

Tourism in Nepal: A Study on Tourists' Perceptions

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A thesis submitted to the Department of MBA BRAC Business School in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Business Administration

BRAC Business School,
BRAC University
November 2022

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my own original work while completing my degree at BRAC University.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate reference.
3. The thesis does not contain material that has been accepted or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Approval

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Ethics Statement

I hereby assure you that the following conditions are met for this paper " Tourism in Nepal: A study on Tourists' Perception" to the best of my knowledge.

1. This is an original work and has not been published anywhere.
2. This paper has not been considered for publication anywhere at this moment.
3. The ideas, management principles, and techniques are from my reflections and understandings, and appropriate citations are used where appropriate.
4. The writer's research and analysis are accurately reflected here.
5. The views and suggestions are based on the result and are not biased toward any company.

I understand the major consequences if the Ethical Statement's rules are breached.

I agree to the above statements and confirm that this submission follows the norms of Solid-State Ionics as outlined in the Author's Guide and the Ethical Statement

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Abstract

Tourism is undoubtedly one of the fastest-growing industries in Nepal. The prospect of tourism in Nepal is huge after the national remittance and revenues of water resources (Basnet 2009). However, it became very significant after COVID-19, and Nepal's lost remittance and tourism revenues have crippled the nation's finances. Therefore, the restoration of the industry back to its normal phase and with a whole lot of improvement seems necessary (Sah et al., 2020). For the sustainable growth of the tourism sector, it is necessary to overcome the challenges by identifying the problems and mitigating consumer needs and demands by improving the services. The data from 2018 shows that the tourist industry contributes about 7.9% to the country's GDP (Gross Domestic Product) and has supported over 1.05 million jobs and is expected to support 1.35 million jobs by 2029. (Sah et al., 2020). It is therefore important to support the industry.

This research discusses some of the challenges and problems such as lack of basic infrastructures like transportation, communication. Constrained marketing budget for tourism promotion and lack of publicity, lack of quality hotels, and lack of the infrastructure required for the proper development of both existing and viable tourism destinations, lack of development of tourism sites and so on.

The research therefore, has attempted to understand the perception of tourists in Nepal through an online survey where 44 people were asked about their experience of Nepal following both open-ended and close-ended questionnaires. The research has also tried to come up with suggestions based on the survey and secondary research, and careful analysis and reflections of theories of consumer behavior.

Keywords: Tourism; Consumers Perception; Tourist; Behavior; Marketing; Nepal

Acknowledgment

I express my deep sense of indebtedness to my supervisor Dr Md Parves Sultan, Professor BRAC Business School, for his precious guidelines, inspiration, and suggestions thoroughly during the period of doing my thesis. I also express my sincere gratitude to all the authors whose research has been cited in this study.

I am grateful to the BRAC University international office, the MBA department, all the faculties, and entire university members and friends for their support in pursuing my MBA degree.

And finally, to my family members for supporting, motivating, and inspiring me in every step, it would not have been possible without their kind support.

Nanshu Pokharel

20264067

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List of Acronyms:

NAC	Nepal Airline Corporation
UN	United Nations
NGOs	Non- Government organization
INGOs	International non-governmental Organizations
UNWTO	The United Nations World Tourism Organizations
WTO	World Trade Organization
WIFI	Wireless Fidelity
PVT LTD	Private Limited Company

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

Nepal has always faced problems in the tourism sector because of its political instability, and when we are talking about this, it goes way back to 1951 when there was autocratic governance under the Rana Regime. After Nepal received its democracy in 1955, Nepali Government welcomed the foreigners. (Nepal, 2022)

If we have to trace Nepal's history in the tourism sector, it really began after the successful conquest of the world's highest peak by Sir Tenzing Norgay and Sir Edmund Hillary on May 29, 1953. It helped Nepal to become a popular travel destination for tourists from abroad. The National Planning Council on Tourism was established in 1956 and got things moving in terms of tourism promotion under the direction of Frenchman George Lebrec. The National Tourist Development Board was established in the same year. As Nepal's first aviation service provider, Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation, currently known as Nepal Airline Corporation, began operations in 1958. Nepal, joined the International Union of Official Travel Organizations in 1959. (Shrestha & Shrestha, 2012)

Another reason why Nepal was famous for tourism back in the 1960s and early 1970s was because Marijuana was legalized, and it was a happy place for all the hippies around the world who used to travel to Nepal for that very reason. After the Government criminalized the sale of hashish and marijuana in 1973, many travelers began showing interest in culture and adventures.

The Nepal Tourism Board was created in 1998 as a partnership between the Government of Nepal and the business sector to advertise Nepal as a desirable travel destination. To promote tourism there, Nepal held "Visit Nepal 98" that same year. Due to a Maoist insurrection that lasted for ten years and caused a negative message throughout the world, tourism began to decline in 1999. The tourism business was badly impacted by other events like the Indian Airlines fleet being hijacked from Tribhuvan International Airport in 1999, the Royal Massacre in 2001, and King Gyanendra seizing control and suspending the constitution (Shrestha & Shrestha, 2012).

