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Motivation and Effects of Adventure Sports Tourism in the Cordillera Administrative Region, Philippines

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate (1) the motivation of tourists for joining adventure sports tourism, (2) the environmental, economic, educational, and sociocultural effects of adventure sports tourism on destinations, and (3) the types of support for sustainable adventure sports tourism development. All these inputs lead to the offering of insights into the design of policies relevant to sports tourism development. The quantitative-descriptive research method was used in this study among 300 primary respondents such as mountain bikers, cross-country runners, and mountain climbers/hikers traversing selected areas in Benguet, Mountain Province, Ifugao, and the City of Baguio. Data were gathered through a researcher-made questionnaire and data were processed through weighted means. Findings revealed that the immersion in nature, with beautiful and unpolluted scenery is their primary motivating factor in enjoining adventure sports tourism among respondents. More so, adventure sports tourism increases environmental awareness, and provides opportunities to meet new people and cultures. Adventure sports tourism helps in cultural exchange and preservation and improves the lifestyle of residents by creating new job opportunities and enabling tourists to learn while enjoying outdoor recreational activities. Respondents firmly believe that the right infrastructure, with proper community engagement and hospitality values, will contribute towards the sustainable development of adventure sports tourism in the different communities in the Cordillera Administrative Region. Lastly, policies were forwarded to increase the responsiveness of the tourists and the community in sustaining adventure sports tourism. Overall, adventure sports tourism enhances the general well-being of individuals, the community, and the region as a whole.

Keywords: Adventure Sports Tourism, Environmental Awareness, Nature, Culture, Sustainable Tourism Development

Introduction

One of the most innovative and dynamic industries in the world is tourism. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), notably Objectives 8, 12, and 14, depend on the tourism industry. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) may advance much more quickly with the help of tourism. If properly managed, the sector may provide incentives for environmental protection, provide excellent employment for long-term growth, and reduce poverty, all of which will aid in the transition of nations toward more inclusive, resilient economies (World Tourism Organization; UNWTO, 2018; Tomino et al., 2020).

Planning and developing tourism responsibly requires finding a balance between the needs of society's environmental, economic, and social sectors. The management of sustainable tourism development must maintain high customer satisfaction, ensure that consumers have a significant experience, raise consumers' awareness of sustainability concerns, and spread sustainable tourism practices among them (Streimikiene et al., 2020).

According to Turker and Ozturk (2013) and Ling et al. (2011), tourism impacts in three categories, economic, socio-cultural, and environmental. Economic impact includes elements such as increased jobs, additional income, and generates tax revenue. On the other hand, sociocultural impacts encompass the resurgence of traditional crafts and ceremonies, increased intercultural communication and understanding, exchanges in traditional cultures, and help improve community services. And lastly, the environmental category consists of the protection of parks and wildlife, the creation of water and noise pollution, and wildlife protection or destruction.

One of the aspects of tourism that is bringing in a lot of visitors is adventure tourism. To define adventure tourism, several factors must be taken into account, including activity, motivation, risk, performance, experience, and surroundings. The mixing of these concepts to create a definition is equally significant. The term adventure tourism refers to a wide range of independently initiated activities that include interacting with the natural world, having a component of actual or apparent danger, and in which the outcome, while unpredictable, may be influenced by the participants and conditions.

In the modern world and among some affluent visitors who prefer an experience over just lounging about a region, adventure tourism has grown in popularity. Even if the cost of travel is the same, the tourist tries to upgrade their trip by adding more activities to their agenda. Adventures are experiences that offer a certain amount of personal thrill. Trekking, camping, river rafting, backcountry bicycling, and other activities are all included in adventure tourism, a fast-expanding segment of the travel industry. Adventure tourism is the practice of traveling while engaging in an outdoor activity that purposely presents a challenge to travelers. This frequently entails the players using their knowledge, grit, endurance, and problem-solving skills to overcome some sort of risk. Travelers might learn teamwork, coordination, leadership, decision-making, and other abilities through

