

**A PROJECT WORK ON
AN EXPLORATION OF STAFF AND GUEST PERSPECTIVES
REGARDING SUSTAINABILITY IN THE NEPALI HOSPITALITY
SECTOR**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the project work report entitled “**An Exploration of Staff and Guest Perspectives Regarding Sustainability in the Nepali Hospitality Sector**” submitted for the BHM is my original work and the Project work report has not formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, or other similar title.

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Arbin Paudel

July, 2026

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the Project Work Titled '**An Exploration of Staff and Guest Perspectives Regarding Sustainability in the Nepali Hospitality Sector**' Submitted by **Arbin Paudel** for the partial fulfillment of the requirement of BHM embodies the Bonafide work done by his under my supervision.

.....

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The hospitality sector worldwide is one of the most vibrant and fast-changing industries. Besides, it plays a significant part in the economic growth, creation of jobs, and sharing of cultures. However, in recent decades, besides its economic and social benefits this sector is also revealing its dark side in terms of the environment and society. Factors such as water and energy intensive nature of hotels, restaurants and other tourism-related facilities, large amounts of waste generated by them as well as their carbon footprint are some of the ways in which these industries impact the environment negatively. Consequently, with the rising global concern about environmental harm and climate change, the concept of sustainability has evolved from being just a practice that some companies that want to do good follow in the hospitality industry to a main principle in the sector. The United Nations World Tourism Organization emphasizes that sustainable tourism development must meet the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future, ensuring that economic, social, and environmental impacts are fully accounted for in tourism planning and management (UNEP & WTO, 2005).

When talking about sustainability in hospitality, people mostly mean the implementation of eco-friendly measures, social justice and economic stability. Apart from making use of energy-efficient devices, reducing wastes, saving water, sourcing food and materials locally and responsibly, it also involves reaching out and getting the communities involved. In order to reduce the environmental impacts of tourism while at the same time provide quality services, it is necessary for the tourism industry to shift toward sustainable consumption and production patterns (UNEP, 2018). Due to this, a large number of international hotel groups and independent hotels have started to get green certified, use eco-labels as well as carry out corporate social responsibility programs to be in line with international sustainability standards. Two of the major stakeholder groups that determine the success of the implementation of and formation of perceptions about sustainability practices in hotels are the staff and guests. The role of hotel staff is obvious in the operationalization of such sustainability initiatives as reduction of energy use, waste segregation, linen reuse,

and environmental compliance. Suspending the training of staff, along with their motivation and understanding (which can be seen as components of the whole), is a very efficient way of influencing the success of sustainability strategies. Employee engagement is widely recognized as a critical factor in the successful implementation of sustainability within the hospitality sector, as it is the frontline staff operating at the ground level who translate organizational sustainability policies into concrete everyday actions (Zhang, J. et al., 2025a)

Hotel guests, on the other hand, are the ones who, through their expectations and preferences as well as their choices, affect sustainability practices. Environmental consciousness has become one of the attributes of the modern travelers, and quite often, they choose accommodation providers who display responsible environmental and social conducts. However, guest awareness and participation in sustainability initiatives differ by cultural background, education, and the purpose of travel to a great extent. Hospitality management literature indicates that in case of many guests, although they show willingness and positive attitudes toward sustainability in general, they are less ready to engage themselves in eco-friendly behaviors during their stay, especially when they feel that convenience or comfort are being compromised. Hospitality and tourism industry is a key socio-economic service in Nepal which supports employment, earning of foreign exchange and rural development. Beautiful natural sceneries, culture and biodiversity of Nepal have made it a popular place of interest for tourists from across the world. Despite these positive attributes, there are a number of sustainability issues and challenges faced by the sector. Major sustainability challenges faced include managing wastes in mountainous areas, promoting energy efficiency in remote areas and merging the growth of tourism with the preservation of environment. Major sustainability challenges faced include managing wastes in mountainous areas, promoting energy efficiency in remote areas and merging the growth of tourism with the preservation of environment. Nepal government through its tourism policies is highlighting the necessity of sustainable tourism practices so that fragile ecosystems and cultural heritage sites can be protected (MoCTCA, 2020). In spite of these policy guidelines, the actual application of environmentally friendly measures in Nepalese hotels is a bit patchy. Big hotels and international chains situated in the urban areas like Kathmandu and Pokhara are the ones who are more into structured sustainability projects, such as using energy-efficient equipment, setting up waste management systems, and carrying out

community-based activities. On the other hand, small and medium-sized hotels that actually make up a great part of the industry usually struggle with lack of resources, not having enough technical knowledge, and not being trained, which are factors that prevent them from going green. On top of that, there is an obvious discrepancy between sustainability practice and stakeholder perception in the Nepalese hospitality industry. Even if hotel authorities bring up environmentally friendly measures, they can only do so effectively and lead to behavioral change through the awareness of the hotel staff and the participations of the guests. For instance, the programs to reuse linen or the system of waste segregation will work only if the two sides employees and guests are on the same page and doing their part. This means that one cannot ignore the viewpoints of both the hotel staff and the guests when it comes to the evaluation of ecological practices.

Scholarly works on hospitality sustainability propose that perception is a key element in dictating conduct. For instance, if employees see ecological projects as an extra burden that does not clearly benefit them, their dedication will be minimal. Correspondingly, if tourists fail to comprehend the reason for the environmental actions, they will not take part in them properly. Thus, looking at perceptions from both standpoints is extremely helpful in showing the operational advantages and disadvantages of going green initiatives. Research into sustainability in hospitality is a new area in Nepal and only a few studies have compared staff and guest perspectives on the same issues. Most of the existing research in Nepal mainly discusses either the environmental impact of tourism or the general quality of hotel services. There is very little focus on sustainability as a joint responsibility of both service providers and consumers in these studies. This leaves a major gap in research, especially in revealing how sustainability efforts by employees and customers in the Nepalese hotel sector are experienced, understood, and valued. Besides, worldwide tourism trends show that sustainability is turning into a unique selling point for hospitality businesses. Hotels that adopt sustainable practices can have double benefits of cutting down their running costs and upgrading their brand image leading to customer loyalty. Studies from abroad have found that travelers tend to select the hotels that take care of the environment diligently and the hotels that portray and carry out the sustainability practices clearly and transparently. However, one of the big problems in tourism growth destinations like Nepal is that they are trying to balance sustainability along with low prices and easy access as majority of tourists are still looking mainly

for cheaper prices. So, conducting research to find out the views of the staff and guests about sustainability in the Nepali hospitality industry is at the right moment as well as a necessity. It opens a window to how sustainability at various levels of hotel and customer operations is understood. The study also helps to find out if sustainability messages are being delivered effectively and if the stakeholder expectations are met. Finally, such research lays the foundation for strengthening sustainability practices in Nepalese hotels, which is a win-win scenario for the industry expanding overtime while at the same time safeguarding the environment and culture.

To sum up, sustainability in hospitality is a major factor of contemporary tourism development, and it's a far cry from the last concern any more. In the context of Nepal, it is of even greater significance since tourism is dependent on the nature and tradition of the place. Nevertheless, the success of these methods is not only dictated by administration and policies but also by the views and actions of the workers and customers. Examining both these points is a must for uncovering the shortcomings, facilitating better execution, and making the sustainability concept a practical and in-exchange-for-the-Nepali-hospitality-sector reality.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The hospitality industry in Nepal is witnessing continuous development mainly due to rising domestic and international tourists. However, with the boom of tourism, issues such as environmental pollution, overuse of resources, and waste disposal are being highlighted more and more. Hotels, being one of the main service providers in this sector, have a major part in driving sustainability in tourism. Nevertheless, even though sustainability is becoming a global concern, most of the hotels in Nepal still struggle with the transformation of sustainability concepts into their routine working environment. This situation brings about questions on how well the sector understands and implements the principles of sustainability. One of the critical problems is the existence of a considerable disparity between the formulation of sustainability policies and their execution on the ground. Although some hotels have taken the lead in cutting down their energy use, sorting waste, and limiting the use of plastics among other things, the real results of these efforts largely hinge on the knowledge, mindset, and willingness of the employees as well as the customers to participate. Frequently, hotel staff might be untrained or not stimulated enough to carry out sustainability practices consistently, and at the same time, guests might not

be made aware of or involved in such initiatives. Consequently, there is non-uniformity in the performance that ultimately diminishes the collective effect of sustainability endeavors in the hospitality set-up.