The most significant accomplishment was the historic Peace treaty signed in 2006 between the Maoists and the Government since it helped promote Nepal to foreign tourists. The second time that Tourism Year was observed was in 2011.

On April 25, 2015, a severe 7.8-magnitude earthquake struck the country. Along with the UNESCO Heritage Sites, some 600,000 buildings in Kathmandu and other adjacent towns were destroyed or damaged. The death toll rose to over 8,000 as thousands of people were left homeless. The earthquake's epicenter was in Gorkha, which was felt in sections of India, Bangladesh, Tibet, and Bhutan, in addition to the central and eastern parts of Nepal. After the earthquake, the Nepali government promptly proclaimed a state of emergency, mobilizing the entire Nepali army, Armed Police Force, and Nepal Police for rescue and recovery operations. Nepal also requested assistance from the international world. Members of SAARC and several other nations, including China, Taiwan, the USA, and the UK, swiftly sent rescue teams and relief. The UN immediately set up the "Nepal Earthquake 2015 Flash Appeal" fund, intending to raise money for earthquake assistance. There was additional support from NGOs and INGOs like the International Red Cross Society, CARE International, Save the Children, SOS Children's Village International, etc.

The impact of the earthquake on tourism was massive. The earthquake caused an estimated \$7 billion in total economic losses, of which \$81241 million, or 11.5 percent, were attributed to the tourism industry. The effects of the earthquake on the arrival of tourists were noticeable. Even nine months after the earthquake, the inbound visitor arrival was below pre-disaster levels, and it reached a six-year low in 2015 ([Rijal, 2016](#))

Although the tourism industry was severely impacted by the destruction of numerous historical sites near the capital city and the closure of some trekking routes, a new slogan, "Nepal is safe," began to gain traction in the international market in mid-August to promote the regions that were spared, such as Pokhara, the Annapurna region, Lumbini, and Chitwan. The repercussions of the earthquake on tourism have since subsided, and Nepal is progressing well toward a better future.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The tourism industry is one of the most lucrative industries when it comes to contributing to the GDP of Nepal's economy. Despite having huge potential, the sector has quite a few drawbacks, which do not enable the tourism sector to reach its full potential.

Few common problems that most of the researchers found in the tourism sector were poor transportations and communication facilities, a constrained marketing budget for tourism promotion, lack of promotion, lack of quality hotels, and lack of the infrastructure required for the proper development of both existing and viable tourism destinations, lack of development of tourism sites and so on.

Additionally in Nepal, the execution of official policy has consistently been a major concern, and the tourism industry is no exception. Lack of institutional capacity is typically cited as the most significant contributing cause to such subpar policy execution. Many public policies, however, are not effectively implemented because they are poorly designed, and their content is incoherent and incomplete. In the case of tourism policy, this is true.

Similarly, Ghimire in his article ([Ghimire, R. P. 2009](#)) has illustrated a few contemporary challenges which are being faced by the tourism industry in Nepal. One of the main challenges is enhancing tourism competitiveness. According to Ghimire Nowadays, relatively few people choose to travel to certain locations based solely on proximity or sentimental factors; instead, they compare key indications of the travel and tourism competitiveness index.

Ghimire also mentioned the lack of clear and concise human resource regulations for the tourist and hospitality industry to keep up with the dynamic shifts in the global marketplace and the quickly advancing technology innovation. The country's need for quality training and available capability for providing it is vastly out of sync. On the other side, graduates in tourism and hospitality have an extremely low retention rate. Additionally, this industry lacks higher-level research and managerial development initiatives. He also emphasized how it was still quite difficult to include the newer airports.

Similarly, (Acharya in his article stated that the reason why people are only concentrated in Kathmandu and Pokhara is because the other tourist sites such as Rara, Dudh Pokhari , Hile, Gosai Kund and so many other sites of Nepal are not quite developed. The expansion and development of tourism sites therefore becomes an important challenge in the tourism sector of Nepal. ([Acharya, S. 2022](#))

The current scenario of Nepal's tourism sector is very critical as it is not even being able to provide the basic infrastructural needs, such as transportations and communication facilities. Unavailability of good roads and services like google maps confuses tourists when they have to travel from one place to another. There are also no clear signs and instructions given on the

buses about the routes as to where it is going. These are all the reasons which discourage senior citizens and people with disabilities to travel far and to the places they want.

The historical importance in Nepal, but due to the lack of human resources one also being the tourist guide with less knowledge about the place makes it difficult to transfer the knowledge to the foreigners about Nepal.