adventure tourism. Geography/topography, weather and climate, people and culture, flora and fauna, fairs and festivals, natural beauty, and society are all components of adventure tourism. Risk, education, experiencing a new culture, and travel are the primary factors that determine if a visitor is an adventure tourist. One of the most important elements of adventure tourism is risk. Today, risk is associated with severe, dangerous activities that allow a visitor to demonstrate their willpower. The motivation of adventure tourists is also linked to being in a natural environment, meaningful experiences, learning, and being in a new culture, according to certain recent research (Carvache-Franco et al., 2022). Emotion, nature (Beckman et al., 2017) social, escape, family, enthusiasm, culture, and rafting services (Sato et al., 2018), novelty, enjoying nature, environmental education, escape, excitement, supernatural, physical challenge/skill development, risk, and social, facilities, attraction activities (Giddy & Webb, 2018), relax mentally, relieve stress and tension, and avoid the hustle and bustle of daily activities, to be competent socially, feel a sense of belonging, and earn the respect of others (Jin et al., 2019) relaxation, recognition, challenge, socialization, creativity, and discovery (Bichler & Peters, 2021) are the identified motivations of tourists in joining adventure tourism. Adventure tourism is a modern twist on ecotourism, sports tourism, and nature tourism.

Sports tourism is a subset of adventure tourism that can aid in sustainable development (Bergara et al., 2018). The context of sports tourism consists of human experiences that are concentrated on a group of services while traveling to particular locations to partake in a sports product. The purpose of the trip may be business-related (professional teams and athletes, for example) or recreational (trail runners competing in outdoor small-scale sporting events). Sports tourism refers to all forms of active and passive involvement in sporting activity, participated in casually or in an organized way for non-commercial or business/commercial reasons that necessitate travel away from home and work locality. Participation in sporting activities can take the shape of active or passive behaviors, and it is motivated by a variety of factors (Filo et al., 2013; Nazari, 2022).

Sports tourism supports SDG 8 (promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for everyone) by opening up numerous prospects for new business ventures that will need the creation of many new jobs. Additionally, SDG 3 (ensuring healthy living and fostering well-being for all at all ages) is aided by sports tourism. Investment in sports tourism can encourage residents to participate in sports in addition to offering visitors athletic possibilities and a physical activity outlet (Morfoulaki et al., 2023). The two-dimensional economic and social activity of sport tourism sits at the nexus of the travel and sporting goods industries, both of which are grappling with the issue of sustainable development. Together, active living and active travel have a significant economic and social influence on communities all over the world, contributing significantly to local sustainability. A triple bottom-line framework of the economic, social/cultural,

and environmental aspects of sports tourism is connected to maintaining the destination (Rauf & Weber, 2021; Nazari, 2022). Sports tourism is seen as a crucial form of tourism that mixes sports and travel to draw visitors, boost the local economy, and advance local culture (Giango et al., 2022). Following its positive impact, Sports tourism frequently reorganizes rural and urban local communities, which require regeneration in emerging economies (Muiruri Njoroge et al., 2017; Khan et al., 2020; Giango et al., 2022; Carvache-Franco et al., 2022). Travels geared toward participation in sports and physical activities either competitive or recreational by people around the world have contributed to the marketability of tourism. The positive perception of sports as a fundamental activity to engage in one's free time has developed the link between sports and tourism (Innocenti & Merci, 2012).

Adventure tourism and sports travel are naturally attracted to the Philippine scenery. The 7,107 islands brag and provide every possible option for adventurers (Brain, 2010). Among the most distinctive and breathtaking tourist attractions are scenic landscapes enhanced by cultural diversity that can be found in the Cordillera Administrative Region. The provinces of Kalinga, Apayao, Abra, Benguet, Ifugao, Mountain Province, and Baguio City make up the landlocked regional politico-administrative unit known as the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR). The Cordillera Tourism adopts culture and nature as its main thrust. The region provides breathtaking landscapes as well as the opportunity for some challenging mountain exploration. Local cyclists in Baguio will be pleased to lead you on routes that range from an easy half-day ride down to Ambuklao Dam to a lung-busting full-day descent of Mount Santo Tomas. The second-highest peak in the Philippines, Mount Pulag, is also an option. Spelunkers will be excited to explore the numerous subterranean caverns further north. Sagada's sacred burial places for the native tribes are caverns and streams. The Village Museum in Bontoc is perfect for learning more about Igorot culture. While the beauty of white water rafting excursion down the Chico River can be found in Kalinga. Travelers may be mesmerized by the numerous rice terraces they will encounter step of the way. This vision for tourism development in the region is embodied in the concept of eco-tourism. Ecotourism is being pursued in conjunction and complementation with other tourism ideals as well as land uses that can be absorbed in the existing environments of Cordillera's villages and towns, in response to the growing desire of the indigenous community for change and modernization (Department of Tourism, 2016; Alipio, 2008). With a broad diversity of species, ecosystems, and a multiplicity of communities and cultures, mountain regions have always been fascinating to people, particularly those attracted by the region's natural beauty, outdoor sports, adventure, milder summer temperatures, and distinctive features, alpine cultural history, with a spirituality heightened by the seclusion and great heights of the mountains. The study of regional travel in the Philippines shows that one of the primary factors that influenced the increase in local tourism visits is the natural attraction of the places. Studies also show an emerging market for nature- and culture-based tourism (Romeo et al.,