Besides that, there is hardly any study conducted in the context of Nepal that explores sustainability from the point of view of two primary stakeholders i.e. hotel staff and guests by comparing their respective perceptions. Most of the existing research either delves into the operational side of hotels or covers general tourist satisfaction without analyzing the extent to which sustainability practices are experienced and interpreted by the two groups. Due to this lack of thorough knowledge, it becomes a challenge for hotel managers and policy developers to formulate sound strategies that not only make the operations sustainable but also meet guest expectations. Hence, the exploration and comparison of staff and guest points of view will be required to unearth the current gaps and to enhance the implementation of sustainability in the Nepali hospitality sector.

1.3 Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How do hospitality employees in Nepal interpret and get involved with sustainability at their work and through their professional lifestyle?
2. How do tourists, the customers of Nepal's hospitality industry, view and react to the sustainability of this industry?
3. In what way do the opinions of the employees and customers about the sustainability in Nepal's hospitality sector match and differ?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

- To investigate the perceptions of hotel workers in Nepal and how they understand and carry out sustainability practices in hotels.
- To assess how much the tourists visiting Nepalese hotels know about and perceive sustainability initiatives during their stay.
- To identify the gaps, similarities and differences in the perceptions and effectiveness of sustainability practices in the Nepali hospitality sector through a staff and guest perspective comparison.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This is highly crucial research as it certainly helps us understand better how different sustainability activities are viewed and carried out within the hospitality

sector of Nepal. Since making sustainable efforts is a worldwide focus in tourism and hospitality, hotels in Nepal are getting more and more under pressure to come up with and follow environmentally responsible and socially aware practices. But the extent to which these measures achieve their purpose is quite dependent on the degree to which the staff and guests comprehend and support them. So, in a way, this research study is a step towards closing that gap by looking at the matter in terms of two important stakeholders. Hotel owners and other members of the hospitality sector will realize from this research that sustainability is a wide-ranging concept that potentially impacts various aspects of hotel operation and management. Analyzing the present state of awareness, implementation, and facing of challenges regarding sustainability practices can be a tool for reshaping hotel strategies and policies to be more rooted in sustainability. Identifying the differences between the sustainability policies that are meant to be followed and the actual ways of doing things at the operational level goes further in helping hotel managers to come up with better training for the workers, improve communication, and come up with sustainability programs that are not only effective but also that the guests can see and feel. Regarding the role of guests in the overall tourism experience, the present study draws attention to the importance of consumer knowledge and engagement in the adoption of sustainable hospitality practices. It points out that if hotels take into account the ways guests view sustainability, they will be more able to meet customer expectations, ensuring greater satisfaction and creating stronger brand loyalty. At the same time, tourists themselves are more motivated to act in a responsible way during their visit.

From the point of view of academic scholars and potential subsequent investigations, this study is a valuable addition to an already small collection of works focusing on the hospitality sector in Nepal and its sustainability from both staff and guest perspectives. Besides bringing fresh insights, it is likely to trigger more research on the subject eventually leading to improved standards and worker practices ensuring environmental preservation. Having these studies on hand is also handy when critical policy decisions at the industry level need to be made to better reinforce environmental performance.

1.6 Literature Review

The idea of sustainability in hospitality has radically changed over the last twenty years. First, it was a very small, niche idea mostly held by a few environmentally conscious operators. Now, it has turned into one of the most

important parts of the strategic management of the entire tourism industry worldwide. Rising awareness of the negative environmental impacts of tourism has led to more and more questioning by both researchers and operatives of how hotels and service providers can be more eco-friendly while still providing quality experiences to their guests. The industry's focus on sustainability cannot be explained only by a response to government enforcement or fear of damage to the company's image. The changes we see nowadays in the hospitality business are in fact, a big transformation of the industry's views, and its commitments towards the natural environment, local people, and future generations (Bohdanowicz & Zientara, 2008). The triple bottom line model is the most typical way of sustainability framing in the hospitality field. It aims at balancing environmental, economic, and social performance at the same time (Elkington, 1997). Hospitality scholars have extensively employed this model as a theoretical framework to assess how well hotels are on the one hand managing natural resources, contributing to the well-being of the local community, and on the other hand, generating a reasonable level of income that can sustain the business over time. Nevertheless, even though it has helped in thinking and is used in many places, the triple bottom line model has been a target of quite a bit of criticism for its overlooking the reality that in many situations, especially when it comes to developing countries, decisions on sustainability are full of difficult trade-offs, and sometimes people have to choose their immediate economic survival over the environment (Mowforth & Munt, 2015). This is very true for Nepal where, on the one hand, the hospitality industry suffers from lack of resources, poor infrastructure, and doesn't have enough regulation enforcement, and on the other hand, trying to reach all three dimensions of sustainability is a really big challenge.

The international discussion about sustainable tourism is largely driven by global policy frameworks. Among these frameworks are the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with focus on Goal 12 for responsible consumption and production, Goal 13 for climate action, and Goal 8 for decent work and economic growth. The United Nations World Tourism Organization has always reiterated that tourism development should be done in such a way that it protects the delicate ecological systems, brings significant socioeconomic benefits to the host communities, and at the same time, makes the tourism industry viable in the long run (UNEP & WTO, 2005). However, the challenge of turning these world-level, normative commitments into local, hotel-level actions is still a major and

disappointing one, especially for destinations like Nepal where the government is not very capable, stakeholders' awareness of sustainability is widely different, and the mechanisms for enforcement are often weak. Therefore, the difference between what is hoped for in policy and what actually happens in operations is not just a technical issue that can be fixed with better systems or technologies. It is, in fact, a deeply human problem which arises from awareness, motivation, and behavior.

Nowadays, sustainability research in hospitality is widely distinguished from previous ones, which mainly concentrated on technical interventions, in the way that it focuses much more on the human aspect of sustainability. By human aspects, we mean the perceptions, attitudes, motivations, and behaviors of the people who implement and experience at the operational level sustainability practices. Today, instead of considering only infrastructural solutions like energy-efficient lightings, solar panels, and water recycling systems, recent research has also highlighted the role of hotel staff as sustainability agents at the frontline and of guests as active co-producers of sustainable tourism experiences (Zhang, Y. et al., 2025b). This change in the research center is a reflection of a more comprehensive and finer understanding that the effectiveness of a sustainability project depends not only on the quality of the systems and technologies that are introduced but also on the values, knowledge, and the actual engagement of those who are part of and users of these systems. In fact, Han, Hsu, and Sheu (2010) explain that it is a complicated combination of personal norms, social influence, perceived moral obligation, and contextual factors that can explain behavioral intention and actual participation in green practices, which hotel management, cannot simply enforce by policies.

