



LAUREA
UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
Together we are stronger

Cultural Perspective of Tourism in Nepal

Nepal, Shankar
Baral, Nenshan

2015 Kerava

Laurea University of Applied Sciences
Kerava

Cultural Perspective of Tourism in Nepal

Shankar Nepal, Nenshan Baral
Degree Programme in Tourism
Bachelor's Thesis
February 2016

Shankar Nepal
Nenshan Baral

Cultural perspectives of Tourism in Nepal

Year	2016	Pages	39
------	------	-------	----

This Bachelor's thesis is conducted with the main objective of understanding the perspective of culture and its impact on the tourism industry of the host country i.e. Nepal. Furthermore, it will help to gain insight about the possible opportunities and threats in tourism through the responses gathered from various respondents. To research the topic, a web-based survey was conducted among the Nepali youths (mostly students) belonging different places via social networking sites.

Both qualitative and quantitative approaches have been applied in this thesis. To gain initial insight regarding culture and tourism, online material related to different cultural monuments and places of historical importance within and outside the Kathmandu Valley were referred. This provided a basis for quantitative research conducted in the next phase of the research. For the purpose of the study, online questionnaires using Google forms were created and sent via various social networking platforms for responses.

Before developing the questionnaires for the online survey, researcher thoroughly reviewed the literature and considered the main objectives. For study purposes, data published by Nepal Tourism Board and various research works from other researchers relating to the same field were also examined. The data thus collected are analyzed using various statistical methods. Analyzing the obtained results then produces the conclusions of the research. Some general and specific recommendations are also listed at the end.

Nepal is a country with an abundance of historic, cultural and diverse ethnic traditions, which could attract tourists from every corner of the world. The county holds tremendous opportunities for the development of cultural tourism but it is lagging behind due to the lack of abundant resources. Towards the brighter prospects, these resources are in the process of being established and hopefully will take the cultural tourism of Nepal to a new height.

Keywords: tourism, cultures, demography, demography

Table of Contents

1	Introduction	5
1.1	The aim and objectives of research.....	5
1.2	Defining culture	5
1.3	Tourism sector in Nepal.....	7
2	Literature Review	8
3	Research Method	11
3.1	Chosen methods and materials:	11
3.2	Research procedures	12
4	Data collection	13
4.1	Interview with the authorities	13
4.2	Online questionnaire	14
5	Data Analysis and Result	14
5.1	Demographic factors.....	15
5.2	Resources and opportunities of cultural tourism in Nepal.....	17
5.3	Reasons for tourist visiting Nepal.....	19
5.4	Cultural services	22
5.5	Advantages and problems.....	25
6	Limitations, Validity, and Reliability of the Research.....	27
7	Conclusion and Recommendations	29
	References	31
	Book References.....	31
	Electronic References	31
	Figures.....	33
	Tables.....	34
	Appendixes.....	35

1 Introduction

Nepal is a country with rich tourism potential. Apart from its magnificent natural beauty and scenery, the country's rich culture lures tourists around the globe to make their trip to Nepal. Although Nepal is a small country it is very diverse in socio-economic and physical features. These features help the country to pull a wide range of visitors from around the globe to its architectural wonders, breathtaking landscapes, preserved culture and snowy mountains. With the right promotion and techniques, the country could attract more tourists and make them stay longer. This research will help to identify the perception of Nepali people regarding cultural tourism in Nepal and what steps we can take to promote it further.

1.1 The aim and objectives of research

The research was conducted to understand the perspective of culture and its impact on the tourism industry of the host country. It helped to gain insight about the perspective of Nepalese people regarding cultural tourism and the opportunities it offers and threats it poses. The responses collected from different respondents indicate how people from Nepal take culture as a factor to promote tourism and what measures can be taken in order to ensure its promotion. All the related stakeholders could and adopt it for improvement can use the information collected in this research.