2021). Thus, the National Tourist Organizations and/or tourist enterprises must use Destination Marketing to identify their selected tourists, actual and potential, and communicate with them to ascertain and influence their wishes, needs, motivations, likes, and dislikes, on local, regional, national, and international levels, and to formulate and adapt their tourist products accordingly given achieving optimal tourist satisfaction thereby fulfilling their objectives

These sports tourist attractions have been called the greatest voluntary transfer of wealth from rich to poor countries (Dorcheh & Mohamed, 2013). Tourism is a potential economic, sociocultural, educational, and environmental base, providing elements that may improve the quality of life of the people, the community, and the region as a whole. The benefits that could be derived from adventure sports tourism, however, could only be maximized with the support and cooperation of the tourists, residents of the local community, and the government. Therefore, based on the acknowledged role that adventure sports tourism plays in sustaining destinations, the goal of this study is to investigate why tourists choose to participate in adventure sports tourism, the effects of adventure sports tourism on destinations in terms of the environment, economy, education, and sociocultural, the types of support for sustainable development of adventure sports tourism. All these inputs offer insights into the design of policies relevant to sports tourism development.

Objectives

This study aims to investigate (1) the motivation of tourists for joining adventure sports tourism, (2) the environmental, economic, educational, and sociocultural effects of adventure sports tourism on destinations, (3) the types of support for sustainable adventure sports tourism development. All these inputs lead to the offering of insights into the design of policies relevant to sports tourism development.

Materials and Methods

The study is purely quantitative. The descriptive research design was employed through a survey questionnaire to shed light on motivations for joining adventure sports tourism, the environmental, economic, educational, and sociocultural effects of adventure sports tourism on destinations, the types of support for sustainable adventure sports tourism development towards the design of policies relevant to sports tourism development.

Through convenience sampling – a non-probability sampling methodology was used to have a total of 300 respondents comprising mountain bikers, cross-country runners, and mountain climbers/hikers traversing the area destinations of Mt. Ugo, Tinongdan in the municipality of Itogo, Bubok-Bisal and Mt. Purgatory of Bokod, Mt. Pulag of Kabayan, Buiguas, Tuba and La Trinidad, all in the province of Benguet. Additionally, the

municipalities of Kiangnan and Alfonso-Lista of Ifugao Province, municipalities of Bontoc and Sagada of Mountain Province, and the City of Baguio.

A researcher-made questionnaire patterned from eminent authors was used to answer the primary objectives of this study. The instrument was subjected to validity and reliability tests with a Cronbach $\alpha = .847$, hence, the instrument is valid and reliable.

Before the gathering of data, the informed consent form was provided to respondents. Data confidentiality was also assured to participants with the data collected. Only those respondents who completed the forms participated in the study. The study made use of weighted means to process the data gathered from descriptive objectives.

Results and Discussion

1. Motivations of Respondents in Joining Adventure Sports Tourism

Table 1 presents the motivations of respondents in joining Adventure Sports Tourism in selected areas in the Cordillera Administrative Region.