These dynamics are especially important in the case of Nepal where tourism remains a significant source of income for the locals. In fact, Nepal's tourism is mostly concentrated in the mountain areas that are ecologically very fragile and naturally beautiful. Besides nature, the country boasts of its cultural heritage and scenic beauty. Tourism has indeed uplifted the rural communities, among which has majority of the population. Tourism not only provides livelihood but also uplifts the social conditions. Natural beauties of the country such as the Himalayas and the ancient temples and structures that are recognized as UNESCO World Heritage Sites have dual roles. On one hand, they are the biggest attraction for tourism and thus, the source of income for many. On the other hand, due to overexploitation and unsustainable practices, these natural and cultural assets are at the risk of getting

deteriorated. Therefore, in the backdrop of the ongoing debate on the environment and sustainability, the issue of tourism gaining 'high stakes' via the negative aspect of it being 'unsustainable' comes up quite often and quite apt in this case (MoCTCA, 2020). Although Nepal government has taken steps towards implementing policies related to environmental preservation and sustainable tourism, substantial research on the ways sustainability is perceived and practiced in the hotel industry and more importantly, how the understanding differs between the service providers and the consumers of services (staff and guests respectively) is very few. Such lack of stakeholder-related studies not only creates an academic vacuum but also becomes a hindrance for the tourism industry to have and implement a well-derived sustainability management strategy.

This review of related literature presents three discourse areas whose interlocking constitute, on the one hand, the content scope of the study and, on the other hand, the lens through which the research questions may be addressed. First, it is the scope of the hospitality industry's sustainability strategies and their inherent difficulties at large which the paper undertakes as the initial issue. The paper also opens up the Nepalese context through separate sub-sections especially since the realities of these two contexts are so different. The next area looks into the perceptions of the workers in the hotel industry and their degree of involvement in the sustainability issues through work motivation theories and behavioral change as two key ways of analysis. The third topic deals with guests' environmental consciousness and eco-friendly behaviors during hotel stay, making the whole discussion led by a question that goes back to traveler's transformation through their stay, which is not very easy (and this behavior gap is already well known and documented). Finally, the paper points out those areas in the existing body of literature where we find the shortcomings which the present research is going to fill by placing it in the general academic discussions on the topics of sustainability, stakeholder engagement, and responsible tourism in Nepal.

1.6.1 Sustainability Practices and Challenges in the Hotel Industry

Sustainability practices implemented in the hotel industry have been highly recorded worldwide, covering geographical, organizational, and cultural differences, with the production of a very diversified yet at times contradictory set of results. Via energy management, waste reduction, water conservation, and sustainable

procurement, hotels attempt to attenuate their environmental impact and showcase corporate social responsibility, a very few research always mention these as main operational areas. Large-scale empirical research by Chan, et al. (2014) at hotels in Hong Kong revealed that although most properties had embraced some green practices, the level of adoption varied dramatically across different hotel categories, ownership types, and levels of management commitment. Very importantly, their study unveiled that companies often resort to sustainability in a scattered, standalone fashion issue rather than as an integral, organization-wide strategy, which is indeed very much applicable to the Nepalese scenario. The consequence of fragmentation is not only that individual interventions hardly have a combined environmental impact, but also the messages to both staff and guests about the hotel's real dedication to sustainability become inconsistent, and thus trust and involvement get affected negatively.

International organizations and industry bodies have promoted the certification and eco-labeling movement as standardized mechanisms by which sustainability performance of hotels is incentivized and communicated. Hotels that are certified under such schemes as LEED, Green Globe, and Earth Check, benefit from the benchmarking frameworks provided to them in a structured manner and have the most reliable way of showing their environmental credentials to the increasing number of eco-conscious travelers. Mensah (2006) investigating the use of environmental management practices by hotels in Ghana, revealed that although the larger, internationally branded hotels tended to go for formal certification, the majority of smaller, locally owned ones did not have enough financial resources, competencies, and managerial capacity needed to be able to meet certification standards. This discovery can very well guide Nepal, where the hotel industry is also mainly made up of small and medium-sized enterprises that may desire sustainability but at the same time encounter very real structural impediments to its implementation. It is a different narrative to the one, frequently encountered in policy, that going through the process of awareness raising will be ample to cause a change in behaviors, hotels very much depend on the material conditions under which they operate.

The debate about how sustainability adoption might affect the financial performance of a hotel has been an especially controversial topic of research. Many articles in the literature emphasize that through sustainability investments, hotels can receive positive returns, such as lower operating costs, better brand differentiation,

and improved guest loyalty (Bohdanowicz, 2006; Kang et al., 2010). Unfortunately, these most hopeful perspectives are contradicted by performance for beneficial sustainability that are financial are not only long-term but also uncertain, whereas the first costs are very present and they are the biggest and highest ones that discourage investing especially resource-constrained operators (Holcomb, et al., 2007). Besides, they also emphasized that sustainability commitments were often being used as a marketing tool by a hotel for trying to gain benefits aside from being truly ethical rather than greenwashing, which leads to a lot of questions if commercially driven sustainability is substantively different from greenwashing. This is more a real situation in Nepal where hotels use green marketing to attract tourists but in reality, hardly practice green operation. Besides, the lack of strong monitoring system leaves guests and regulators unable to bring out the real commitment from mere performance (Holcomb, et al., 2007).

In the case of Nepal and, to some extent, the whole South Asian region, the sustainability issues of the hotel sector are intensified by a very specific set of structural and contextual factors. Dhungel (2009) described the harsh infrastructural limitations of Nepalese hotels, such as the sporadic power supply, the lack of proper waste management facilities, and the scarcity of sustainable supply chains, which are factors that hardly facilitate the implementation of internationally recognized sustainability standards in such underdeveloped contexts. Due to these infrastructural gaps, hotels in Nepal sometimes have to make a compromise between their operations and environmental best practices, for example, by using diesel generators during power outage or non-local suppliers when local ones are not available or reliable. Instead of simply blaming the hotels for the poor sustainability results due to unwillingness or unawareness, it is important to think about the real physical constraints that determine what is possible for hotels in less fortunate environmental conditions.

Moreover, the one-of-a-kind geographical and cultural characteristics of Nepal present sustainability issues that standards developed based on hotel markets in Western or East Asian countries fail to cover adequately. The presence of high-altitude trekking routes and mountain lodges hardly intermittently increases the pressures in such areas around waste disposal, water use, and firewood consumption, which are non-existent in urban hotel markets (Sharma, et al., 2015). At the same time, hospitality holds a very important place in Nepalese culture where the notion of

atithi devo bhava, meaning "the guest is God, " has created very strong norms of providing generous service, and this could be a source of conflict with sustainability initiatives that the guests might think are lowering not only the quantity but also the quality of service. Hence, a comprehension of sustainability in Nepalese hospitality not only demands the use of international standards but also requires an understanding of how specific cultural, geographical, and economic factors impact both the challenges and opportunities for responsible hotel management in this area.

1.6.2 Staff Perceptions and Employee Engagement with Sustainability

Within the hospitality management field, the role of hotel staff in the successful execution of sustainability initiatives is becoming a major focus of research. Today, it is more than generally accepted that even the most technically advanced environmental management system or the most attentively designed sustainability policy depends for its effectiveness on the frontline workers who are able to make the organization's intentions a part of everyday operational reality. According to Zhang, J. et al. (2025a), the extent to which employees are involved in sustainability can be regarded as a key factor, or even the deciding factor, in hotels' success or failure regarding their environmental and social goals. In fact, it is the individual decisions and behaviors of the staff members throughout the day e.g., how they control energy consumption, dispose of waste, behave towards guests, and deal with environmental situations that, when added up, determine the actual sustainability performance of a hotel. This change in perspective means that sustainability is no longer a top-down managerial directive but a common organizational culture that all employees at different staff levels must accept and live by.