Another problem in tourism industry is that people know very little about homestay tourism in Nepal. Tourist who loves exploring the culture and lifestyle of people has very less options of actually staying in the community and exploring due to the wrong concept of homestay that people have in their mind. Homestay is still considered as a passive business for those who are unemployed, dependent, and not literate. If this pattern persists, homestay tourism may cease to exist within the upcoming generation. (Sureis, 2019)

1.3 Objective of this study

The prime objective of this research is to study the perception of tourist regarding Nepal tourism. This research explores the tourists' perceptions to study their tourism experience and current issues/problems in Nepal's tourism. The study also endeavors to provide suggestions following the research findings.

1.4 Limitations of the Study

During our study we traced out a few limitations that we were unable to overcome in this short period of time: Sample size of this study was small. The demographics of the study participants were narrow, and we were unable to reach out to more people due to various constraints like time, finance, location, etc. However, this is a small-scale or pilot study where appropriate attempts were made to reduce sample bias as much as possible.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The United Nations World Tourism Organizations (UNWTO) defines tourism as “Traveling outside one's typical area for personal, business, or professional reasons which is a social, cultural, and economic phenomenon. Visitors are what they are, whether they are tourists, excursionists, residents, or non-residents, and tourism is about their actions, some of which imply spending on tourism.” (UNWTO, 2022)

Tourism is defined by the World Trade Organization (1993) (WTO) as "the activities of persons traveling and staying for not more than one year in a row outside their usual environment for leisure, business, and other purposes."

Similarly, Rome conference on tourism 1963 defines tourism as “a trip outside of one's home country or the one where they typically work and live. However, this definition did not account for domestic tourism, which has developed into a significant source of income and employment for the hospitality sector.

Cambridge dictionary describes a tourist as a traveler who travels from their place to somewhere for recreation or pleasure.

Similarly, IGI global defines tourist as “anybody who travels to locations other than the one where they typically reside for a period of at least one night but no longer than one year, outside of their normal environment, and whose usual objective is distinct from engaging in any paid activity there” (Perinotto & Martins, 2022).

There are mainly three types of tourism (Introduction to Tourism, 2015):

1. Domestic - The person who lives in his/her/their place to visit another place within the country. For example, a person from Kathmandu leaving Kathmandu to explore Pokhara.
2. Inbound - Inbound is when a person leaves his/her/their country to explore another country. For example, a person leaving Nepal to go on a holiday to Italy.
3. Outbound – Outbound tourism is when a person leaves their home country to explore another place. A person can be an inbound and outbound tourist at the same time. For

example: If a person is leaving their hometown Nepal and traveling to Italy are an outbound tourist but from 'Nepal's perspective that person is an inbound tourist from Italy.

Similarly, there are different types of tourist They can be divided into two groups: "psychocentric" tourists (introvert, less adventurous travelers) and "allocentric" tourists (extrovert, risk-takers, more adventurous travelers); Wanderlust (tourist who likes to roam around in very unique places and gives more importance to the cultural needs) or "sun lust" (tourists who love sun, distinctive locations). "Recreational" tourists who put physical recreation as the top priority. Diversionary tourists (tourists looking to get away from the monotony of daily life), experiential tourists (tourists looking for real-life experiences), experimental tourists (tourists looking to interact with the locals), or existential tourists (tourists looking to actively engage in the culture and lifestyles of the host community) are all types of tourists (Seery, P., Paris, C., 2010).

2.2 Status of tourism in Nepal

Without a doubt, one of the industries with the quickest growth is tourism, and in the context of Nepal, this sector has enormous growth potential in addition to remittances and water resource profits (Basnet, 2009) But after COVID-19, it has become extremely important because Nepal's lost remittance and tourism income have destroyed the country's finances. Therefore, returning the industry to its usual state while also making significant improvements. (Sah et al., 2020). According to data from 2018, the tourism sector supports about 1.05 million employments and is projected to provide 1.35 million jobs by 2029, making up roughly 7.9% of the nation's GDP (Gross Domestic Product). (Sah et al., 2020). Therefore, it is crucial to sustain the industry as it has evolved.

Even though Nepal is a small country, it is very rich regarding its ecological and physiographic characteristics. Nepal's physical distinctiveness offers a wide range of adventurous activities, and its ethnically and culturally diverse population provides tourists opportunities for art, education, and entertainment. (Look and Gaze: State of Ecotourism in Nepal, n.d.).

Similarly, due to the lack of diversity in tourism products, Kathmandu has emerged as the most popular tourist destination, followed by Pokhara, Chitwan, Patan, Bhaktapur, Lumbini, and some other trekking routes. All facilities are centrally placed in the Kathmandu valley. It is also well known that Nepal is a popular vacation and leisure destination; nevertheless, there are few plans for recreational facilities for all types of visitors. It takes a firm understanding of

what to sell and how to position tourism items favorably in the global marketplace. Nepal has not been able to reap enough benefits from tourism due to a lack of success in putting the plan into action, limited international promotion efforts, and insufficient quality control measures. (Experts Views on the Tourism Industry in Nepal, n.d.)

