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## Effects of Intangible Cultural Heritage for Economic Development in Nepal

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### Abstracts

Nepal is the land of diverse cultures and rituals that play a vital role in tourism development. In Nepal, cultural tourism has vital role in tourism development like natural diversities. In cultural tourism, intangible cultural heritage (ICH) like festivals, rituals and customs, craftsmanship, music, dance of different castes and ethnic communities play an important role in tourism promotion. The objectives of the study are to analyze how ICH plays its role on economic development through tourism and why ICH is important for a nation to enhance overall economic activities. The study followed a qualitative research design and drew conclusions on the basis of primary and secondary sources of the data collected. Primary data were collected from the Kathmandu Valley Basantapur area and secondary data were gathered from books, articles and various documents related to the study area. The findings and conclusion of the study have been based on a description and analysis of the data. Countries like Nepal, ICH can support for economic enhancement through various ways such as increasing demand of the goods, increasing the attraction of tourists in sites, increasing the expenditure of the festival's organizers.

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*Keywords:* culture, development, economic, festivals, heritage, ritual

### Introduction

Intangible cultural heritage is known as the heritage related to people as form on intangible like but people have been practiced in different form like oral form as songs, narratives art form like skills, art craft, traditional of environment and so on. Burra Charter, (2013) notes ICH as:

The intangible cultural heritage means the practice, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage.

ICH is generally existed in people's life and slowly and gradually transmitted from generation to generation. ICH is created by the negation of the value of respected community, their history and environment of surroundings so that it is based on the interaction of nature and culture. It also focuses on the diversities and pluralism of nature and culture. It is total sum of the human life so it appears as form of multidisciplinary issue in study. ICH is related to culture, ritual, economic activities, environment art, history, myth and human relation etc. in this study it analyzed from the perspective of economy.

Culture is not the means of entertainment but also source of economic activities. In ancient time government or local organized various festivals and promoted the local economy. There is one proverb in Nepal as "*Pashupati ko Jatra sidrara ko Byapar*". It shows that festival is not only remains as religious and cultural phenomena but also used as the opportunities of buying and selling product goods. In this regards, Culture and religion play role on economic activities in Nepal because our society is the society based on mediaeval pillar of economy. Like that various intangible culture play role to enhance tourism and ICH develop as form of cultural capital in Nepal. We use culture as form of capital because it establishes relationship between economic activities. In the context of Nepal, it is going to be the capital that can be used for sustainable livelihood. In the definition of culture Bourdieu, (1986) included the both tangible objects like arts and intangible things like song dance, myth and oral narratives that effects in the life of human being since primordial time. Like that Di Maggio, (1982) describes about the tangible and intangible cultural heritage in the context of France and notes, cultural heritage more focuses on intangible culture heritage that plays role to identify the cultural recognition of the nation. The idea is very similar the context of Nepal while talking about the ICH of Kathmandu valley. Both tangible and intangible cultural heritage play equal role to manifest the cultural identities of Kathmandu valley. Songs dances, knowledge and history reflect of ICH of Kathmandu valley. Kathmandu valley is known as the city of culture, knowledge, spiritualism and Tantra. The knowledge is based on performance culture like song and dance guided by certain spiritualism, there are other places in Nepal like Lumbini, Mustang, Gorkha etc. which is based on the ICH.

In the context of economic development traditional craftsmanship play important role than the other forms of ICH. However, the convention related to ICH that held in 2003 basically highlighted skills and knowledge involved in craftsmanship rather than the craft products themselves. It focuses on preserving craft objects, safeguarding attempts concentrates on encouraging producing craft. Intangible cultural heritage is taken as main source of culture that UNESCO categorized as main cultural heritage in 2003). UNESCO brings various clarifications about ICH in the context of socio-cultural condition of the particular nation and its primitive value. UNESCO highlights its five stages cycle included as creation, production, dissemination, transmission and reception, and participation and consumption respectively (ICHC 2003). It compares the significance of ICH with other cultural heritage and relates it's with human knowledge and heritages.

In recent decades the role of local culture in knowledge and entrepreneurial clustering has also been put forward. Many incent cultural city bring been projects for enhancing tourism through promoting intangible cultural heritage. Primordial literature has brought in new form of either dance or song and projected as interesting myth which bring new test for audience and it became as material for tourism promotion. Ottaviano & Peri, (2004), Tabellini, (2010) project the situation of ancient roman culture and its tourist value of Italy. They highlighted that economic values and diversities of culture that play role to promote the tourism of Italy as well as advertise the ICH of ancient Rome. Jacobs (1961) & Florida (2002a,b; 2005) also talked about the value of ICH for economic development of an ancient city. Effect globalization like cultural exchange, tourist related phenomena such as short time migration bring new value on the ICH because the ICH is interesting for new people. In this context, Constant et al., (2012) focused that global phenomena bring new insight in ICH and it is going to be popular business materials in future.

Nepal is one of the home lands of cultural development where various tangible and intangible cultures have been flourishing since primordial period of the history. Nepal is rich in cultural diversity because there found multiple cultures in a single place. It is the heaven of cultural diversity and harmony. However, modernization, influences of western culture rigorously attempt to convert the ICH in new one and tries to envy the beauty and aesthetic of the diversity which is not only limited as culture but also expand in cultural capital. The study explores the situation of the role of intangible cultural heritage and its role on economic development in the context of Kathmandu valley.