Table 1 The extent of motivation of the respondents to join adventure sports tourism

Motivations	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Able to connect with nature with beautiful and unpolluted scenery	3.79	HM	1
Improves health and physical appearance	3.75	HM	2
Able to compete with others	2.61	MM	9
Able to get prizes	2.22	SM	10
Able to enjoy the hobby	3.52	HM	5
Able to bond with family and friends	3.69	HM	3
Able to improve existing skills or obtain new skills	3.50	HM	7
Able to analyze fitness and sports performance	3.35	HM	8
Able to influence sports participation	3.56	HM	5
Able to influence the improvement of physical education and sports	3.58	HM	4
Overall Mean	3.36	HM	

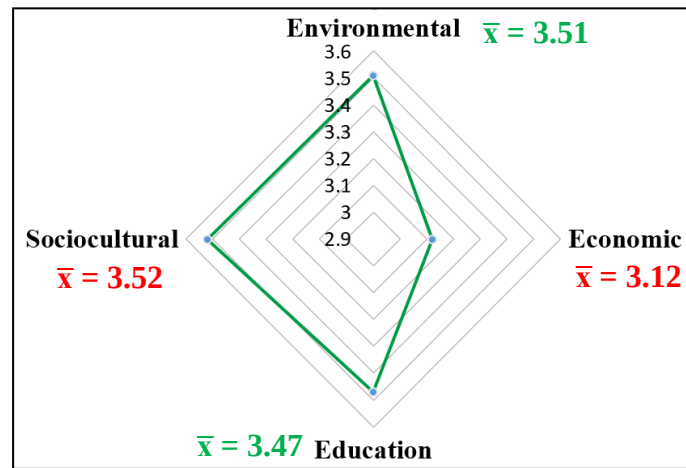
Note. Legend: 1.0-1.74= Not Motivational (NM); 1.75-2.49= Slightly Motivational (SM); 2.50-3.24= Moderately Motivational (MM); 3.25-4.00 = Highly Motivational (HM)

Results revealed that respondents are highly motivated to join adventure sports tourism with an overall mean of 3.36 on a four-point Likert scale. This simply implies that the respondents were highly involved in adventure sports tourism. Notably, respondents are highly motivated because they can connect with nature with beautiful and unpolluted scenery. Joining adventure sports tourism improves their health condition and enhances their physical appearance, able to enjoy the beautiful scenery while bonding with family and friends. Respondents join adventure sports tourism to influence the improvement of physical education and sports. On the other hand, external motivators like prizes were described by the respondents as slightly motivational.

Different wants and requirements that are crucial to selecting and appreciating a travel place influence visitor motives by including cognitive and emotional elements in a scenario where the two act as mediators between the individual and the environment, the motivation was gradually reduced. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the main incentives for engaging in mountain tourism were sociability, challenge, the natural environment, and achievement. The tourists made new acquaintances and relished the challenge of various climbing experiences with friends because the motivations for sociability and challenge represented the same proportion (Beckman et al., 2017; Yousaf et al., 2018; Pestana et al., 2020; Carvache-Franco et al., 2022). While Giddy (2018) and Mishra et al. (2021), claim that in terms of push and pull considerations, tourists are motivated by internal and extrinsic causes. Pull factors help travelers decide where to go, and push factors motivate them to travel. Push factors are related to the particular wants and preferences of visitors, such as the need for solitude, adventure, social connection, rest, fitness, and status. Pull factors, on the other hand, are characteristics of a location, such as its natural resources, cultural attractions, and recreational amenities. The reasons people travel differ greatly in sports tourism. Sports tourism is relevant to conventional travel objectives including physical, interpersonal, cultural, status, and prestige. However, several motivations are directly linked to participating in sports (competitiveness, the desire to triumph, the development of abilities, and competence). These factors identified by eminent authors are all present in this study.

2. Perceived Environmental, Economic, Education, and Sociocultural Effects of Adventure Sports Tourism

Figure 1 presents the level of environmental, economic, educational, and sociocultural effects of Adventure Sports Tourism.



Note. Legend: 10.-1.74= Least Effect (LE); 1.75-2.49= Slight Effect (SL); 2.50-3.24= Moderate Effect (ME); 3.25-4.00 =High Effect (HE)

Figure 1 Environmental, economic, education, and sociocultural effects of adventure sports tourism

Generally, the respondents perceived that adventure sports tourism had a high effect on the sociocultural, environmental, and educational aspects of destinations with a mean of 3.52, 3.51, and 3.47 respectively. On the other hand, the economic aspect had a moderate effect on destinations with a mean of 3.12. This implies that respondents are aware of the benefits of adventure sports tourism in the sustainability aspects of tourism towards sustainable development. Culturally, tourism is considered an element of community enrichment. More so, adventure sports tourism positively contributes to the maintenance of the environment by protecting, creating, and maintaining adventure tourism spots. Also, adventure sports tourism creates opportunities in the locally through supply of goods and necessary services for the different tourist activities.