1.2 Defining culture

Scholars have defined culture in many different ways and from many different perspectives. More than 500 definitions of culture can be found. Oxford dictionary defines culture as "the customs and beliefs, art, way of life and social organization of a particular country or group" (Oxford Dictionary) whereas Cambridge English Dictionary states that culture is, "the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time" (Cambridge Dictionary). Both of these definitions basically try to state the same overall meaning. In broader sense culture can be defined as the body of cultural properties created and produced by a given nation or people, as a reflection of their values, their lifestyle, and the main factors ensuring their survival. Based on the characteristics of the natural environment and influenced by its social and historical features each nation or ethnic group creates its own system of particular cultural properties and values. So culture is the only element that distinguishes the various peoples of the world from one another. One factor that cannot be overlooked here is that culture is associated in many ways with the lives and activities of people; thus, the essential nature of man and society can be seen through culture. As culture is connected with many aspects of human and social life, it is clear that tourism as an active area of human activity that cannot be taken separately from culture.

Hofstede states that: “Culture refers to the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving” (Hofstede, 1997)

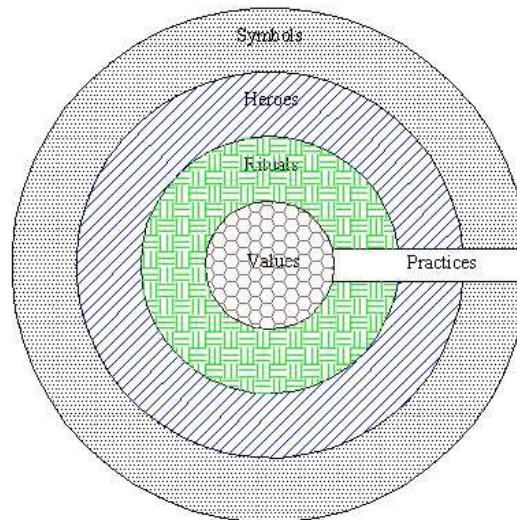


Figure 1: Manifestation of Culture at Different Levels of Depth (Hofstede 1997)

According to Hofstede, the core of a culture is formed by the values which in terms of tourism will be the basis for the attraction of a given destinations. The different levels of culture will be the rituals, the heroes and the symbols of the given culture, which again would serve as a basis for tourism purpose travels.

Tourists, upon their arrival to a foreign destination, enter into the linguistic and cultural sphere of that nation whether they want to or not. They get to observe the cultural symbols and signs, arts and theatrical performances, enjoy national food and drink, and learn about the clothing, transportation, local history, and culture. As a matter of fact, the existence of distinct national cultural properties serves as the primary context for tourism, by encouraging people to visit such properties in person, to study them, and to travel as tourists. Specialists have referred to the foundations of tourism as “cultural attractions” which are divided into “hard attractions” and “soft attractions” Hard attractions include factors like

- Cultural heritage properties
- Museums
- Architecture
- Monuments
- Temples and monasteries
- Cultural and artistic centers
- Streets and squares

- Buildings
- Archeological findings and
- Lifestyle of the people

Whereas, soft attractions include factors like:

- Music
- Dance
- Poetry
- Literature
- Painting
- Sculpture
- Traditional folk arts and
- Handicrafts

1.3 Tourism sector in Nepal

Nepal is a small landlocked country in South-East Asia. Although small, the country is rich in various ecological and physiographic characteristics. These diverse characteristics attract tourists from the world to Nepal. Nepal's physical uniqueness provides a wide scope of adventurous activities while its diverse culture and ethnicity offer scope for art, learning, and entertainment for the tourists. Tourism is a major source of foreign exchange income and employment generator in Nepal. Also, Nepal lacks abundant resources, in this scenario; the tourism sector is expected to play an important role in the development and economy.

As per the statistical survey conducted by Ministry of Culture, Tourism & Civil Aviation; Planning & Evaluation Division; Statistical Section of Nepal during the year 2012 the total number of tourists visiting Nepal was 803,092. The number had increased by 9.1% in comparison to the previous year. Out of which, tourists who traveled via air were 598,258 (74.5%) whereas who traveled by land were 204,834 (25.5%). Their average length of stay was 16 days for the year. During the same year the number of tourist arrival by purpose of visit is shown below:

Trekking & Mountaineering	Business	Pilgrimage	Official	Conv. / Conf.	Others	Not Specified	Total
105,015	24,785	109,854	30,460	13,646	48,540	91,165	803,092

