988)**			0.166	0.540	24.884
5	1.857 (6.293)**					0.551 (7.096)**		0.291	0.498	50.358
6	2.209 (5.722)**						0.462 (4.484)**	0.137	0.550	20.109
7	1.764 (5.194)**	0.001 (0.007)	0.583 (5.726)**					0.270	0.505	23.235
8	1.610 (4.750)**	0.004 (0.045)	0.348 (2.481)*	0.276 (2.392)*				0.298	0.496	18.016
9	1.635 (4.739)**	0.021 (0.205)	0.368 (2.476)*	0.294 (2.384)*	0.061 (0.426)			0.294	0.497	13.463
10	1.539 (4.615)**	0.060 (0.596)	0.299 (2.064)*	0.210 (1.725)	0.217 (1.485)	0.400 (3.180)**		0.345	0.479	13.639
11	1.395 (3.772)**	0.088 (0.087)	0.321 (2.183)*	0.197 (1.609)	0.259 (1.687)	0.375 (2.911)**	0.121 (0.899)	0.344	0.479	11.482

Notes:

- Figures in parenthesis are t-values.
- The asterisk signs (\*\*) and (\*) indicate that the results are significant at one percent and five percent level respectively.
- Sustainability of cultural heritage tourism is dependent variable.

The regression results show that the beta coefficients for government policies and regulations are positive with sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. It indicates that government policies and regulations have positive impact on sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. The finding is consistent with the findings of Timothy and Weeks (2010). Similarly, the beta coefficients for community participation and involvement are positive with sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. It indicates that community participation and involvement have positive impact on sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. The findings is consistent with the findings of Gursoy and Rutherford (2004). Likewise, the beta coefficients for tourist behaviour and preference are positive with sustainability cultural heritage tourism. It indicates that tourist behaviour and preference have positive impact on sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. This result is consistent with the findings of Kozak (2002). Further, the beta coefficients for climate change and environmental concerns

are positive with sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. It indicates that climate change and environmental concerns have positive impact on the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. This finding is consistent with the findings of Kim and Ko (2015). In addition, the beta coefficients for technological advancement and innovations are positive with the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. It indicates that technological advancement and innovations have positive impact on sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. This finding is similar to the findings of Zhang and Li (2021). Moreover, the beta coefficients for economic factors and market demand are positive with sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. It indicates that economic factors and market demand have positive impact on sustainability of cultural heritage tourism. This finding is similar to the findings of Aas and Ladkin (2010).

#### **4. Summary and conclusion**

Tourism industry is huge and still growing and the cultural heritage tourism segment is rapidly growing with it. Good number of people travel every year to witness the tangible and intangible cultural heritages of different places. Nepal is a country rich in cultural heritage making it have incredible prospect in cultural heritage tourism. But the cultural heritages need to be preserved and tended to time and again with passing time which makes the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism challenging. The identification of factors that impacts the cultural heritage tourism will facilitate the concerned people in preservation.

This study attempts to examine the factors of sustainability of cultural heritage tourism in Nepal. The study is based on primary data of 121 respondents.

The major conclusion of this study is that government policies and regulations, community participation and empowerment, tourist behaviour and preferences, climate change and environmental concerns, technological advancement and innovation, economic factors and market demand enhance the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism in Nepal. The study also concludes that community participation and empowerment followed by technological advancements and innovations is the most significant factors that explain the sustainability of cultural heritage tourism.

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