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RESEARCH ARTICLE

ATTITUDE OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT, THE CASE OF NECH SAR NATIONAL PARK, ETHIOPIA.

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Abstract

Community attitude towards sustainable tourism are critical to community involvement and tourism development. The purpose of this research is to describe the attitude of local communities towards sustainable tourism development and examine the reliability and validity of the sustainable tourism attitude scale (SUS-TAS). Descriptive research design is used with quantitative approach in order to address research objective. A household survey was conducted to collect data from respondents. Respondents are selected using a stratified random sampling technique. Data are collected using a structured questionnaire. Sustainable tourism attitude scale (SUS-TAS) is used as a basis for analyzing local communities' attitude towards sustainable tourism development. Principal components analysis (PCA) with a varimax rotation was performed to delineate the dimensions of the sustainable tourism attitude scale. Among seven factors community members showed agreement to six factors of sustainable tourism development. This study supports the premise that sustainable tourism attitude scale is a reliable and valid instrument to measure residents' attitudes toward sustainable tourism development.

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Introduction:-

Tourism is one of the largest and rapidly growing industries in the world. It creates jobs, drives economic growth and helps build better societies. The sector accounts for 10.4% of global GDP and 9.9% of total employment in 2017 (WTTC, 2018). Tourism has experienced rapid growth for the last six decades and this trend is expected to continue with strong momentum (UNWTO, 2018; WTTC, 2018). Tourism in general has become one of the major cultural and economic forces in the world today and is regarded as an important means to benefit local communities (Marzuki, 2011).

Sustainable tourism development is emerged as a key issue in the development agenda for the tourism industry in many developing countries (Tosun, 2001; Helmy, 2004). Sustainability is an essentially contested subject. The concept is used to refer to a 'balance' or 'wise' use of resources. The concept of sustainable tourism development has its roots in sustainable development. Sustainable development is "development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs" (UN, 1987). The key principle of sustainable development underlying all others is the integration of environmental, social, and economic concerns into all aspects of decision making. The debate about sustainable tourism is largely influenced

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by the concept of sustainable development. Sustainable tourism is “form of tourism, which meets the needs of tourist, the tourism industry and host communities today without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs” (Swarbrooke, 1999:13). Sustainable tourism as an emerging paradigm seems to enhance the existing conceptual frameworks on tourism planning and development by making the residents its focal point (Choi and Sirakaya, 2005). A central component of this paradigm is building relationships and alliances to strengthen the capacities of local communities and transform local economies in a sustainable way that is also good for the environment.

Communities have become central to a holistic concept of sustainability, which embraces and integrates environmental, economic, political, cultural and social considerations (Richards and Hall, 2000). Communities are a basic reason for tourists to travel, to experience the way of life and material products of different communities. Residents are major actors in the tourism development process since they are directly affected by tourism (Ap, 1992; Murphy, 1985; Gunn, 1994). Community participation is believed as a method of grassroots democracy, where individuals have a right to participate in decision-making on matters that directly affect their lives. Styliadis, Biran, Sit and Szivas (2014) and Bello, Lovelock and Carr (2018) advocated that the objective of sustainable tourism development can be attained through the voluntary involvement of local communities. Both direct and indirect support of community residents’ participation is the foundation of the sustainability paradigm (Butcher, 1997; Jamieson and Jamal, 1997; Hunter, 1995). It is seen as a corrective style especially where local residents are poor or geographically disadvantaged (Burns, 2004).

As tourism becomes increasingly important to communities around the world, the need to develop tourism sustainably also becomes a primary concern. Sustainable tourism entails that the community is the focal point of the tourism planning process (Choi and Sirakaya, 2005). The concept of developing sustainable tourism sets the community as a cornerstone of the development process because sustainable tourism development usually rests on the assurance of renewable economic, social and cultural benefits to the community and its environment. Sustainability is important because communities need to support themselves on the basis of available resources. Local community involvement, particularly in emerging and remote tourism destinations, is justified to accomplish sustainable tourism development efforts (Kala and Bagri, 2018). Remote rural areas of developing nations, usually attributed by subsistence economies, poor status of traditional agriculture, dependence on pastoralism, poverty, poor governance, fragile natural environments and susceptibility to natural disasters, pose unique challenges in tourism development (Sood, Lynch and Anastasiadou, 2017).