Table 1: Tourist Arrival by purpose of Visit, 2012

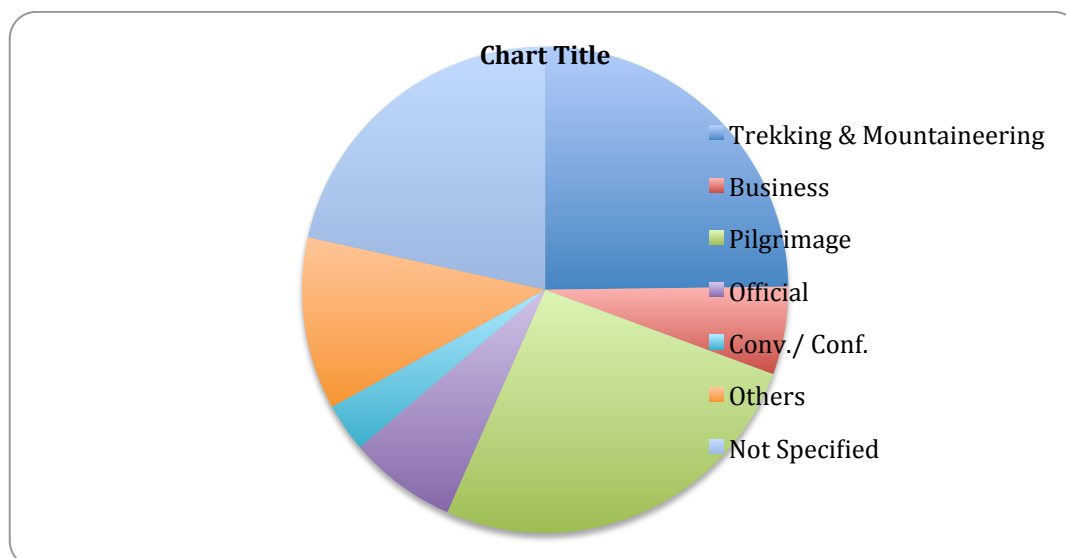


Figure 2: Tourist Arrival by Purpose of Visit, 2012

The evaluation shows that tourism sector in Nepal has been an important source of foreign exchange earnings. As variations in the amount of revenue earned from tourism correlate to the variations in the number of tourists, foreign exchange earnings are shown to be dependent on the number of tourist arrivals. The net total foreign exchange receipt from tourism sector during 2012 was Rs. 30267.42 million.

2 Literature Review

Culture and Tourism: Defining Roles and Relationship

Prayag Raj Sharma. International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development ICIMOD Discussion. Paper Series No. MEI 95/2. 1995

This study conducted an analysis of positive and negative impacts of tourism on culture and some suggested mitigating measures to control the negative impacts. The study was made in two tourism areas of Nepal Kathmandu and Khumbu. Some negative impacts found changed in the ethnic demography, commercialization of art, youth problems, increase in crime rate, degradation of national parks etc. The paper had also provided the different roles to be played by government, NGOs, and the private sector in preservation and development of cultural diversity. Few monitoring recommendations like monitoring of natural resources base, temples, monasteries, festivals, cultural events, traditional crafts, and patterns of emigration and immigration etc were listed at the end of the paper.

Case study on the effects of tourism on culture and the environment: Nepal; Chitwan-Sauraha and Pokhara-Ghandruk

Ram Niwas Pandey, Pitambar Chettri, Ramesh Raj Kunwar, and Govinda Ghimire. Culture and Tourism in Asia. UNESCO Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. 1995

The project was conducted to study the impacts of tourism on culture and the environment and its present state in Nepal. The findings of this study were supposed to provide guidelines for the formulation of sustainable tourism, which protects the natural and social environment of the host country and encourages a better understanding of people and respects for their culture. The paper contained two case studies in the third section. Two case studies were conducted among the people of Chitwan (plain area of Nepal) and Ghandruk (hill regions around the Annapurna sanctuary). The impacts of tourism on these two different groups of people were examined. Based on the information generated, some general and specific recommendations are offered to enhance the tourism industry in Nepal. Recommendations are also provided to protect the ecological and socio-cultural conditions of the country. The authors suggested that to increase the number of tourist arrivals, the need to study the demand side of the industry is a must. The tourism promotional centers should conduct more intensive international and national promotional campaigns. The festivals and culture of Nepal should be widely publicized. Preparation and distribution of the brochures illustrating these celebrations need to be done by governmental and non-governmental agencies in a worldwide context. Apart from it, focus on movies and audio-visual aids should also be provided as they are also helpful in drawing tourists.