The studies on the factors influencing employee sustainability attitudes and practices point out a complicated network of personal, organizational, and environmental elements. In a major review of green human resource management in hospitality. Pham, et al. (2019) found that sustainability-related training, performance appraisal, and incentives were strongly linked to enhancing employees' environmental dedication and pro-environmental behavior. Most importantly, however, they discovered that the organizational climate was the key factor influencing the success of these strategies in other words, employees were much more willing to connect with sustainability issues when they saw that their company's commitment was true and consistent, rather than a display or selective. This result has major implications for the

hotels in Nepal where, sustainability training courses, if any, are often made up of random sessions and are not linked to the company's values and/or performance management systems. One of the main points that keep coming up in research papers about hotel employees and sustainability is how organizational leadership and management communication can significantly influence employees' perceptions. Baird, et al. (2018) discovered that people working in hotels where the top management was seen supporting the sustainability programs and communicating clearly about their reasons and importance were a lot more likely to perform ecologically friendly actions than those in the hotels where sustainability was considered an operational afterthought or completely delegated to a single department. This indicates that sustainability culture in hospitality organizations largely originates from the leadership side, even if its eventual manifestation is through the lower-level employees going about their daily activities. In Nepal, where hierarchical organizational structures are an inherent part of business culture as well as social norms, the consequences of this point being made are especially relevant, the thinking and doing of hotel owners and senior managers could have a very heavy impact on the sustainability involvement of frontline staff, thereby making leadership commitment not only a facilitator but almost a necessity.

Even with all the evidential support found so far, the biggest limitation of the existing research is the lack of the perceptions of sustainability of hotel workers in lower-income and developing country contexts. The diversity in motivational dynamics, cultural frameworks and structural constraints in these regions is very different, to a large extent, from the scenes of North America, Europe or East Asia which have been documented. Sustainable Hospitality Alliance (2023) points out most of the empirical research on employee sustainability engagement has been done in high-income countries and they warn against indiscriminately applying results from these countries to developing country hotel sectors where economic insecurity, lack of social protection, and lower environmental awareness level could very much change the way organizational sustainability programs and employee engagement are related.

Regarding Nepal, for instance, hotel workers are mainly exposed to unstable working conditions, low wages, and very limited professional development opportunities, and these factors might influence their willingness and ability to prioritize sustainability in ways that current literature, which was mostly developed in stable employment environments, might not represent.

1.6.3 Guest Perceptions and Participation in Sustainability Initiatives

Researchers have increasingly focused on how hotel guests think about and react to sustainability efforts as hospitality studies realize that guests are not just passive receivers of hotel services but also active players, whose behaviors and choices have a significant impact on the environmental performance of the hotels they choose. However, the link between guest sustainability attitudes and their actual behaviors during their stay is much more complicated and less consistent than the early hopeful studies indicated. Han, et al. (2010) utilized the theory of planned behavior to study green hotel customer intentions and discovered that although favorable attitudes towards environmental responsibility were common among their survey participants, the actual behavioral intentions were largely influenced by perceived social norms and the perceived costs be it financial, practical, or comfort-related of selecting or engaging in green hotel options. This attitudinal-behavioral gap, now recognized in the literature, means that hotels cannot take guests declared environmental values as a sure sign of their in-stay sustainability actions.

Great lengths have been taken in the research to identify which aspects most influence hotel guests' decisions to participate in certain sustainability programs. Among these are towel and linen reuse, energy saving, waste separation, and opting out of daily housekeeping. Miao and Wei (2013) demonstrated that highlighting sustainability actions by pointing to the social norm, i.e. telling guests that most former ones had joined the follow-up initiative, resulted in a significantly higher level of participation than trying to persuade guests by emphasizing the benefit to the environment only. Yet, this is one of the theories of social influence on which the authors base their research and the results can be very useful for hotels in Nepal when they communicate the sustainability programs to their guests. Communication of hotels' sustainability schemes based on social norms rather than purely environmental appeals could be more effective for guests whose main motivation for travel is leisure or adventure as opposed to environmental activism. On the other hand, this also leads to the wider issue of whether sustainability participation that is motivated by social influence rather than intrinsic motivation is genuine and the extent to which such participation leads to changes in guests' environmental concerns and behaviors that extend beyond their stay at the hotel.

It has been recognized that cultural backgrounds and national identities greatly influence guests' perceptions and behaviors related to sustainability, making it difficult to design universal communication strategies for hotel sustainability programs. Dimanche (2003) have shown that environmental attitudes, perceptions of risk, and the willingness to give up certain standards of service for sustainability benefits vary greatly from culture to culture. For example, tourists from Northern European countries generally start with higher levels of environmental awareness and are more willing to accept service changes for sustainability than guests coming from countries where environmental education has not been promoted that systematically.

Nepal, which receives a very diverse international visitor base including Western adventure travelers as well as package tourists from South and East Asia, faces a significant challenge in terms of communication and management due to cultural heterogeneity. A uniform approach to engaging guests in sustainability would not work well considering the different types of audience. This example highlights the importance of developing environmentally-related communication strategies that are sensitive to culture and specific to the market, as opposed to simply conveying generic environmental messages.

The "green gap" refers to a phenomenon whereby a discrepancy between guests' raised concern for environment and their actual in-stay behavior still persists. The phenomenon has not only been theorized but also backed empirically with data. Juvan and Dolnicar (2014) most probably offer the sharpest account of this phenomenon within the hospitality context. They contend that the green gap is not merely due to hypocrisy or indifference, but mirrors the psychological compartmentalization that individuals undergo when they take on a "tourism identity" that mainly values pleasure, relaxation, and forgetting everyday duties and routines. Under this mental setup, carry out environmentally responsible acts is likely to be viewed as so contrary to the hedonic aim of the holiday that it results in a psychological barrier to involvement, which simply environmental messages cannot quite overcome. This theoretical point is highly pertinent to Nepal where the adventure tourism and leisure segments serve guests who, although they may be very committed to environmental values in their home lives, can psychologically be expected to put personal experience and comfort first during their Himalayan vacation.

There are many articles about guest perception of sustainability in well-established tourism destinations worldwide. Nevertheless, there is a significant lack of empirical studies that investigate these tourism and sustainability interactions specifically in Nepal as well as other Himalayan tourism areas. Buckley (2012) points out that most of the sustainability research in mountain and adventure tourism have been dealing with the environmental impact assessment and carrying capacity analysis while the perception and behavioral motivation of the individual tourists to these types of tourism have not been really addressed. Such a situation is a big challenge for the hotel managers of the major tourism destinations in Nepal as they have very few research-based evidences to rely on while designing their guest engagement programs that are culturally appropriate, behaviorally effective, and operationally feasible. It is not only an academic deficiency that probably the main reason for lack of locally based evidences, but it is also a real barrier to the development of the sustainability communication strategies that have the power to really reach the widely diversified international and domestic visitors of Nepalese hotels, and this further points to the significance of primary empirical research in this locality.

1.6.4 Research Gap

The literature that has been reviewed indicates a very developed field in terms of understanding but yet strangely separated or isolated. Researches on hotel-level sustainability strategy, staff engagement, and guest behavior have each developed their own theoretical vocabulary and empirical base, however they hardly communicate with one another in a single research site. Chan et al. (2014) and Mensah (2006) study sustainability at the organizational and managerial level; Pham et al. (2019) view it in terms of employees' green training and organizational climate; Han et al. (2010), Miao and Wei (2013), and Juvan and Dolnicar (2014) view it through guest attitudes and behavior.

However, this research that brings together both staff and guests within the same hospitality setting, which locates staff and guests in the same hotels and asks how the perceptions of sustainability of one another may be aligned, diverged, or actively contradicted, is lacking. This indeed is a significant missing point. The sustainability of a hotel as a result of the interaction between what staff are willing and capable of doing and what guests are expecting, allowing, or resisting, and considering these two as independent research problems makes it possible for the

literature to describe either of the sides in isolation but not to explain the friction between them.