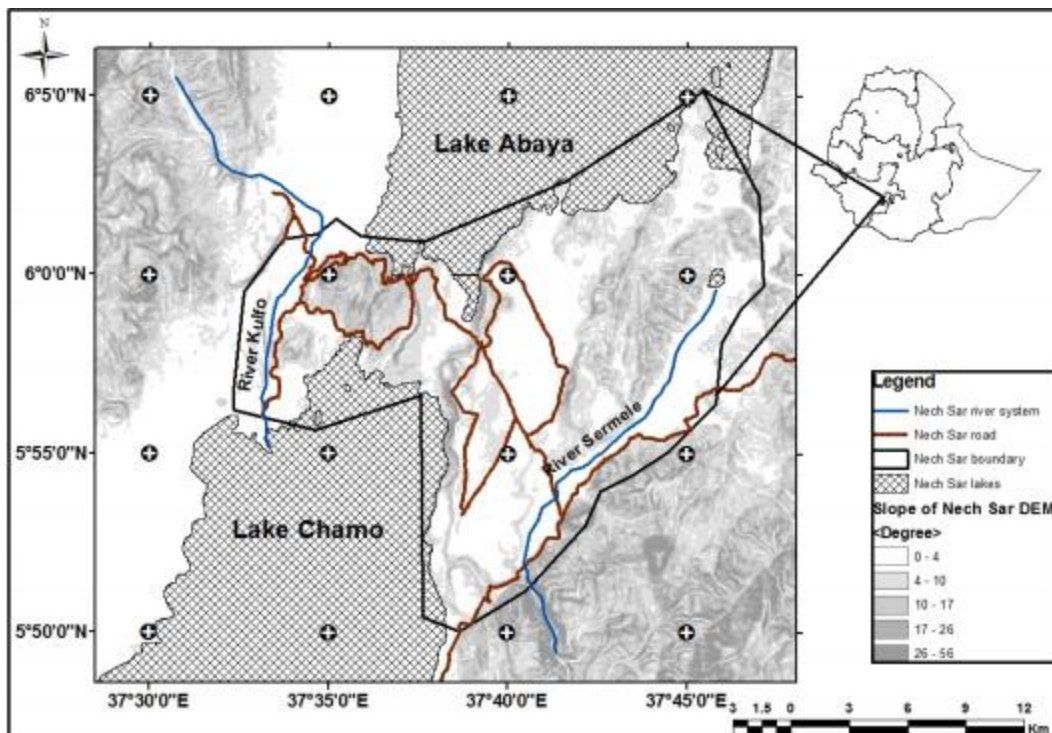
Initial community attitudes toward tourism are critical to community involvement in tourism industry (Murphy, 1983), and sustainable development of the host community (Owen, Witt and Gammon, 1993). Attitude is defined as “a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor” (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993 p. 1). Attitudes are also defined as “a state of mind of the individual toward a value” (Allport 1966, p. 24) and as “an enduring predisposition towards a particular aspect of one’s environment” (McDougall & Munro 1987, p. 87). Attitudes of individuals can be classified along the following three dimensions: cognitive (beliefs, knowledge, perceptions), affective (likes and dislikes), and behavioral (action taken or expressed) (Carmichael, 2000). According to Getz, attitudes are “reinforced by perceptions and beliefs of reality, but are closely related to deeply held values and even to personality” (1994, p.247). One of the most influential models is Doxey’s Irridex model (1975) suggests that residents’ attitudes toward tourism may pass through a series of stages from “euphoria,” through “apathy” and “irritation,” to “antagonism,” as perceived costs exceed the expected benefits. The Irridex model indicates that residents’ attitudes toward tourism would change over time within a predicable one-way sequence (Wang, Pfister and Morais, 2006).

Examining local residents’ attitudes and perceptions, are worthy because these are “important planning and policy considerations to successful development, marketing, and operation of existing and future tourism programs and projects” (Ap, 1992:665). Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to examine the attitudes of residents toward sustainable tourism development in Nech Sar National Park. It is imperative to examine residents’ attitudes in developing countries, especially at the lower level of development stages when the support and involvement of the local community is critical to the success of tourism development efforts. The research also addresses the reliability and validity of sustainable tourism attitude scale (SUS-TAS) instrument to measure local communities’ attitude towards sustainable tourism development.