Socioeconomic Impacts of Tourism in Lumbini, Nepal: A Case Study

Pradeep Acharya.

To collect information about existing state of tourism in Lumbini was the main objective of the study. It was conducted without any specified hypothesis and theoretical framework. This study was made during the year 2001 AD in Rupandehi district of Nepal among the people of Lumbini ideal village development committee. To study the extent and impacts of tourism in Lumbini, investigation was made. The study attempted to demonstrate what people actually feel about the incidence of tourism and its socio-cultural impacts. The research results indicated that tourism was favorable for the people as it was helpful in generating employment and increased income.

Impacts of tourism in world heritage site: a case of Bhaktapur Durbar Square, Nepal

Sacheen Maharjhan. The University of Hong Kong (Pokfulam, Hong Kong) 2012

This study focused on Bhaktapur Durbar Square, one of the monument zone of Kathmandu Valley World Heritage Site which lies within a Bhaktapur city, an ancient historic town. Survey research targeting local people and key informant's interviews were held to investigate on

the domains of major impacts from the cultural tourism in Bhaktapur Durbar Square from the perspective of the local community. The study found that cultural tourism in Bhaktapur had contributed significantly to local government's tax revenue particularly through tourist entry fee, which in turn contributed to the conservation of the world heritage properties. However, the study also found that there had been limited positive impacts of cultural tourism for the majority of local people i.e. farmers group. Tourism has not encouraged the growth in the agriculture sector. A community-based tourism strategy was recommended in order to reduce the disparity and which would directly benefit the community and encourage the local community to involve in decision-making process.

Tourism and Economic Growth in Nepal

Vishnu Prasad Gautam, Ph.D. NRB Economic Review. Vol 23-2. October. 2011

This paper attempted to confirm empirically about the positive impact of tourism in Nepal. It was based on Nepalese data of foreign exchange earnings from tourism and gross domestic product for the period between FY 1974/75 and 2009/10. Co-integration test had been done for ascertaining long run relationship and error correction method for short run dynamics. Out of two variables used in the model, earning from tourism was obtained from Tourism Statistics while GDP series was derived from Economic Survey, 2010/11. The analysis of the relationship between tourism earning and economic growth exhibited the significant relationship between the variables. Using the concepts and methods of the unit root test, cointegration, Granger causality test and error correction method, and the study confirmed that there exists short-term dynamic relationship as well as the long-run cointegrating relationship between tourism income and GDP. In addition, the evidence seemed to verify the notion that tourism growth granger causes economic growth and vice versa indicating a bi-directional causality between economic growth and tourism growth.

Changing socio-cultural status in Rural Nepal: A case study of Bandipur VDC of Tanahun District, Western Nepal

Kapil Khanal. Institute of Forestry, Pokhara, Nepal. 2011

The general objective of the research study was to explore the changing socio-cultural status of the people of the Bandipur VDC. The eleventh chapter of the report presented the impacts of tourism on Socio-cultural status of Bandipur. From the economic aspects, significant positive changes were observed due to tourism in Bandipur. It had increased job generation and income. The increase in the flow of tourist had increased the demand for daily supplies of vegetables, fruits, and other items. This had also provided a good market for the local producers and farmers. Talking about the socio-cultural change the most significant impacts that were known to exist in Bandipur included change in quality of life of the service providers,

job holders of hotels, restaurants, groceries, revivification of culture and traditions, employment of porters, guide etc which were among the positive impacts of tourism on society and culture. However, some negative impacts were felt like the increment in hooliganism, increasing trend of westernization in clothing and food habits leaving behind their own indigenous and cultural habits. Also, some of the celebrations of indigenous cultures were at stake as people were becoming more liberal towards the celebration of western festivals.