2.3 Conceptual Review

This part deals with the different theories of consumer behavior, outlook on tourist behavior, and how the perception of consumer (Tourist) behavior will be one factor in contributing towards the better sustainability of the Tourism industry in Nepal.

One way to break the complexity of understanding consumer behavior is to attempt to see the point of view of different theorists regarding the very subject.

As defined by Solomon(Solomon, R. C. 1992), consumer behavior is the process by which individuals or groups choose, acquire, utilize, or discard goods, services, concepts, or experiences to satiate their needs and desires. (Dimanche & Havitz, 1995)

Similarly, According to Peter and Olsen (Peter, J. P. Olson, J. C. 2002), consumer behavior encompasses people's ideas, feelings, and behaviors related to their consuming practices as well as external influences like advertising, packaging, consumer observations, etc.

Cultural (values, social class), social (reference group, family) personal (Gender, age, education, income) and psychological factors (perception, belief) all have an impact on how consumers approach solving problems. (Engel et al. 1968).

When customers buy or consume specific goods and services, such as those related to tourism, sports, etc., they are motivated by emotional arousals like feelings. This is known as the hedonic view or experiential perspective of consumer behavior.

A different view of consumer behavior helps to create a different hypothesis that might help in consumers' purchase decision-making (tourists). The foundation of a successful tourism business lies in understanding all these hypotheses which result from careful analysis of consumers' dynamic thoughts and feelings. For instance, Anderson's model of consumer behavior emphasizes the importance of information in consumer decision-making and attitude to explain the purchase behavior of consumers (Rakib, M.R.H.K. 2021).

Consumer behavior is dynamic, and a thorough comprehension of this dynamic behavior is the basis of a prosperous tourism industry. If many aspects of travel, tourism, and hospitality can satisfy consumer requirements and wants, the likelihood of success in the tourism business increases. It is therefore necessary for tourism marketers and destination managers to understand the consumer's behavior of tourism products and services in the first place to offer their desired products and services at various places in order to satisfy the needs of consumers.

The important thing to understand as a marketer is the fact that the consumers always wants to take most of the benefits spending less. So as an industry what are the ways that we can meet the expectation of our consumers while getting equally benefited?

These types of theories on consumer behavior help us to understand what they like and dislike about Nepal. Which places would they love to visit again? And how much are they willing to contribute to the places they find satisfying? Therefore, understanding the psychology of tourists as a consumer becomes important for the improvement and sustainability of the tourism sector of Nepal.

2.4 Outlook on 'Tourist's Behavior

Consumers in the tourism sector are represented by highly diverse group of tourists, which are constantly changing in terms of personal features, personality traits and behavioral characteristics. Monitoring tourist behavior is essential to plan tourist services. Due to the increasing poverty and socio-economic crisis, most countries tried to make great efforts to reopen their tourism industry even though many countries may be going through a rough socioeconomic phase. A wide range of practical measures has been taken into consideration to stimulate the tourism demand and facilitate destination capacity to meet 'tourists' expectations in post-pandemic era. But tourists are still not fully prepared to spend like the pre-COVID stage. By partially reopening the tourism industry during the pandemic, a few countries have encouraged many people to visit their country. The global tourism business in early 2022 rebounded to around 61% below 2019 levels, but it is expected to significantly revitalizes throughout the rest of 2022 since the global social restrictions may be released in many parts of the world ([Juvan et al., 2017](#)). Many destinations have completely removed or eased due to COVID-19-related restrictions since early June 2022. Such striking efforts are assumed to boost the global tourism industry in which the domestic tourism in each country could be

prioritized for recovery in advance. This is changing the behavior of tourists back to its original state.

Chapter 3

Research Method

3.1 Introduction

Both the qualitative and quantitative method has been applied in this research. For initial insight into culture and tourism, online material related to tourism in Nepal was referred to. This provided a basis for quantitative research conducted in the next phase.

This study surveyed a random set of people who had been to Nepal at least once. A descriptive analysis of the obtained responses was then done. The research from secondary sources across cultures on tourism was also reviewed to gain more insights regarding consumer perception among tourists in Nepal.

This research purposely selected several travel agencies, marketing managers, and potential future tourists of Nepal and interviewed them. In short one-to-one interview sessions, we asked the participants a few questions to learn more about their views on the tourism sector of Nepal and what is stopping the potential tourist from deciding to visit Nepal. These data were later analyzed and compared with the quantitative data of the survey. The data were then presented in suitable graphical formats to make the readers understand the information quickly.

3.2 Research Design

The information was collected by using both primary and secondary data. The survey questionnaire was presented and was given to the participants to fill out via google form. The one-to-one interview sessions had no formal structure as we found that the interviewees were more comfortable sharing their opinions in this way. The interview was conducted over zoom video conference, where the marketing managers of a few tour and travel firms in Dhaka, Bangladesh were asked questions.