Method and Material:-

Nech Sar National Park (NSNP) is among well-known national parks in Ethiopia and referred as mosaic of forest, open woodland, grassland and fresh water habitat (Duckworth *et al*, 1992). The national park is established in 1974 (Kelbore and Stellmacher, 2012). It is situated 510 km south of Addis Ababa and 3 km east of Arba Minch town in Sothern Ethiopia. The park lies within the floor of the Great Rift Valley and extends from 5° 51' N to 6° 50' N and from 37° 30' E to 37° 48' E. The national park has 514 square kilometers of territory of which 85% is land and 15% is water (Molla, 2017). It includes the "Bridge of God" (an isthmus between Lake Abaya and Lake Chamo), and the Nech sar (English: white grass) plains east of the lakes. The topography of the park is characterized by mountains and plains with elevation range from 1,100 to 1,600 meters above sea level (Clark, 2010).

NSNP lies within the Somali-Massai Regional Center of Endemism, one of the major floristic regions in Africa and falls within one of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN's) global biodiversity hotspots in the world, named the "Horn of Africa" (Blower, 1968; Bolton, 1970; Duckworth et al., 1992). It is the only national park where significant number of critically endangered Swaynes hartebeest still survives, the only known locality of the Nechisar nightjar (*Caprimulgus solala*), with large population of hippos and crocodiles. The national park is home for many wildlife including swaynes hartebeest (*Alcellaphus buselaphus swaynei*) and Grant's zebra (*Equus quagga*), which are flag ship species of the park. The park is also home for both aquatic and terrestrial birds. There are over 91 mammal species and around 351 bird species in the national park. The park has approximately 800-1000 plant species (Duckworth et al., 1992:7).



Source: Kelbore and Stellmacher (2012)

Household survey was conducted to collect data from respondents. Data are collected from local communities living inside and around the national park. Household heads are the primary source of data for this research. The total number of households in these administrative units were 11,166 at the time of data collection. Sample size for this research is 386 household heads which are determined by using Yamanes' sample size determination formula (1967:886).

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where; N = the total population that will be studied
n = the required sample size

e = the precision level 0.5 at confidence level of 95%

In order to select respondents; First, kebeles adjacent to the national park are identified (kebele is the smallest administrative unit in Ethiopia). Second, nine adjacent kebeles are purposively selected and stratified. The selected kebeles are located at Arba Minch town (dilfana and wuha minch), Arba minch zuria woreda (chano dorga and ganta kanchama ochole), Amaro woreda (gumre, derba menena, tifate and yero), and Gelana woreda (ergansa). Then, samples are selected using stratified random sampling technique.

Data are collected using structured questionnaire developed to measure local communities' attitude towards sustainable tourism development. The survey is consisted of demographic variables and a series of 43 statements to which participants stated their level of agreement or disagreement on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree).

Sustainable Tourism Attitude Scale (SUS-TAS) developed by Choi and Sirakaya (2005) is used as a basis for analyzing local communities' attitude towards sustainable tourism development. Sustainable tourism attitude scale (SUS-TAS) measures residents' attitude towards sustainable tourism development as subjective indicators. It is a tool developed to analyze subjective indicator of residents' beliefs, cognitions, and behavioral intentions toward tourism development using sustainability paradigm as its foundation. The SUS-TAS aims to capture residents' attitude towards sustainable tourism development by explicitly integrating seven sustainability criteria, namely, environmental sustainability, economic benefits, the socio-cultural impact of tourism, community-based benefits, visitor satisfaction, long-term planning and community participation.

The factorability of the 43 sustainable tourism attitude scale items were examined. It was observed that 42 of the 43 items correlated at least .3 with at least one other item, suggesting reasonable factorability. Principal components analysis (PCA) with a varimax rotation was performed on 43 items to delineate the dimensions of the SUS-TAS. Green and Salkind (2005) define factor analysis as "a technique used to identify factors that statistically explain the variation and covariation among measures" (p. 312). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sample adequacy tests was used for additional verification of the sample size.