Specifically, adventure sports tourism has a great effect on the sociocultural, environmental, educational, and economic aspects of the tourism spots in CAR. Under Sociocultural, findings revealed that adventure sports tourism provides the opportunity to meet new people from different cultures allowing tourists and the community to promote interaction of social and cultural values. Also, adventure sports tourism promotes the culture of the host community through different cultural activities, thus, promoting cultural identity. Adventure sports tourism also promotes the development and maintenance of public and local facilities and infrastructure. This shows that the respondents look into socializing with others. Socialization is the process of learning how to become part of a culture. It is a very vital process in forming a personality. These results are supported by the study of Zhuang et al. (2019), which states that the social habits, practices, values, beliefs, and lifestyles of the locals in a tourist destination are impacted by tourism, which has an impact on the characteristics of the local social culture. Adventure sports tourism can reinforce the national heritage, individuality, uniqueness, and community spirit as

local individuals can join together to promote their culture. Sports tourism can initiate the restoration, preservation, and/or modernization of cultural traditions.

As to the environmental effects of adventure sports tourism, respondents agreed that it promotes environmental awareness, allows tourists to appreciate nature, motivates sports enthusiasts to participate in environmental protection activities and advocacy, and promotes the implementation of Republic Act 9003 known as the Solid Waste Management Act of the Philippines. Also, adventure sports tourism conserves biodiversity and protection of wildlife and their habitat. Lastly, it helps in the minimization of traffic, noise, and pollution. However, according to Sunlu (2003) and Arquinez et al. (2020), tourism depends on the condition of the environment, both natural and created by humans. The connection between tourism and the environment is complicated, though. Many of the actions it entails hurt the environment. Many of these effects are related to the development of tourism-related amenities, such as resorts, hotels, restaurants, shops, golf courses, and marinas, as well as basic infrastructure like highways and airports. The detrimental effects of tourism growth might eventually lead to the environmental destruction of resources that it is dependent on.

More so, findings show that economically, adventure sports tourism helps improve the lifestyles of residents in the community through the promotion of entrepreneurship opportunities and capabilities of the locals. It also provides an avenue for the locals to market local products. Though, it only provides seasonal employment opportunities, income derived from tourism activities enables locals to provide for their needs daily. According to the studies of Haldar (2017) and Morfoulaki et al. (2023), the increased money spent by these tourists affects the suppliers as well as the companies where the money is spent. Through supply chain interactions that cross sectoral boundaries, economic activities are interrelated. In other words, to provide an output of a thing or service, there is a greater demand from a range of sectors for other goods and services. As a result, a rise in the demand for one thing or service increases the demand for other products and services across the whole economy. Similar to this, a rise in production will result in a rise in demand for labor from businesses that provide the necessary commodities and services as well as from those that produce the final product or service.

Additionally, respondents agreed that adventure sports tourism affects education. Specifically, adventure sports tourism can provide students the venue to learn and enjoy the outdoors, emphasizing outdoor recreational activity skills, safety, and positive group dynamics, leading to a reflective learning experience. Through this, it will allow students to relate and connect the movement of mountain bikers, cross-regional runners, and trekkers which can improve regional sports and student research.

3. Types of Support for Sustainable Adventure Sports Tourism Development

Table 2 presents the necessary support for sustainable adventure sports tourism development in the Cordillera Administrative Region.