3.3 Sample Selection

This was an online survey which was circulated via Facebook, Instagram and through personal phone calls. But, most of the surveys were circulated among BRAC students. The Participants who filled out the survey were a group of people who visited Nepal before. It was also made sure that all the participants were unbiased about their opinion and were asked to show a picture of them in Nepal so that it can be known for sure the participants visited Nepal at least once. The sample size mostly had participants aging from 20 to 40 years, because we found people from the other age groups to be quite reluctant to participate in surveys.

Secondly, the marketing manager from “Vibrant Tours and Travels”, “Britto Tours and Travels”, “Kazi Air International PVT Ltd” and “SN Travels” in Dhaka, Bangladesh was interviewed via Zoom video conference.

3.4 Demography

The sample size had a higher percentage of young people from 20 to 40 years of age. The sample size consists of 19 Male and 25 Females. Most of the participants are either undergoing graduation or are graduate students. The online survey was mostly done by and circulated among the students of BRAC. As a result, we can also see that a significant number of participants have a monthly income of less than \$400. A very large percentage of participants are from Bangladesh because while taking the survey these numbers of group were more reachable. But there were also participants from Bhutan, France, Spain, India, the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Nepal, Brazil, and Vietnam because the survey was also circulated to these people via facebook, instagram and through personal phone calls and messages.

Chapter 4

4.1 Data Analysis

As described in the methodology, a survey was conducted on a wide demographic. The compiled set of data is tabulated in with the titles and numbers below:

Table- 4.1 Survey Data

Statement	Options/Responses	Frequency	In Percentage
Gender of the tourists	Male	19	43.2
	Female	25	56.8
	Others	0	0
	Total	44	100
Age of the tourists	Less than 18 Years	0	0
	18–25 Years	10	22.7
	26–35 Years	30	68.2
	36–45 Years	1	2.3
	46–55 Years	2	4.5
	More than 55 Years	1	2.3
	Total	44	100
Monthly income of tourists	Less than RS.40,000 (\$400)	15	34.09
	RS. 40,001 - 60,000 (\$401-\$600)	4	9.09
	RS. 60,001 - 80,000 (\$601-\$800)	4	9.09
	RS. 80,001 - 100,000 (\$801-\$1000)	4	9.09
	RS. 100,001 - 120,000 (\$1001-\$1200)	2	4.54
	RS. 120,001 - 140,000 (\$1201-\$1400)	5	11.35
	RS. 140,001 - 160,000 (\$1401-\$1600)	4	9.09
	RS. 160,001 - 180,000 (\$1601-\$1800)	1	2.27
	RS. 180,001 - 200,000 (\$1801-\$2000)	0	0
	More than 2,00,000 (\$2,000)	5	11.35
	Total	44	100
Nationality	Australia	0	0
	Bangladesh	18	40.91
	China	0	0
	Bhutan	4	9.09
	Myanmar	0	0

	Germany	0	0
	France	2	4.54
	Spain	1	2.27
	India	4	9.09
	United States	2	4.54
	United Kingdom	1	2.27
	Canada	4	9.09
	Srilanka	0	0
	Nepal	1	2.27
	Brazil	1	2.27
	Vietnam	4	9.09
	Others	2	4.54
	Total	44	100
Motivation for travelling	Exploring culture and religion	24	54.5
	To enjoy nature	22	50
	Rest and Recreation	22	50
	Adventure	22	50
	City trips	9	20.5
	Wellness, meditation and yoga	5	11.4
	Honeymoon	1	2.3
	Languages, Ethnicity & Culture	1	2.3
	Football tournament	1	2.3
	Friends	2	4.6
	Food	1	2.3
	Others	4	9.1
	Total	114	100
Types of Destination	Options/Responses	Frequency	In Percentage
Adventure	Mountaineering	20	45.5
	Trekking	22	50
	Rafting, Canyoning, Bungee	19	43.2
	Paragliding	19	43.2
	Jungle Safari	8	18.2
	None	8	18.2
	Total	96	100
Religion and Culture	Pilgrimage	13	29.5
	Monastery Visit and Guest staying	22	50
	None	15	34.1
	Total	50	100
Leisure Tourism	Sightseeing	36	81.8
	Boating and Kayaking	24	54.4
	Sit back and relax	28	63.6
	None	3	6.8
	Total	91	100
Village Tour	Homestay	18	40.9
	Traditional dance and food	27	61.4

	Ethnic Products, local handicrafts	26	59.1
	None	6	13.6
	Total	77	100
Yoga and Meditation	Yoga	4	9.1
	Meditation	15	34.1
	None	27	61.4
	Total	46	100

The ratio of males: females in the set of population are 43:57, which can be considered almost equal with no significant gender bias. Most of these tourists belong to the age group of 26-35 years (68.2%), whereas 22.7% fall into the 18–25 age group, and only 2.3% belong to the 36-45 years of age. These tourists are well educated, the maximum of which are undergoing graduation or are graduate student of Brac University. Which is why we can also see that a significant number (34.09%) of participants have a monthly income of less than \$400. A very large percentage (40.91%) of participants is from Bangladesh because the survey was physically conducted in Dhaka, Bangladesh. But there were also participants from Bhutan, France, Spain, India, and the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Nepal, Brazil, Vietnam and others because the survey was also circulated to these people via Facebook, Instagram and through personal phone calls and messages.