Result and discussion:-

A descriptive summary of respondents is presented in table 1 shows 93.3% of household heads participated in the research are male while female household heads are only accounts for 6.7 %. Most of the respondents aged between 30 and 59 years. Respondents aged 19 and below are 2 (0.6%), Respondents aged between 20 – 29 are 22 (5.7%), respondents aged 30 - 39 are 104 (26.9%), respondents aged 40 – 49 are 141 (36.5 %), respondents aged 50 – 59 are 77 (19.9%) and respondents aged 60 and above are 40 (10.4%). Among the respondents 126 (32.6%) are illiterate, 162 (42%) know how to read and write, and 98 (25.4%) are educated. Household size of respondents ranges from 2 to 22. The average household size of the respondents is seven. Households with household size of 1 to 5 are 147 (38.1%), 6 to 10 are 205 (53.1), 11 to 15 are 30 (7.8), and 15 and above accounts for 4 (1%). Respondents earning annual income of 9999 birr and below are 98 (25.4%). 69 (17.9%) of respondents earn 10,000 – 19,999, 41 (10.6%) of respondents earn 20,000 – 29,999, 57 (14.8%) of the respondents earn 30,000 – 39,999, 28 (7.3) of respondents earn 40,000 – 49,999, and 93 (24.1%) of respondents earn 50,000 and above. The average length of residence of respondents is 33 year with a range of 1 to 70 years. 51 (13.2%) of residents have length of residence of 9 year and below. 35 (9.1%) of residents stayed for 10 to 19 years, 49 (12.7%) of respondents have 20 to 29 years length of residence, 116 (30.1%) of respondents have 30 to 39 years length of residence, 75 (19.4%) of the respondents have 40 to 49 years length of stay, and 60 (15.5%) have resided for 60 years and above.

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

Socio-demographic variables	Category	N	(%)
Gender (N = 386)	Male	360	93.3
	Female	26	6.7
Age (N = 386)	≤ 19	2	0.6
	20 - 29	22	5.7
	30 - 39	104	26.9
	40 - 49	141	36.5
	50 - 59	77	19.9

	≥ 60	40	10.4
Educational status (N = 386)	Illiterate	126	32.6
	Writing and reading	162	42
	Educated	98	25.4
Household size (N = 386)	1 - 5	147	38.1
	6 - 10	205	53.1
	11 - 15	30	7.8
	>15	4	1
Annual income (N = 386)	≤ 9999 birr	98	25.4
	10,000 – 19,999	69	17.9
	20,000 – 29,999	41	10.6
	30,000 – 39,999	57	14.8
	40,000 – 49,999	28	7.3
	≥ 50,000 birr	93	24.1
Length of residence (N = 386)	≤ 9 year	51	13.2
	10 -19 year	35	9.1
	20 – 29 year	49	12.7
	30 – 39 year	116	30.1
	40 – 49 year	75	19.4
	≥ 50	60	15.5

Note: N = 386

Local communities' attitude towards SUS-TAS items

Most of the respondents showed their agreement to environmentally sustainable tourism development at NSNP (M = 3.82, SD = 1.01). Respondents agreed to statements including community environment should be protected for now and for the future (M = 3.75, SD = 1.21); diversity of nature must be valued and protected (M = 3.88, SD = 1.09); tourism development should strengthen efforts for environmental conservation (M = 3.81, SD = 1.19); tourism must protect the community environment (M = 3.82, SD = 1.14); tourism needs to be developed in harmony with natural and cultural environment (M = 3.78, SD = 1.12); proper tourism development requires that wildlife and natural habitats be protected at all times (M = 3.82, SD = 1.21); tourism development must promote positive environmental ethics among all parties that have a stake in tourism (M = 3.95, SD = 1.14); regulatory environmental standards are needed to reduce the negative impacts of tourism development (M = 3.84, SD = 1.21); and tourism must improve the environment for future generations (M = 3.75, SD = 1.20).

Table 2:- Local communities' attitude towards environmentally sustainable tourism development

Environmental sustainability	Mean	SD	Percent (%)				
			SDA	D	N	A	SA
Community environment should be protected now and for the future	3.75	1.21	7	11.9	11.1	39.1	30.8
The diversity of nature must be valued and protected	3.88	1.09	6	3.1	20.2	38.1	32.6
I think that tourism development should strengthen efforts for environmental conservation	3.81	1.19	9.6	2.3	17.6	38.9	31.6
Tourism must protect the community environment	3.82	1.14	8	3.4	17.6	40.9	30.1
Tourism needs to be developed in harmony with natural and cultural environment	3.78	1.12	8.3	4.1	14	48.4	25.1
Proper tourism development requires that wildlife and natural habitats be protected at all times	3.82	1.21	9.8	3.6	13.5	41.2	31.9
Tourism development must promote positive environmental ethics among all parties that have a stake in tourism	3.95	1.14	7.8	2.1	14.2	39.4	36.5
Regulatory environmental standards are needed to reduce the negative impacts of tourism development	3.84	1.21	9.6	4.1	11.9	41.2	33.2
I believe that tourism must improve the environment for future generations	3.75	1.20	9.1	5.4	16.3	39.9	29.3