Table 2 Support for Sustainable Adventure Sports Tourism Development

Support	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Improve Policies and Regulations	3.50	SA	2
Improve Local Facilities and Infrastructure (Accommodations, Restaurants, Souvenir Shops, Good Road Network)	3.85	SA	1
Improve Community Engagement	3.35	SA	3

Note. Legend: 10.-1.74= Strongly Agree (SA); 1.75-2.49=Agree (A); 2.50-3.24= Disagree (D); 3.25-4.00 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

Findings revealed that support to improve local facilities and infrastructures such as accommodations, restaurants, souvenir shops, and even good road networks ($\bar{X} = 3.85$) are vital to developing adventure sports tourism in the selected spots in the Cordillera Administrative Region for sustainable development. More so, respondents strongly agree that support to develop and/or improve policies and regulations of the operations of adventure sports tourism is necessary ($\bar{X} = 3.50$). Policies should be in place to clearly and smoothly operate all activities within selected sports tourism spots in CAR. Lastly, support to improve community involvement or engagement is vital to allow adventure sports tourism to develop ($\bar{X} = 3.35$). Locals should typically be involved in the decision-making and micromanagement of tourism development. Additionally, local knowledge and active interest would be advantageous to successful entrepreneurial endeavors of adventure sports tourism.

Tourists, residents, the government, and other private organizations should join hand in hand towards the development of sustainable adventure sports tourism. Accordingly, support towards the improvement of facilities and infrastructures, the establishment of policies and regulations on tourism operations, and active community engagement would make matters uncomplicated since these locals would feel a sense of ownership and be empowered to participate in all aspects of adventure sports tourism.

Conclusion

This study investigated the motivations of tourists for joining adventure sports tourism, the environmental, economic, educational, and sociocultural effects of adventure sports tourism on destinations, and the types of support for sustainable adventure sports tourism development. The main conclusions of this study may be summarized as follows: (1) among the motivators of joining adventure sports tourism, engagement with nature plays a significant factor; (2) adventure sports tourism has high to moderate effects on the sociocultural,

environmental, and educational aspects of destinations; (3) sustainable adventure sports tourism can be achieved by providing support or by developing touristic destinations through the availability of facilities, infrastructure, regulations, and active involvement of locals.

Recommendations

This study's findings offer insights into the design of policies relevant to adventure sports tourism development. Based on these findings,

1. Government agencies in partnership with private entities/businesses may plan and implement programs, projects, and activities that may improve local facilities and infrastructure (Accommodations, Restaurants, Souvenir Shops, Good Road Networks) within the different adventure sports tourism destinations in the Cordillera Administrative Region. Improving local facilities and infrastructure boosts tourism development by raising the attractiveness and competitiveness of a destination. Tourism stakeholders may discover new options for sources of income (diversification of the economy, supporting local economies thereby creating employment, and considering outside investments for infrastructure development) (Zamfir & Corbos, 2015). It might become more accessible and offer numerous chances for the locals if basic services are developed there or if the infrastructure is invested. The local government may encourage business owners to offer regional goods like delicacies and traditional handicrafts during sporting events at a discount to promote mutual understanding between locals and tourists. It would encourage small- to medium-sized companies to sponsor sporting and tourist activities. Additionally, they could provide discounts, bonuses, or unique categories for locals who engage in sporting events as pricing incentives. This will improve communities' awareness of sports tourism and increase residents' access to the activities.

2. To oversee the administration of tourism, a robust management policy should be formed. The development phases should be handled by the Department of Tourism in each municipality, with an elected candidate receiving on-the-job training before taking over after a while. Tourists, the local community, and government organizations may manage natural areas, maintain and enhance natural and cultural heritage, reduce overconsumption and waste, and respect ecological limits to enhance the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural effects of adventure sports tourism in the community based on the policy that may be formulated in each sports tourism area.

3. Policymakers and sports tourism managers may concentrate on the factors influencing locals' views and support for sports tourism in light of these findings. A welcoming environment, emotional connection, and sympathetic understanding precede residents' views toward active engagement. Policymakers may create initiatives to encourage people to be more welcome to adventure sports tourists in light of the importance of

citizens' friendliness in increasing their perception of support for future sports tourism growth. They could give tax breaks and discounts on licenses to encourage local business owners to promote and take an active part in sporting events. To fully engage sports visitors in the community's culture, the local government may incorporate scheduled local excursions in key tourist destinations into the sporting event itinerary. The locals would be more proud of their community while the tourists would experience the friendliness of the community.

Additionally, to create awareness, policymakers and sports tourism managers may launch information campaigns to enlighten the populace about the advantages of sports and adventure sports tourism in the community through e-marketing, social media, and other channels that highlight the driving forces outlined in the study. Such a base might be used to plan and expand adventure sports tourism in the future.

Finally, the local community must ensure that visitors have a positive and rewarding experience.

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