Below diagrams illustrate the percentage of people’s motivation towards the types of destination behind traveling to Nepal

Reason for the motivation to travel	Percentage of people who are motivated towards the reason for travelling
Areas Known for culture and Heritage	54.5%
Natural areas (to enjoy nature)	50%
Rest and Recreation	50%
Adventure	50%
Town and Cities	20.5%
Wellness/meditation and Yoga	11.4%
Honeymoon	2.3%
Others	9.1%
Football Tournament (others)	2.3%
Food (others)	2.3%
Meeting Friends (others)	2.3%
Language, Ethnicity and Culture (other)	2.3%

The below diagram shows that the large percentage of people are motivated to travel and visit the heritage site of Nepal which is 54.5%. Equal percentage of people are seen as motivated to travel Natural areas, rest and recreation, adventure sites which is 50%. However, very few people seem motivated to visit towns and cities which is 20.5%. Even fewer people are seen into wellness/meditation and yoga which is 11.4%. The other types of destination overall give us the percentage of 9.1 where people have mentioned the reason for the motivation such as Football tournaments, food, meeting friends and for exploring different language, ethnicity and culture.

When asked what kind of specific activities they prefer in the types of destination these were their responses:

Adventure

Mountaineering	45.5%
Trekking	50%
Rafting, Canoeing and Bungee	43.2%
Paragliding	43.2%

Areas known for culture and Heritage

Monastery visit and Guest Staying	50%
Pilgrims	29.5%
None	34.1%

Leisure Tourism

Sightseeing	81.8%
Boating and Kayaking	54.5%
Sit back and Relax	63.6%
None	6.8%

Village Tour

Homestay	40.9%
Traditional dance and food	61.4%

Ethnic, product , local and handicraft	59.1%
None	13.6%

The specific activities people prefer in Adventure compared to others was trekking which was 50% followed by the second best activity that is mountaineering which was preferred by 45.5% of people.

For Religion and Culture, a large portion (50%) of the participants selected “Monastery Visit and Guest staying”.

For Leisure Tourism,” Sightseeing” had the highest number of votes which was (81.8%), although the other categories were also quite high Sit back and relax was(63.6%), and “Boating and Kayaking” was(54.4%).

For Village Tour, “Traditional dance and food” (61.4%) and Products, local handicrafts” (59.1%) It seemed participants were less interested in Yoga and Meditation, as the majority (61.4%) selected none.

Ratings based on experience in different types of destination

Based on the ratings in the survey, most people prefer their destination type in Nepal to be adventurous (4.34 out of 5). But the other categories such as village tour, yoga and meditation are not too far off.

The table below demonstrates the rating based on experience in different types of destination from 1 to 5 where 5 is considered to be the highest and 1 is considered to be the lowest.

Table 4.2 Rating Scale

Destination Type	Scales	Star Frequency rating	Average in scale of 5 Star
Adventure	1	0	4.34
	2	0	
	3	5	
	4	19	
	5	20	
Religion and Culture	1	0	4.05
	2	2	
	3	10	
	4	16	

	5	16	
Leisure and Tourism	1	1	4.07
	2	1	
	3	12	
	4	10	
	5	20	
Village Tour	1	0	3.87
	2	2	
	3	16	
	4	11	
	5	15	
Yoga and Meditation	1	2	3.55
	2	7	
	3	10	
	4	15	
	5	10	
Overall Average			3.976

Source of the information about the destination

Table 4.3 – Source of the information about the destination

Category	votes	In Percent
Family and Friends	30	32.97
Colleagues	12	13.19
Social Media	24	26.37
Self-Search	25	27.47
Other	0	0.00
Total	91	100.00

The survey results indicate that tourists learn about Nepal almost equally from "Family and Friends" Whereas, the influence of social media and self –search is not seen very prominent in comparison to being suggested from family and friends.

Table 4.4 -Mode of travel

Mode of travel	Number	Percentage
Solo Travel	17	39.5
Family tour	5	11.6
Group tour	19	44.2
Holiday Package	2	4.7
Others	0	0
Total		100

The survey also states that tourists prefer solo travel to Nepal or group tours. This can be because many of our participants are students with a monthly income of less than \$400. As students are usually single, they are more likely to travel solo, and since income is also relatively low, group tours are a much more economical option for many

Preferred Destinations:

This particular survey concludes that the people prefer to visit Kathmandu (77.3%) and Pokhara (79.5) the most.

Table 4.5 Tourist Preference.