Note: $N = 386$, $Mode = 4$

The respondents showed disagreement towards perceived social cost of tourism development ($M = 2.17$, $SD = 0.93$). The residents disagreed to likert scale items consisting of statements that describes that tourists disrupt quality of life in the community ($M = 2.14$, $SD = 1.20$); quality of life has deteriorated because of tourism ($M = 2.10$, $SD = 1.20$); I feel irritated because of tourism in the community ($M = 2.06$, $SD = 1.19$); community recreational resources are overused by tourists ($M = 2.21$, $SD = 1.11$); the community is overcrowded because of tourism development ($M = 2.03$, $SD = 1.08$); I feel uncomfortable or unwelcome in local tourism businesses ($M = 2.12$, $SD = 1.15$); tourism is growing too fast ($M = 2.47$, $SD = 1.15$); and the quality of social interaction in the community has deteriorated because of tourism ($M = 2.25$, $SD = 1.25$).

Table 3:- Attitude of local communities towards perceived social cost of tourism development

Social cost	Mean	SD	Percent (%)				
			SDA	D	N	A	SA
Tourists in my community disrupt my quality of life	2.14	1.21	39.6	28.5	15.3	11.4	5.2
My quality of life has deteriorated because of tourism	2.10	1.20	41.2	28	15.8	9.3	5.7
I often feel irritated because of tourism in the community	2.06	1.19	41.5	31.1	13.2	8.3	6
Community recreational resources are overused by tourists	2.21	1.12	32.4	31.6	22.3	9.8	3.9
My community is overcrowded because of tourism Development	2.03	1.08	38.6	34.5	15.8	7.8	3.4
I do not feel comfortable or welcome in local tourism Businesses	2.12	1.15	35.5	37	13.2	8.5	5.7
Tourism is growing too fast	2.47	1.15	26.7	22.3	32.1	15	3.9
I believe that the quality of social interaction in my community has deteriorated because of tourism	2.25	1.25	36.3	29	14	14.8	6

Note: $N = 386$, $Mode = 1$

Community members agreed to statements of perceived economic benefits of sustainable tourism development for their community ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 1.07$). Respondents showed their agreement to statements that express perceived economic benefits such as tourism brings new income to their community ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 1.28$); tourism is a strong economic contributor to the community ($M = 3.58$, $SD = 1.22$); tourism generates substantial tax revenues for the local government ($M = 3.71$, $SD = 1.20$); tourism is good for our economy ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 1.23$); tourism creates new markets for our local products ($M = 3.66$, $SD = 1.29$); tourism diversifies the local economy ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 1.21$); and tourism benefits other industries in the community ($M = 3.74$, $SD = 1.23$).

Table 4:- Communities' attitude towards perceived economic benefits of tourism development

Economic benefits	Mean	SD	Percent (%)				
			SDA	D	N	A	SA
I like tourism because it brings new income to our community	3.54	1.28	13.2	5.7	18.9	38.1	24.1
I believe tourism is a strong economic contributor to the community	3.58	1.22	10.9	4.7	25.4	34.2	24.9
Tourism generates substantial tax revenues for the local government	3.71	1.20	9.8	2.8	23.1	35.2	29
I believe tourism is good for our economy	3.72	1.23	10.9	2.8	18.9	37.8	29.5
Tourism creates new markets for our local products	3.66	1.29	11.1	6.5	19.2	31.3	31.9
Tourism diversifies the local economy	3.76	1.21	9.3	4.9	16.6	38.3	30.8
Tourism benefits other industries in the community	3.74	1.23	10.6	3.1	18.1	37.6	30.6

Note: $N = 386$, $Mode = 4$

Residents attitude towards maximizing community participation in tourism development is positive ($M = 3.71$, $SD = 1.31$). Respondents agreed to statements which includes tourism decisions must be made by all in the community regardless of a person's background ($M = 3.85$, $SD = 1.32$); full participation of everyone in the community in tourism related decisions is a must for successful tourism development ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 1.23$); it is acceptable to

exclude a community's residents from tourism development ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 1.49$); and communities' residents should have an opportunity to be involved in tourism development and management ($M = 3.94$, $SD = 1.22$).