This difference is even more visible in cases of Nepal as compared to the high-income countries where these basic theories were mostly developed. The literature that focuses on employees, which also includes broad sector reports from organizations like the Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, has mostly revolved around workplaces that have stable employment relations and formal systems of training, i.e. conditions which do not describe the wage insecurity and informal training that are typical in Nepalese hotels. Using the results of such literature to explain the situation in Nepal without local verification will amount to the assumption that the level of organizational stability that frontline hospitality workers may have here is so high that it creates a possibility of organizational stability. Likewise, the literature on guest behavior with respect to the attitude-behavior gap, although very convincing at the theoretical level, has been tested predominantly in destinations with a rather uniform guest profile. Hotels in Nepal cater to a diverse clientele ranging from cheap backpackers to the wealthiest travelers, from Western adventurers to regional package tourists. This diversity in culture and motivation influencing sustainability attitudes has not been empirically studied in this particular setting. The Nepal-specific literature which is available is mostly structural and policy-oriented such as MoCTCA's (2020) tourism statistics and related government policy documents. These documents and statistics are very accurate in recording the number of tourists, identifying infrastructural gaps, and setting out government frameworks; however, they do not give much information about how the people inside hotels, i.e. staff who serve guests and guests who are served, perceive and handle the idea of sustainability on a daily basis. *Atithi devo bhava* is the cultural norm, which is the incarnation of the sacred guest, and it is a source of potential conflict between a generous hospitality and sustainability restraint that is a recurring theme. However, this contention has only been stated, it has not been explored. No research has probed the views of Nepalese hotel workers and guests in terms of how they understand this conflict or how they relate it to their willingness to take up or accept sustainability interventions.

Altogether, these gaps indicate one fundamental problem: sustainability in Nepalese hospitality has been explored mainly through the lens of practices and policies, but not as the lived, relational experience between the people who deliver hospitality and the people who consume it. This paper fills that void by looking at a

Pokhara-based hotel scenario, staff and guests' perceptions of sustainability, agreement and disagreement between these perceptions and influence of local cultural and economic conditions on both sides of the relationship at the same time.

1.7 Research Method

1.7.1 Research Design

This research uses a qualitative phenomenological approach which is an in-depth research strategy based on personal experience. This research is not about identifying behaviors and responses by counting them but the research focuses on how the hotel staff and hotel guests in Pokhara personally experience and interpret sustainability.

The two groups, hotel staff and guests, are the subjects of this research since the sustainability of hospitality depends on both the providers and the customers. The hotel staff are the workers who put in their everyday effort, whereas the visitors, they can only react and take part in those hotel activities. By analyzing both categories, we can get a clearer picture of how people engage with sustainability, how they feel about, understand and even reject it. Another feature of this methodology is that there is a chance to compare the experiences of the staff and the guests, and after both have spoken about them, these descriptions and interpretations are compared in order to find out how much they both agree on what sustainability means and how much they differ. That directly corresponds to the research problems at hand, which ask not only how each group experienced sustainability but also how the views of the two differed or were similar.

Qualitative method was selected mainly because sustainability, from this point of view, cannot merely be measured or described in terms of numbers. It is related to values, habits, cultural expectations, and everyday choices, things that are best understood if there is a conversation, such as in-depth interviews, rather than questionnaires or fixed questions. Through interviews staff members and clients can have the opportunity to describe how they personally define sustainability as well as how its presence (or absence) in their work or their hotel stay reflects that definition.

1.7.2 Study Area

The location of the present study was Pokhara, a major mountain destination in Nepal that is a popular resort town. As a city of scenic lakes, mountain backdrops,

and a gateway to one of the most popular trekking regions (Annapurna), Pokhara is one of the leading tourist cities of Nepal.

In addition, the city attracted the attention of the researchers because it hosts one of the densest numbers of hotels in the whole of the country ranging from small indigenous guest houses run by locals to branded hotels of greater size and it enjoys the benefit of a steady stream of domestic and international tourists throughout the year. Apart from that factor, the city has been selected because it mirrors many of the issues discussed in this paper. Hotels here experience a growing need to incorporate green practices primarily due to tourist influx and the increasing environmental pressure on lake and hill areas, yet many of them still function with limited resources, poorly trained personnel, and quite flexible work practices. Pokhara therefore serves as the ideal place to study not only how sustainability is interpreted and implemented in the hotel sector but also how the difference between policy intentions and the everyday reality is so obvious in this case.

Pokhara has many hotels that provided research facilities for this study, through which we collected a diverse set of opinions mostly from staff and guests, who are engaged at different levels in sustainability activities in the real, operating hospitality setup rather than a theoretical or abstract concept. It also allowed to collect data over a long time and from different hotels.

1.7.3 Population and Sampling

The population in this study is divided into two different kinds of people in the hotels of Pokhara: employees working on operations regularly and visitors staying at these hotels while their visiting Pokhara. Employees are those interacting sustainably as parts of the sustainability aspects which is a part of their daily routine, such as housekeeping, front desk, food and beverage, or management staff. Visitors include residents in Nepal, as well as overseas tourists, who were staying at hotels in Pokhara at the very least and had some sort of exposure to its sustainability related practices through linen reuse, waste segregation, energy saving measures or general hotel policies, etc. As this is a qualitative phenomenological study and the researcher's goal is to obtain in-depth detailed descriptions of a few selected individuals' direct, lived experience instead of a statistical representation through data collection from a whole population; purposive sampling was implemented that participants selection is based on criteria which the researchers have, so that the participants can provide useful

information about the research questions, instead of being randomly chosen. For employees, participants were picked based on their daily involvement with the hotel business and getting introduced to the sustainability related tasks, regardless of their specific department or title of the job.

Purpose of selection to the guest participants was that the individuals have completed a hotel stay in Pokhara of at least one night so they had been in touch with hotel's sustainability practices through sufficient time to form a general understanding of it. The number of participants involved here was very limited, which is indeed a usual method and justified for phenomenological studies as such since the main point is the thoroughness rather than the coverage. The process of data collection stopped at the point when there was no emergence of significantly new themes or insights from the addition of interviews; this phenomenon is called data saturation.

1.7.4 Data Collection Methods

In order to collect data for this study, semi-structured, in-depth interviews with hotel staff and hotel guests was carried out in Pokhara. The use of this method is in line with phenomenological research as it is based on people's first-hand description of their experience which in this case is sustainability. This allows participants to talk about their views on sustainability in their own words rather than relying on fixed categories.

Separate interview questionnaires for staff and tourist have been drafted since the latter group approaches sustainability issues in very different ways. The staff questionnaire concentrated on employees' views on sustainability at work: the kind of changes they have to adopt on the job, how they feel about these changes and what kind of barriers or support they experience. The guest interview questionnaire asked if the guests have been aware of sustainability initiatives of the hotel, whether they have been noticing some environmentally friendly behaviors, what their response to these initiatives has been, and whether these initiatives reflected their idea of a hotel stay in Nepal.

The interviews were face-to-face at a time and place that was good for the person being interviewed, mostly inside or near the hotel. The semi-structure meant that there was a list of questions beforehand, but the people being interviewed were encouraged to talk in depth, tell personal anecdotes, raise points that had a lot of meaning for them, even if these had not been addressed by the original questions.

Being open is of the essence in phenomenological research where the main objective is to understand experiences as described by people and hence it is of importance to allow such an interview situation. Interviews were audio taped by permission of the participants, then fully transcribed to make sure of correct interpretation of the records. Besides the interviews, I have taken field notes in which various details about the participants -their tone, the words they stressed, the expressions, even the physical gestures -are also registered anything relevant and significant that will assist later in analyzing the data.