S. N	Location	Number	Votes Percentage
1	Kathmandu	34	14.11
2	Bhaktapur	11	4.56
3	Pokhara	35	14.52
4	Nagarkot	15	6.22
5	Sagarmatha National Park	7	2.90
6	Lumbini	9	3.73
7	Chitwan National Park	7	2.90
8	IIAM	3	1.24
9	Annapurna Region	12	4.98
10	Khumbhu Valley	3	1.24
11	Nuwakot	3	1.24
12	Patan (Lalitpur)	8	3.32
13	Dharan	2	0.83
14	Bandipur	12	4.98
15	Panauti	3	1.24
16	Helambu Trek	1	0.41
17	White Water Rafting	8	3.32

18	Janakpur	3	1.24
19	Trekking in Langtang Region	2	0.83
20	Trekking in Annapurna Region	7	2.90
21	Everest and Trek to the Base Camp	5	2.07
22	Bardiya National Park	4	1.66
23	Swayambunath (Monkey Temple)	14	5.81
24	Pashupatinath Temple	14	5.81
25	Boudhanath Stupa	13	5.39
26	Dhampus	1	0.41
27	Others	5	2.07
	Total	241	100.00

4.2 Interview

In the interview part of our research, we had 5-minute one-to-one sessions with 15 people - 4 marketing managers working in travel agencies and 10 potential tourists who had not visited Nepal yet.

Marketing manager's point of view

According to them, people love going to Nepal for its natural and vibrant sites, and that too at an affordable price for the masses. But there are some points of concern that they commonly receive from their clients.

People seem to perceive that the Tribhuvan International Airport runway is risky. This is mainly because people often mix up Tribhuvan International Airport with Tenzing-Hillary Airport in Lukla, situated in northeast Nepal, often referred to as the world's most dangerous airport, with a single runway that angles down toward a valley below.

This issue can be solved by running campaigns on airport safety and showing people what measures are taken by Tribhuvan International Airport for passenger safety.

People loved the rural side of Nepal. They enjoyed learning and experiencing the local lifestyle over there. But a common complaint was poor internet connectivity in rural areas. As we are living in a very digital age now, with people connected very strongly to social media and many even working on the go as freelancers, most people are quite dependent on strong internet connectivity.

This problem can be overcome by providing on-demand WiFi services in certain spots. Businesses like "Bonton" or "xfinity", enables broadband internet users who have a WiFi access-point set at their home, to share their internet with others in exchange for some money

via an app. Similar businesses can be set up in these local areas, where the locals can share their home WiFi with the tourists through an app. This will help the tourists connect to the internet and allow the locals to earn a little bit on the side.

This will help the tourists connect to the internet and allow the locals to earn a little bit on the side.

Potential tourist's point of

10 students from Bhutan and Bangladesh who has never visited Nepal and who wanted to visit Nepal were asked about their perception regarding Nepal. 5 out of 10 answered that they think the most of people love to visit mountains and love trekking, whereas 4 out of 10 answered temples and other religious sites and 2 of them talked about hospitality and culture.

Upon talking to these potential tourists, we found that the concerns stated by the marketing managers resonated with the feedback we got from the potential tourists.

In addition, some were concerned about the extreme roads leading to some of the mountains that can be made only with bikes. While people knew about many of the popular tourist spots in Nepal but were also confused about how to travel locally to these spots.

This problem can be sorted by social media campaigns about Nepal travel routes. The tourism industry can also promote popular influencers and bring them to these amazing tourist spots so that they can show the world where and how to travel with ease in Nepal.

4.3 Findings

A survey was conducted on a few aspects of tourism in Nepal. The survey participants comprised a wide range of people from different age groups, countries, annual incomes, etc. There were similarities between the problems that were addressed by the tourists who visited Nepal and some of the articles which mentioned about the challenges and the problems that are seen in the tourism sector of Nepal.

The survey also shows that most people visit the city areas rather than the other parts of Nepal. When asked, most people answered that they fear traveling outside the city, because facilities that are considered basic in recent times, like transportations, communication, decent hotels,

digital transactions, etc., are not up to the mark and in some cases non-existent. From this, we can analyze that people are interested in exploring outside the city if given the basic facilities.

The survey data also shows that people learn a lot about Nepal from friends and family, but they don't travel to Nepal with friends and family. According to the survey, most people travel to Nepal solo

It is also important to note that it certainly helps in developing other sectors such as village tours as 61.3% of people have stated it as their preferred destination but after visiting the level of satisfaction they got was significantly less.