Table 5:- Attitude of local communities towards community participation in tourism development

Community participation	Mean	SD	Percent (%)				
			SDA	D	N	A	SA
Tourism decisions must be made by all in my community regardless of a person's background	3.85	1.32	11.7	6.5	19.2	31.3	31.9
Full participation of everyone in the community in tourism related decisions is a must for successful tourism development	3.88	1.23	8.8	5.7	12.2	35.2	38.1
Sometimes, it is acceptable to exclude a community's residents from tourism development.	3.17	1.49	22.5	13	13.2	27.5	23.8
Communities' residents should have an opportunity to be involved in tourism development and management	3.94	1.22	9.3	2.8	12.7	35.2	39.9

Note: $N = 386$, $Mode = 5$

Community members response shows that they are agreed to long term planning statements ($M = 3.92$, $SD = 1.09$). They agreed to statements describing that tourism industry must plan for the future ($M = 3.91$, $SD = 1.15$); successful management of tourism requires advanced planning strategy ($M = 3.96$, $SD = 1.09$); long-term view is essential when planning for tourism development ($M = 3.94$, $SD = 1.06$); residents must be encouraged to assume leadership role in tourism planning committees ($M = 3.92$, $SD = 1.11$); tourism development needs well-coordinated planning ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 1.14$); and tourism development plans should be continuously improved ($M = 3.90$, $SD = 1.02$).

Table 6. Attitude of local communities towards long term planning for tourism development

Long term planning	Mean	SD	Percent (%)				
			SDA	D	N	A	SA
Tourism industry must plan for the future	3.91	1.15	7.5	3.6	14.2	39.1	35.5
I believe that successful management of tourism requires advanced planning strategy	3.96	1.09	6.2	3.6	13	42.7	34.5
I believe that we need to take a long-term view when planning for tourism development	3.94	1.06	5.2	3.9	16.8	39.6	34.5
I think residents must be encouraged to assume leadership role in tourism planning committees	3.92	1.11	3.4	4.4	15.1	40.1	37
I believe tourism development needs well-coordinated planning	3.89	1.14	4.6	3.7	15.9	41.5	34.3
Tourism development plans should be continuously improved	3.90	1.02	6.8	5.1	16.5	40.7	30.9

Note: $N = 386$, $Mode = 4$

Community attitude towards ensuring visitor satisfaction is also positive ($M = 3.96$, $SD = 1.05$). Most of the respondents are agreed to statements including tourism businesses has responsibility to provide for visitor needs ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 1.04$); community attractiveness is a core element of ecological "appeal" for visitors ($M = 3.93$, $SD = 1.14$); tourism businesses must monitor visitor satisfaction ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 1.03$); and tourism industry must ensure good quality tourism experiences for future visitors ($M = 4.01$, $SD = 0.98$).

Table 7. Attitude of local communities towards visitor satisfaction

Visitor satisfaction	Mean	SD	Percent (%)				
			SDA	D	N	A	SA
Tourism businesses has responsibility to provide for visitor needs	4.03	1.04	6.2	0.8	12.7	44.3	36
Community attractiveness is a core element of ecological "appeal" for visitors	3.93	1.14	7.3	2.8	16.1	37	36.8
Tourism businesses must monitor visitor satisfaction	3.88	1.03	4.7	2.1	25.4	36.8	31.1

Tourism industry must ensure good quality tourism experiences for future Visitors	4.01	.98	4.7	2.1	13.5	47.7	32.1
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Note: $N = 386$, Mode = 4

Residents showed high agreement level to community centered tourism development ($M = 4.28$, $SD = 0.97$). Respondents are agreed to statements like tourism industry should be required to obtain at least one-half of their goods and services from within the local community ($M = 4.16$, $SD = 1.03$); tourism businesses should hire at least one-half of their employees from within the local community ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 1.01$); communities' residents should receive a fair share of benefits from tourism ($M = 4.47$, $SD = 0.90$); and tourism industry must contribute to community improvement funds ($M = 4.26$, $SD = 0.94$).