One interview generally lasted for about thirty to forty-five minutes depending on whether the interviewee wanted to say or discuss more. In other words, the length of the interview is determined by the interviewer's desire to give or the extent to which a participant wants to explain things.

1.7.5 Data Analysis Techniques

The interview's collected data were analyzed through thematic analysis, using the phenomenological method of interpretation.

To begin with, the analysis of the interviews required first transcribing every interview word-for-word. After transcripts were prepared, they were studied repeatedly to familiarize with the content of the interviews to better understand the participant's overall experience. Significant statements related to sustainability were identified at the stage when participants directly reflected their understanding, feelings, or reactions on the practices of sustainability.

These statements were then clustered into overarching themes on the basis of similarity of meanings. For instance, staffs' comments regarding how they felt unsupported to perform sustainability tasks might be grouped as a theme whilst the guests' comments on how they did not perceive any sustainability measures during their stay might form another theme. Staff and guests' data were analyzed independently initially, to be able to understand staff and guests' experiences fully before looking for overlaps between the two groups. As both sets of staff and guests' themes were developed separately, the next step was to do a comparison of the themes from these two groups. This comparative step was looking for areas of convergence (or patterns of staff and guests' experiences that were alike) and differences/tensions (where staff and guest views or experiences of sustainability diverged).

In so doing, this step served the main research question, which asks in detail about how staff and guests' view of environmental sustainability are similar or dissimilar. At every point during the analytical process, the researchers made sure that they were very attentive to the language and descriptions that the participants used and did not try to read things into the participants' statements which the participants themselves perhaps had not even thought of (imposing the outsiders' ideas of what sustainability should mean) as it is not a participant's duty to provide readymade answers or views. At the end, the resulting themes were put together in the form of a document that faithfully reflected the participants' thoughts and real-life narratives that went together with the words of the participants taken literally as recorded in the interviews.

1.7.6 Validity and Reliability

In a qualitative study like this one, validity and reliability change a little. Statistics are not the key indicators anymore and instead the focus is on the quality, authenticity, integrity, and the overall trustworthiness of the study. The atmosphere during interviews was very natural and participants could openly, freely share their thoughts without being restricted or having to rely on memorized answers. Their own words were reflected in the research findings wherever possible and not the researcher's interpretation overriding what they actually said.

Same interview guides were utilized for respective groups and for all interviews. Besides that, all interviews were recorded, transcribed fully and field notes were taken as supplements to keep the whole procedure uniform and systematic.

To limit the researcher's personal views influencing the work, transcript reading was done numerous times in order to ensure that theme of each of the sections was genuinely based on participants' own words rather than the researcher's anticipated views or thoughts going in. The hotel, the hotel staff, the context were all clearly explained so that the readers can make a judgment as to whether or not these results are applicable to a similar hotel situation in another part of Nepal. Although repeating the study would not bring the same results and the main point is actually not to reach exactly the same conclusions but this at least gives the impression that the results are authentic representations of the individuals who participated voluntarily.

1.7.7 Ethical Considerations

Protection of the rights and comfort of all participants were ensured through adherence to a strict code of ethical guidelines by the researcher of this study. During the initial interviews, study participants were given detailed information about the nature and extent of their participation, including, the aims of the study, the questions that their responses would cover and the eventual utilization of their responses. Participation was voluntary and no coercion or pressure were placed. Recording only took place with participants being informed of that fact in advance. Participants could either consent verbally or in writing and they could still withdraw during the course of interviews or leave out some questions if they wanted to. Anonymous presentation of results was done by excluding actual names or real-life hotel information from identification of the people involved. Identification by means of terms like Staff Participant 1 or Guest Participant 1 were used for the staff and the guests respectively while real life details which could have revealed hotel or person were left out or changed. Transfers and recording devices were kept in safe and confidential ways and their use was limited to this study only.

Furthermore, participants were informed that their participation would not influence their work status or guest experience. Such assurance was crucial since some staff members could have been reluctant to talk openly about the hotel operations. Hence, the researcher reminded them that their sincere replies were appreciated and that the study did not expect or reward any kind of answer, but rather it was focused on understanding their actual experience.

1.7.8 Limitations of the Study

There are a few limitations to this study that we should point out. The study was solely focused on hotels in Pokhara, so the results might not fully capture how hotel staff and guests experience sustainability in other regions of Nepal. These regions of Nepal could have very different hotel situations, tourist types, and local problems. Being a qualitative study with a limited number of participants, the findings present a vivid description of an individual's experience rather than something that can be generalized to all hotel staff or guests. We just wanted to get a detailed picture of how people understood and perceived these issues, not to find out a general answer to such a large question. Guest participants were interviewed only about their stay at a single hotel; therefore, their opinions might be influenced by that hotel, the time of the year, or the trip rather than reflecting a regular pattern across several hotels or stays.

In the same way, staff participants could be more or less open with their opinions in an interview setting, especially if the topic has the potential to reflect negatively on their working environment. This would certainly vary among different people and possibly affect how they share their experiences openly during the interview

CHAPTER II

FINDINGS

This chapter is the outcome of the study based on the lived experiences of hotel staff and hotel guests regarding sustainability within the hospitality industry of Pokhara, Nepal. The results are derived from semi-structured interviews with participants who shared their personal experiences, perceptions, and understanding of how sustainability plays a role within hotel operations and services. Using thematic analysis, the data from the interviews were thoroughly explored to find patterns and meanings that reflected how both groups viewed, practiced, and lived sustainability.

According to the results, sustainability is seen to be an important part of the hotel and resort business; still, participants' experiences and meanings of it varied depending on their jobs. For hotel staff, the key aspects of sustainability were resource-saving, waste reduction, and environmental responsibility and the difficult work of executing sustainable ideas in the hotels. On the other hand, hotel guests usually linked sustainability with visible green practices, ethical operations of the business, and the quality of the hotel stay. Although both groups showed positive thoughts on sustainable hotel services, there were differences about their expectations, what they valued, and how much they knew about sustainability practices. In order to present these results clearly, each finding corresponds to a research question. For the first research question, the perceptions and experiences of the hotel staff about sustainability will be discussed in Section 2.2. The views of hotel guests on the sustainability aspects of their stay in a hotel that they experienced will be presented in Section 2.3 for the second research question. Section 2.4 will highlight the similarities, differences and missing points between the hotel staff and guests in terms of their views towards sustainability after a comparison. All these findings together will provide a clear and comprehensive concept of sustainability in the hospitality industry of a tourism destination (Pokhara, here) which will answer the objectives and research questions of the present study.

2.2 Participants Overview

The results shared in the following pages are the product of hotel staff and guests taking part in semi-structured interviews in Pokhara, Nepal. Purposive sampling as our primary method to get those participants with relevant direct experience about sustainability in the hospitality industry. The decision to have

representatives of the two sides of the service exchange the service provider and the service receiver was made after we realized that the two sides could change quite different, yet very important, light onto the meaning of a sustainability program. That is why, from their own perspectives, together they would bring an overall image of that reality we were trying to grasp.

The members of the hotel staff who had taken part belonged to various types of departments such as housekeeping, front office, food and beverage service, food production, maintenance, and hotel management which are common in the hospitality sector. Besides, the participants came from a wide range of professional backgrounds with some having just a very few years of work at a hotel and others having been in the business for over ten consecutive years. That variation helped the investigation pick up a more comprehensive view of the opinions by persons working on diverse fronts of hotel operations as well as being directly in charge for the sustainability work in the facility.