Chapter 5

5.1 Conclusion

Since tourism is a huge resource in contributing towards the GDP of Nepal, we must focus more on its sustainability and its growth. This paper has come to the conclusion that it is the basic infrastructures such as lack of transportations, communication, and basic hotels that are keeping most of the tourist from not visiting to the other part of Nepal. The survey highlights and reflects on desirability of tourist wanting to go to certain places and not getting what they expected in terms of service or product. Therefore, it is important to take into consideration that despite of the interest of tourist wanting to visit Nepal they limit themselves because they cannot access the facilities that is supposed to be provided by the industry. In an open ended – questions to the interviewee in the survey about 54.5% of people responded that exploring culture and religion and visiting historical sites were their biggest motivation to come to Nepal. Based on this responses the industry has lot of scope for the improvement on this particular area, the basic thing that can be done from the local government and individual side is not littering the cultural and religious sites and keeping it more clean. Nepal is both culturally and naturally gifted. Therefore most of the people like to visit Nepal for adventure. We got some very positive responses from the tourists, in an open-ended question they mentioned that they enjoyed their stay at Pokhara and Kathmandu. Especially pokhara which is the amalgamation of both nature and development. From this what we can conclude is the fact that there are so many places in Nepal like pokhara such as Rara, Dudh Pokhari, Hile, Gosaikund which are equally beautiful but unreachable to the tourist because in those areas they lack basic facilities like transportations, communications, accommodations and so on. In order to support this

statement another thing that hinders the growth of the industry is the stereotype that exist for homestay tourism. People view homestay as a very passive form of business which is just for unemployed, dependent and uneducated people. These notions doesn't let the tourism industry flourish and push us more backward. It also doesn't give an opportunity for those types of tourist whose sloe motivation is to visit the country in order to explore different lifestyles and cultures.

Tourism is a significant foreign currency earner for Nepal, and during the 1990s, its tourism industry enjoyed an unprecedented period of growth. However, in recent years, international arrivals fell significantly, both pre and post-COVID. This caused many economic issues throughout Nepal. Our study aimed to suggest solutions to relieve some of these issues by tracing out markers for what caused this fall in Nepal's tourism industry. The study acknowledges that one of the biggest reasons was due to countries going through lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this apparent reason, the study found a few structural, behavioral and technological drawbacks that Nepal's tourism industry has to overcome to attract more and more people.

5.2 Recommendation

- In the survey, a high percentage of people mentioned that they prefer visiting cultural sites and historical places, they were also equally interested in different activities of adventure, and therefore by providing high-quality accommodations and boosting visitor accessibility, we can contribute to the tourism sector's growth. They should be given attractive packages with a wide range of adventurous and cultural activities.
- The Government of Nepal should focus on building basic infrastructures as it is restraining lot of tourist from visiting other parts of Nepal. The reason as to why tourists mostly stick around city areas like Pokhara or Kathmandu is because of the unavailability of basic infrastructure like transportations, and communication facilities over there.

- Services like money exchange booths, digital transactions through phones, and other emergency services need to be made more easily available to tourists through user-friendly digital platforms
- Inaccessibility of the general stores or a proper lodge is also a big reason for tourists to not visit other parts of the Country.
- Services to foreign tourists can be improved at Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA), Kathmandu's only international airport, is currently open for business.
- In the survey we found that most of the people who visited Nepal came to know about Nepal from the one who visited Nepal before they were either their families or friends. Therefore, Nepal should engage more in marketing and needs to come up with the creative ideas of promoting tourism industry in Nepal.
- Knowing the types of tourist and what they activities they must prefer doing will certainly help in further improvement on that area in order to attract more consumers. For example: If most of the people prefer trekking or visiting historical sites. Focusing on what can be done to provide better services should be the concern of the marketers and policy makers. Because the behavior of consumers is influenced by how they take certain services or consume products.

Homestay of Nepal

- Nepal is not only rich in nature but is also very diverse and rich in culture. Through the use of homestays, Nepal can use the natural blessings at its disposal to develop its rural tourism industry. Homestays can serve as an alternate ground since the country lacks significant infrastructural investment but has rich assets to lure tourists in the rural communities. It's a unique style of lodging that has evolved via tourism to help Nepal establish sustainable tourism practices.
- In this competitive world, Nepal must include strong plan and policies and train the human resources and encourage the youth and young graduates towards the industry by showing them the potentiality and possibility of tourism sector of Nepal if they want to attract more tourist in the country.
- Similarly, students or researchers who are trying to research in the similar topic can get some sort of glimpse from this paper. The paper has attempted to highlight the problem from the viewpoint of consumers which could be an interesting angle to look at the problem and hopefully be helpful in order to solve them by the expert.

5.3 Future Research and Limitations

The paper was unable to cater diverse sets of opinion because the primary research was dependent and limited to online platform. Most of the participants were students and were from India, Bangladesh and Bhutan. Only a couple of people were from other countries. Therefore, there is a lot of room for the further research on this topic. Similarly, this paper is work in progress for more research on consumer's perception in order to understand consumer behavior should be done on this paper. In order to cater diverse opinion, mandatory visit to some of the tourist spots and communication to travel agency of Nepal seems vital. Similarly, it needs many sets of questionnaire to get the more vivid understanding on the perception of tourist.

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