Table 8. Attitude of local communities towards community centered tourism development

Community centered economy	Mean	SD	Percent (%)				
			SDA	D	N	A	SA
Tourism industry should be required to obtain at least one-half of their goods and services from within the local community	4.16	1.03	3.9	3.4	13	32.4	47.4
I think tourism businesses should hire at least one-half of their employees from within the local community	4.23	1.01	3.9	3.4	9.1	32.9	50.8
Communities' residents should receive a fair share of benefits from tourism	4.47	.90	3.8	3.3	11.2	32.8	48.9
Tourism industry must contribute to community improvement funds	4.26	.94	4.1	0.8	7	41.2	46.9

Note: $N = 386$, Mode = 5

In general, community members showed agreement to seven factors of sustainable tourism development except perceived social cost. The level of agreement to community centered tourism development is 85.6%, while the level of agreement for perceived social cost is 43.4%. The community perceived lower social costs attached to tourism development at this stage.

Table 9. Attitude of respondents to sustainable tourism development in NSNP

Sustainable tourism development factors	Level of agreement in %
Environmental sustainability	76.40%
Perceived social cost	43.40%
Perceived economic benefits	73.40%
Community participation	74.20%
Long-term planning	78.40%
Visitor satisfaction	79.20%
Community centered economy	85.60%

Note: $N = 386$

Factor analysis on attitude of host community towards sustainable tourism development

Initially, the factorability of the 43 sustainable tourism attitude scale items were examined. It was observed that 42 of the 43 items correlated at least .3 with at least one other item, suggesting reasonable factorability. Principal components analysis (PCA) with a varimax rotation was performed on 43 items to delineate the dimensions of the SUS-TAS and 42 items loaded saliently within seven domains. Tables 10 and Table 11 displays the domain descriptors, the number of items in each domain, corresponding alpha reliability coefficients, Eigenvalues, a percentage of variance explained by individual domain, and the result of KMO and Bartlett tests. the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .89, above the commonly recommended value of 0.6 which is required for a good factor analysis (Tabachnick and Fidell, 1989), and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 (703) = 17449.351$, $p < .001$). The communalities were all above .3 (see Table 10), further confirming that each item shared some common variance with other items. Given these overall indicators, factor analysis was deemed to be suitable with all 42 items.

Table 10. Factor analysis on attitude of host community towards sustainable tourism development

Domain	Item description	Factor Loading	Communality
Environmental sustainability	I think that tourism development should strengthen efforts for environmental conservation	.862	.900
	Regulatory environmental standards are needed to reduce the negative impacts of tourism development	.830	.835
	The diversity of nature must be valued and protected	.816	.843
	Community environment should be protected now and for the future	.798	.796
	I believe that tourism must improve the environment for future generations	.791	.783
	Tourism development must promote positive environmental ethics among all parties that have a stake in tourism	.778	.825
	Tourism must protect the community environment	.774	.859
	Proper tourism development requires that wildlife and natural habitats be protected at all times	.739	.848
	Tourism needs to be developed in harmony with natural and cultural environment	.723	.850
	I do not feel comfortable or welcome in local tourism businesses	.870	.784
	I often feel irritated because of tourism in the community	.864	.860
	My quality of life has deteriorated because of tourism	.853	.869
	My community is overcrowded because of tourism development	.829	.764
	Tourists in my community disrupt my quality of life	.788	.803
Perceived social cost	I believe that the quality of social interaction in my community has deteriorated because of tourism	.754	.659
	Community recreational resources are overused by tourists	.729	.705
	Tourism is growing too fast	.631	.786

Table 10 (Continued)

Domain	Item description	Factor loading	Communality
Perceived economic benefits	Tourism creates new markets for our local products	.866	.836
	Tourism diversifies the local economy	.838	.837
	Tourism benefits other industries in the community	.779	.836
	I believe tourism is good for our economy	.779	.815
	Tourism generates substantial tax revenues for the local government	.689	.720
	I believe tourism is a strong economic contributor to the community	.614	.807
Community participation	I like tourism because it brings new income to our community	.521	.760
	Tourism decisions must be made by all in my community regardless of a person's	.733	.666
	Sometimes, it is acceptable to exclude a community's residents from tourism development.	.697	.574
	Full participation of everyone in the community in tourism related decisions is a must for successful tourism development.	.687	.656
	Communities' residents should have an opportunity to be involved in tourism development and management.	.615	.752
	I believe that we need to take a long-term view when planning for tourism development.	.817	.849
Long-term planning	I believe that successful management of tourism requires advanced planning strategy	.811	.844
	I think residents must be encouraged to assume leadership role in tourism planning committees.	.832	.853
	Tourism industry must plan for the future	.766	.865
	Tourism development plans should be continuously improved	.759	.819
	I believe tourism development needs well-coordinated planning	.757	.811