The hotel guest participants included both residents and people from outside the country who had stayed recently at hospitality establishments in one of Pokhara's towns. They represented different kinds of trips like leisure and cultural tourism, among others. The guests usually stayed two or three days, but the longest hotel stay was more than one week. Thus, the different levels of exposure to sustainability measures would have been a part of what the guests could comment on and reflect from the perspectives. Also, having a mix of national guest and international tourists in the sample, the investigation got a more all-round knowledge of the different ways sustainability could be imagined and interpreted by a person coming from different cultural environments.

2.3 Staff perception of Sustainability

The results suggest that hotel employees mostly thought of sustainability as the responsible use of hotel resources and also delivering high-quality service to hotel guests. The interviewees almost all linked sustainability with cutting down wastes, saving water and electricity. In addition, they agreed that it was important to reduce the use of single use plastics and protect the environment. No matter of their job position in the hotel, participants expressed the view that the implementation of sustainable practices would improve not only the hotel operations but also environmental conservation.

Anil Shrestha, Restaurant Manager at Hotel Fishtail View, gave a very concrete definition of sustainability by describing it as cutting down the amount of waste that hotel operations produce in the form of unnecessary waste on a daily basis. In this respect, he added, "If some waste can be prevented, it should be the main essence of sustainability. Therefore, for example, even our customers are made aware of the fact and we advise them not to change the towels. If the customers are requested not to waste water, they usually support." His statement shows that there is a mutual understanding that sustainability is a joint responsibility involving both staff and guests.

Again, Sunita Gurung, a Local Vegetable Supplier, spoke for the significance of working with local producers who can ensure that the products used in a hotel are of high quality. To explain, she said, "We will buy from local suppliers if goods are unavailable because the food is freshly harvested, as well as the local communities are supported. It is the way of life." The above explanation shows that the interviewees interpreted sustainability in more or less the same terms but added the aspect of supporting local producers, providing them with a living and keeping things fresh. However, besides agreeing that there is an overall environmental and economic justification for going green, the interviewees also pointed out the difficulties they had in their attempts to implement the change. Among them, limited financial resources, lack of staff training, and an unpredictability of guest reactions were identified as the key areas where most interviewees felt the greatest challenges. Roshan Adhikari, Owner of Hotel Himalayan Garden Resort, for one, said, "Some guests are genuinely happy to contribute to your green initiatives; however, the others simply don't care. Therefore, even if you have the greenest hotel, the resource consumption will always increase." The way Roshan Adhikari put it clearly reflects the reality that, at the level of customers, achieving a common vision of sustainability remains a considerable challenge.

The findings suggest that hotel staff have a clear understanding of sustainability and recognize its importance in daily hotel operations. Participants commonly associated sustainability with conserving resources, reducing waste, and supporting environmentally responsible practices. Their responses also demonstrate a positive attitude towards implementing sustainable initiatives despite challenges such as limited financial resources, inadequate training, and inconsistent guest cooperation. These findings indicate that while employees are willing to contribute to

sustainability, its successful implementation requires stronger managerial commitment, regular staff training, and greater awareness among guests to create a more sustainable hospitality environment.

The findings suggest that hotel staff clearly understands the concept of sustainability and knows the value of putting it into daily hotel operations, according to the results. Sustainability for Participants is the preservation of resources, the prevention of waste generation, and the adoption of environmentally responsible practices. Besides, their comments show a favorable attitude towards the adoption of eco-friendly measures, even given problems like financial constraints, lack of training, and the guests' occasional cooperation. It means that, although the employees want to get involved in the sustainability aspect, the effective execution necessitates more commitment at higher management level, continual staff education, and guest involvement, which will contribute to the making of a more sustainable hospitality environment.

2.4 Guest Perceptions of Sustainability

The hotel guests have mostly found sustainability as an important feature. Guests admired the hotels which adopted eco-friendly practices such as banning single-use plastic, promoting towel/linen reuse, saving energy, and sourcing supplies from local businesses. It was clear that these measures would not only help the environment but also the guests were not going to sacrifice the quality of their holidays.

Aakash Sharma, a domestic tourist staying at Hotel Blue Horizon, comments, "It pleases me to know that my stay helps to take care of the environment. I am glad that the hotel is making an active effort to raise environmental awareness and to reduce plastic waste by encouraging us to use reusable products. That kind of action only encourages me even more." This statement can show that a guest who notices such sustainability efforts can become more environmentally conscious as a result.

On the same lines, Emily Carter, a foreign tourist at Lakeside Heritage, says "I don't mind using the towels and lights only that I have to and that they turn off the unnecessary ones. These are such simple measures, I believe, that they will go a long way in environmental preservation." From this, it follows that numerous hotel guests will gladly make some changes in their lifestyle if those changes are not so inconvenient and easy to do. On the other hand, a few guests highlighted the need for

maintaining standards if hotels are adopting a "green" theme. A businessman Rohan Joshi staying at Hotel Crystal Inn expressed his view, "Green is my favorite, but I want every room to be clean, and everything should be of high standards and not just the green aspect of it." In addition, it has been suggested by most of the respondents that the hotels should inform the visitors about their sustainable programs in a better way by means of notices, digital displays, or guest information materials. This will create the possibility for the guest to be more involved in the hotels' efforts.

The results reveal that hotel guests, on the whole, have a favorable attitude toward sustainability at the resorts and are open to assisting with green initiatives they encounter there. Nevertheless, participants pointed out that sustainability plans cannot totally ignore guest comfort and hospitality levels. The replies further suggest that a transparent line of information and apparent environmental practices foster guest engagement, thus making sustainability even better but still providing a great stay.

2.5 Comparison of Staff and Guest Perceptions

The results showed that hotel staff and guests alike had a favorable opinion of sustainability and realized how important it is becoming in the hospitality sector. They both saw that the environmental protection and continued hotel sustainability is a result of such measures as waste minimization, conservation of water and electricity, reduction of usage of single-use plastics and encouraging of local enterprises.

Nevertheless, there were differences in their perspectives related to their professional role. Hotel staffs mainly considered sustainability under operational point, putting in resource efficient management and problems relating to sustainable practices implementation in hotel daily operations. Guests, on the contrary, based their evaluation of sustainability on the whole hospitality experience. Though they welcomed ecofriendly efforts, one of their expectations was that these measures should not interfere with comfort, cleanliness, or the overall quality of services provided.

Also, a significant issue to point out was the varying emphasis of the two groups. Staff members raised issues such as scarce monetary resources, improper trainings, and also the dilemma between traditional hospitality principles and environmental stewardship. On the other hand, the guests showed more interest in assisting the environmentally-friendly initiatives, provided the hotel makes a clear

declaration of environmental efforts that are ongoing by the hotel and continues to offer the same expected level of service.

The results of the analysis reveal that both the hospitality staff and guests, although with different emphasis, are positively inclined towards sustainability. Workers see it as an opportunity and are mostly focused on the application of sustainability measures in their daily jobs. On the other hand, customers mainly care about the way these measures affect their experience while staying at a hotel, restaurant or bar. To narrow the gap between operationally sustainable practices and expectations from guests on these matters, it's likely to be useful if communication about sustainability measures is enhanced, regular training of workers is carried out, and high-levels of service are provided. By doing so, the hospitality sector would not only have its environmental impact managed more effectively, but also enhance the satisfaction of customers.

2.6 Summary

This chapter described the findings and discussion of the research from the viewpoint of both hotel employees and guests about sustainability in the hospitality industry. The discoveries were based on the aims of the research, highlighting staff perceptions, guest perceptions, and the views comparison between the two groups.