### **Study area**

The study only focuses on the role of ICH of Kathmandu valley for economic development. The city is capital city of Nepal where around 1.5 million people are lived (CBS, 2022) and there estimated equal number of populations are temporarily lived in Kathmandu and total population of Kathmandu is around 3 million, however, population of the city is not constrained because migration rate is not fixed in Nepal. Like that around one million tourists' annual visits the city for visit so that the economic value of the city is as important as other values in the sense of ICH. (Ministry of Culture, Tourism & Civil Aviation, 2022, p. 20)

Hanuman Dhoka Darbar square is the study area of this research where both tangible and intangible cultural heritages are located. The area is famous for craft like *Dese maru Jha* (the window that has not found other) and also festival like Indra festival and *Tantric* power. The land is known as magical area of business because for thousands of years people gather in Dabali (open space) for buying and selling goods during festivals period. Like that all the tourists who come to Nepal also visit the area and observe both tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the area.

### **Methods**

Non participatory observation method was used to collect data from the field and used the information related to the role of intangible cultural heritage and economic development. The study also analyzed the data collected from the different sources related to festival and economic development. So, the study followed qualitative research design and analyzed the information on the basis of the issues raised in the study.

### **Impacts of intangible cultural heritage for economic development in Nepal**

Intangible cultural heritage like festivals, ritual practices songs and dances and craft play role to enhance the economic activities in a local community. In the context of Hanuman Dhoka Darbar square both foreigner tourists and local are available in an open space and involved in economic activities such as buying and selling these. ICH creates space for both buyers and sellers once a time. More than that in Basantpur ICH is one of the vital because cultural capitals because the area is gathered in culturally world heritage sites. In the context of festival and economic activities, in present time cultural heritage is used to achieve economic benefit of the society. It circulates not only for cultural values but also for economic activities of the community. Diwasa, (2007) focused that cultural dance and song and other special performances are not only limed in the fulfillment of culture demand but also bring new insight in tourism business. Ashworth & Voogt, (1990) also highlights the economic values of ICH by referring the situation of city performance of Europe where people gather in the special occasion and performances various festivals in the street. It is related to street dance and song that they note, " a

city resident may attend a festival to interact with other city residents or just to enjoy his or her leisure time; a local or international firm may attend the same festival in order to sell or promote its products; and a tourist may attend for entertainment and to experience the local culture" (p.4). In the special occasion there organizes festival in the city and called the tourist for entertainment. Tourists from various parts are gathers in the occasion and exchange the feeling of festivals. Same events occurred in Nepal because many tourists from various nations are involved in Kumari festival and other festivals like Rath (chariot) festival, Dashian performance. September and April is the popular for tourism in Kathmandu because many songs and dances fall in the moth and tourists take interest on that songs and dances.

Intangible cultural heritage like festivals play great role to enhance the economic activities in Kathmandu valley. During the time of festivals mass of the people involved in buying and selling activities so that demand of the local objectives is high. After increasing the demand production also high and the production creats jobs among the local so that festival is only the way to circulate economic activities in Nepal. Basically, on Newar communities ICH play important role because they compulsory use the ICH in their life cycle ritual and other cultural ceremony that has direct connection with economic activities.

Tourism is one of the main economic activities of Nepal and only the source of foreign currency so that it is known as one of the major economic activities of Nepal. Nature and culture both play equal role on tourism promotion in Nepal. In the context of culture ICH portion is very high in Nepal because Nepal is known as the homeland of diverse culture. Each of the cultural groups has its separate and unique ICH which is the main attraction of the tourists. Before Covid-19 pandemic tourists arrival situation is very high in Nepal and Nepal also prepared the plan to celebrate visit Nepal 2020 and also promote the ICH in Nepal. At the time around one and half million tourists visit Nepal. In this context around one million tourists enjoy with ICH (Adhikari, 2021). Tourists love to see various cultural products like songs, dances, enjoy with Nepali art and craft. In Thamel and Basantpur area, there can be seen various curio shop, from curio business many people sustain their livelihood It is known as the main commercial products of Nepal to expert in first world countries. Curio and other handicraft materials covers more than 2% export of the nation (Government of Nepal, 2020) which is one of the major outputs of ICH so that ICH play's role on economic activities. In economic development of the nation ICH can play role from following perspectives

ICH can be the main touristic product of Nepal that can play vital role in tourism promotion. ICH is the main tools for preserving traditional craft like paintings, handicraft and other crafts which play role on the production of traditional material. Traditional materials can be the main goods for export from Nepal. It can be the main source of foreign currency and also play role on self-employment and cottage industries. Traditional knowledge and environment preservation and skills can play role on sustainable and environment friendly development that can play role on sustainable economy of the nation. ICH can be important issue for intellectual property preservation and patient rights issue for cultural brand of skills and craft which is one of the main pillars of national economy. ICH is being import issue on the world for cultural and economic prosperity.

## Conclusion and suggestions

ICH is one of the main issues of culture, however, it has relationship with commercial activities. In modern world cultural products play role on economic development through promoting tourism and soft business. Nepal is land of diversity where ICH has been remained in each of the diversification. Traditional arts, crafts, knowledge, skills and technology play role on enhancing economic activities among the people living in traditional pattern of life style. Like in festival time demand of goods is very high that play role to vibrate market so that traditional cultural festivities play role on maintaining economic cycle of the nation. In the context of Kathmandu valley specially, in Hanuman Doka Darbar square ICH became main way to sustain livelihood of poor people who involved in curio business and opera.

Government should make separate national policy to preserve the ICH in Nepal. All government federal, province and local government make separate policies and programs and promote ICH in local level. ICH can be the main source of traditional economy so that ICH should as cultural capital. Non-government organizations and civil society should promote ICH as productive way and link it with the livelihood of the people.

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