Table 10 (Continued)

Domain	Item description	Factor loadings	Communality
Visitor satisfaction	Tourism businesses must monitor visitor satisfaction.	.758	.691
	Tourism industry must ensure good quality tourism experiences for future visitors	.744	.802
	Tourism businesses has responsibility to provide for visitor needs	.640	.788
	Community attractiveness is a core element of ecological “appeal” for visitors.	.503	.569
Community centered economy	I think tourism businesses should hire at least one-half of their employees from within the local community	.845	.848
	Tourism industry should be required to obtain at least one-half of their goods and services from within the local community	.842	.866
	Tourism industry must contribute to community improvement funds	.819	.838
	Communities’ residents should receive a fair share of benefits from tourism	.874	.882

Note: N = 386

Seven factors were initially labeled as follows: factor 1 = environmental sustainability (nine items; alpha = .96); factor 2 = social costs (eight items; alpha = .92); factor 3 = economic benefits (seven items; alpha = .94); factor 4 = community participation (four items; alpha = .72); factor 5 = long-term planning (six items; alpha = .93); factor 6 = visitor satisfaction (four items; alpha = .78); and factor 7 = community centered economy (four items; alpha = .94). One item was eliminated because it did not contribute to a simple factor structure and failed to meet a minimum criterion of having a primary factor loading of .4 or above, and no cross-loading of .3 or above. Tourism industry must ensure good quality tourism experiences for future visitors is the only item which did not meet the minimum criteria and contribute for factor structure.

Previous studies (Lankford and Howard, 1994; Ap, 1992; Delamere, 1998) indicated that the most widely used reliability test method is Cronbach's internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha is expressed as a correlation coefficient, ranging in value from 0 to 1). Internal consistency for each of the scales was examined using Cronbach's alpha. Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) recommended that a score of .7 or higher is desired reliability while .6 or higher is an acceptable reliability coefficient for research at the early stage of the scale development. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for individual SUS-TAS domains ranged from .72 (lowest) to .96 (highest) with a total scale reliability of .93. This indicates that the variables exhibited a strong to moderate correlation with their factor grouping and thus were internally consistent.

Table 11. Eigenvalues, Variance explained, and Cronbach's alphas of initial SAS-TAS domains

Domains	Number of items	Eigenvalue	% of variance explained ^a	α
Environmental sustainability	9	15.05	39.61	.96
Perceived social cost	8	5.06	13.31	.92
Perceived economic benefits	7	3.42	8.99	.94
Community participation	4	2.50	6.57	.72
Long-term planning	4	1.70	4.48	.93
Visitor satisfaction	3	1.27	3.33	.78
Community centered economy	3	1.04	2.73	.94

N = 386. SUS-TAS = scale assessing residents' attitudes toward sustainable tourism; Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure = .893; Bartlett's test = 17449.351 ($p < .001$).
^aTotal variance explained in the data = 79%.

The results support the assertion of Dogan (1989), who argued that the initial response to tourism development, particularly in rural or Third World settings, might be uniform within the residents. Residents' attitudes and reactions toward tourism contain a sense of homogeneity (Mason and Cheyne, 2000).

Conclusion:-

The results show that the local communities have a positive attitude toward sustainable tourism development at Nech Sar National Park. Environmental sustainability, perceived economic benefits, community participation, long term planning, visitor satisfaction and community centered economy are domain factors for which respondents showed their agreement. Local communities showed their disagreement towards perceived social cost of tourism development. Residents in the study area overall have a favorable attitude toward tourism because tourism development is only in its initial stage and unfavorable tourism impacts on Nech Sar National Park are not readily evident. This study reinforces previous research findings and supports the premise that SUS-TAS is a reliable and valid instrument to measure residents' attitude toward sustainable tourism development. The results of this case study reinforce the findings of those previous studies and indicate that SUS-TAS can be used to measure residents' attitudes toward sustainable tourism development in communities and national parks where tourism has not yet appeared to be a significant economic area of activity.

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