The hotel employees for the most part thought of sustainability as the proper way of managing hotel resources while at the same time retaining the level of hospitality services. They were of the view that sustainability meant reducing waste, saving water and electricity, limiting the use of single-use plastics, and partnering with local suppliers. Staff had a generally positive outlook about the sustainable measures but also pointed out that there were various problems like very little financial resources, staff were not properly trained, and guest cooperation varied in terms of the level. Nevertheless, they showed that they were ready and could be helpful on condition that the company provided them with strong support.

On the other hand, hotel guests too expressed positive views regarding sustainability and were proud of the hotels that chose to implement the green initiatives. It was noted that majority of them were willing to take part in measures such as reusing towels and linen, conserving energy and eliminating plastic. However, it also occurred to them that the environmental-friendly measures should not affect comfort, cleanliness, and even the general hospitality service quality negatively. In

addition, the guests recommended the hotel industry to inform its stakeholders about the sustainability programs better, as it would help them to raise awareness and become more committed through the activities.

The comparison of the two sets of perceptions showed that both groups liked the aspect of sustainability and agreed to cooperate but differed somewhat on the meaning of sustainability. From the operational point of view, hotel staff was interested in the implementation of environmental measures whereas guests were judging the hotel sustainability based on their individual experience and the quality of service they received. Altogether, the research results indicate that sustainability in the hospitality business is achieved most effectively through the teamwork of hotel management, staff, and guests. It can be done by upgrading the staff members' knowledge, communicating with the guests in a better way, and making it clear that the high-quality services will be delivered even if there is a change or implementation.

CHAPTER III

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Conclusion

The research mainly dealt with hotel staff and hotel guests to obtain their views on sustainability in the hotel industry of Pokhara, Nepal. Results showed that there was a general agreement between both parties that sustainability is an important subject of the hotels and its role in the hospitality world is constantly growing. Hotel staff regarded sustainability as an issue to be dealt with in carrying out their work on a daily basis that they focused on the conservation of resources, reduction of waste, and carrying out activities that are in harmony with the environment. On the other hand, hotel guests saw sustaining nature as a significant part of their overall hotel experience with them being quite impressed and appreciative of the hotel's efforts which they could visually detect, as long as these changes did not compromise guest comfort or the overall quality of services.

Besides, the study also showed that although, the hotel staff and guests shared a good attitude towards sustainability, each party had different points of views which were in line with their respective roles and expectations. Staff were more focused on how they could actually implement sustainable procedures, for example, a lack of funds, a shortage of training, and, at the same time, they want to fulfill the requirements of the guests and, the environment goals. On the other hand, guests, on one hand, pointed out the need to preserve top-level standards of hospitality and, on the other hand, supporting initiatives for a greener environment. It turned out that in order to have more success through the engagement of the clients, clear and concise explanations of their ideas, by the hotels, was needed, which would help to create greater understanding and interest in the clients concerning the sustainable practices.

In a way, I would like to say here that the hotel industry sustainability initiative has got to be something that all the hoteliers, hotel workers, and guests of the hotels are jointly responsible for. Besides, it has been pointed out that hotels can support a more sustained environment for a few good reasons through a number of actions, like training their employees in an ongoing manner, implementing sustainable measures as part of their daily working procedures, explaining their environmental strategies to the people in a good manner, and, lastly, they should make sure that they preserve the hospitality values while becoming environmentally aware. If all the

stakeholders work hand to hand, the hotels in Pokhara can be part of an environment-friendly hospitality industry while at the same time not affecting the quality of services offered to their guests.

3.2 Recommendations

On the basis of the study findings, the following recommendations are put forward aiming at improving sustainability in the hospitality industry in Pokhara:

Hotel Management: It is crucial for hotels to make their commitment to sustainability stronger through the development of a clear environmental policy and integrating sustainable practices into daily operations. Employees should be given regular training to improve the understanding and skill level of how they conserve resources and manage waste as well as provide services being environmentally responsible. Hotel management should also invest in such practical sustainability measures as energy-saving appliances, water-conservational technology, and a proper waste separation system.

Hotel Staff: As part of sustainable practices, staff should always ensure a green work environment and actively promote the same to the guests. They should also inform the guests about the hotel's environmental policy so that the guests know them well and are ready to give their cooperation.

Hotel Guests: The guests can become a source of great power in achieving sustainable hospitality practices by supporting these initiatives through various actions like towel and linen reuse programs, appropriate disposal of wastes, limiting the unnecessary use of water and electricity and respecting the hotel's environmental policies. The cooperation of the guests is vital to the achievement of sustainable hospitality practices.

Government and Tourism Authorities: Government and tourism industry bodies should promote sustainable tourism by coming up with the actual implementation measures; running awareness programs, and giving the support of finance and the use of techniques to the hotels that have already made their sustainable practice a major feature of their activities. A system of reward or recognition which highlights the efforts of the hotels who implement such sustainable initiatives may become a means of encouraging more hotels to adopt similar practices.

Hospitality Education and Training Institutions: Educational establishments that offer hospitality training and education should strengthen their content focusing on sustainability and also organize practical work, seminars, industry collaborations, etc.

to produce hospitality personnel who will have the necessary knowledge and competence to run the sustainable practice implementation smoothly.

Future Researchers: Future studies can be conducted by involving a larger number of respondents not only from tourist zones but from non-tourist zones as well in Nepal. It will be more interesting to find sustainability perceptions from hotel types like budget, mid-range, luxury, etc. Researchers can also consider using both quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze the association between sustainability initiatives of hotels, guest satisfaction and hotel performance so that they are able to get an insight into sustainable hospitality practices in Nepal

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APPENDICES:

Appendix I: Interview Guide for Hotel Staff

Research Topic: An Exploration of Staff and Guest Perspectives Regarding Sustainability in the Nepali Hospitality Sector

1. Interview Questions

- What does sustainability mean to you in the hospitality industry?
- What sustainability practices are currently followed in your hotel?
- What benefits do these practices bring to your hotel?
- What challenges do you face while implementing sustainability initiatives?
- How do guests respond to your hotel's sustainability practices?
- What improvements would you recommend for promoting sustainability in the hospitality sector?

Appendix II: Interview Guide for Hotel Guests

Research Topic: An Exploration of Staff and Guest Perspectives Regarding Sustainability in the Nepali Hospitality Sector

2. Interview Questions

- What does sustainability in the hospitality industry mean to you?
- What sustainability practices have you observed during your hotel stay?
- How do these practices influence your overall experience?
- Are you willing to participate in hotel sustainability initiatives? Why or why not?
- Do you think sustainability practices affect guest comfort and service quality?
- What suggestions would you give hotels to improve their sustainability efforts?

3. Appendix III: Participant Information Sheet

Participants were informed that this research was conducted for academic purposes as part of the Bachelor of Hotel Management programme. They were assured that participation was voluntary, their identities would remain confidential through the use of pseudonyms, and the information collected would be used solely for research purposes. Participants were also informed that they could decline to answer any question or withdraw from the interview at any stage without any consequences.

4. Appendix IV: Consent Form

I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study entitled "**An Exploration of Staff and Guest Perspectives Regarding Sustainability in the Nepali Hospitality Sector.**" I understand the purpose of the study and agree that the information I provide may be used for academic purposes. I understand that my identity will remain confidential and that I may withdraw from the interview at any time without any consequences.

Participant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's Signature: _____

5. Appendix V: Sample Interview Excerpt

Researcher: What does sustainability mean to you in the hospitality industry?

Participant (Hotel Staff): "For me, sustainability means using resources responsibly by reducing waste, conserving water and electricity, and encouraging guests to support environmentally friendly practices."

Researcher: What is the biggest challenge in implementing sustainability?

Participant: "The main challenge is encouraging every guest to cooperate with sustainability initiatives while maintaining the expected quality of service."