3 Research Method

For better understanding the perspectives of Nepali people regarding the cultural tourism and its prospects of growth in Nepal, we carried out an online survey of around 156 respondents. The details of the data collection process, the material used, the procedure followed and the method chosen the purpose of research are explained below:

3.1 Chosen methods and materials:

Both the qualitative and quantitative method has been applied in this research. For gaining initial insight regarding culture and tourism, online material related to different cultural monuments and places of historical importance within and outside the Kathmandu Valley were referred. This provided a basis for quantitative research conducted in the next phase. For the purpose of the study, online questionnaires using Google forms was created and sent to a number of university students in Nepal. A structured questionnaire was prepared and convenience sampling method was used. Descriptive analysis of the obtained responses was then done. The research works from a number of authors and students related to culture and tourism was also reviewed to gain more insights regarding cultural perspectives of tourism. Also, the data regarding the flow of tourists to various destinations of Nepal was obtained from the website of Nepal Tourism Board and Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation and analyzed to get a clearer picture of tourism in Nepal.

The research is on the topic 'Cultural Perspective of Tourism in Nepal'. To describe culture in terms of tourism was challenging, as culture in itself is a very vast topic. Thus to provide shape to this study, I decided to study the topic through the perspective of Nepalese people only. As the cultural properties of any nation greatly affect its tourism industry, I decided to carry out this study in Nepal. In this course, the resources and opportunities, social demand, advantages and products and services related to the cultural tourism are discussed.

The basis of research was first formed through qualitative research that helped me identify the variables and aspects of the culture to be measured to find out the situation and perceptions of cultural tourism. The responses thus obtained through interviewee, online survey and their statistical analyzes are all very important in forming the final conclusion. The research is mostly oriented towards qualitative survey because the responses obtained from the interviews were from the people who have been working for the protection of cultural heritages and have observed the tourism falter and prosper in those areas since a long period of time. The information thus obtained was first hand and presented the real scenario of cultural tourism in those places.

Similarly, quantitative research has also formed an important part of the research as they helped quantify the variables and find their relative significance in exact numerical values or percentages. The higher the number of respondents, the greater is the accuracy and reliability of the data. This can lead to ease in drawing final conclusions from the research. So, during the survey, we tried to reach to a maximum number of respondents.

The data are presented in the form various tables, charts, diagrams, pie charts, pyramid and figures to describe more about a certain topic and make the readers understand the information easily. To define the findings in a more easy and comprehensive way, the use of various online tools and other presentation process were made.

3.2 Research procedures

The research for this thesis was conducted in two phases. The first one included the interview with the authorities of cultural heritages of Nepal through electronic media. An online questionnaire was created during the second phase using Google forms. Apart from it, statistical and other secondary data published by the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation and Nepal Tourism Board in their online portals were also analyzed to support the study.

For the first phase, the author formulated open-ended questions for the exploration of the cultural tourism from the point of view of the concerned authority. Since the author could not travel to Nepal himself to collect the data, the questions were sent electronically through contact obtained from friends in Nepal. The detailed responses from the interview were then collected.

In the second phase i.e. the online phase, web-based questionnaire was sent to university level students of Nepal via social networks and e-mail. This was a specially designed questionnaire approved by the thesis instructor. The reason for selecting university students for this purpose was the ease in data collection as they are the ones who frequently use email

and social media in Nepal. Moreover, they also have the understanding regarding the culture and traditions of Nepal along with the significance and recent developments in the tourism sector of Nepal.

With a large number of respondents, the task of drawing a conclusion will ease out and the obtained result would also be more reliable. Thus during this survey, we tried to reach with as many respondents as possible. We consulted with our thesis instructor while designing both interview question format and an online questionnaire. Many friends and fellow students also provided their great assistance, ideas, and help. The assistance from the IT experts and some online tutoring were very helpful during data collecting process.

We applied the below listed step-by-step process to collect data for the research process:

- Interview with the authorities involved in the protection of cultural heritages within Kathmandu Valley of Nepal.
- Online questionnaires for University students in Nepal reached through emails and social networking platforms.
- Analysis of statistical and other secondary data regarding tourists from the online portal of Nepal Tourism Board and Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation.
- Analysis of Collected data, drawing results and conclusion.

4 Data collection

Collections of all the required data were made through online questionnaires and interview. These data were later used to draw conclusions for the research on the selected topic. Using the help of an online tool from Google called Google form; the online questionnaires were created. These questionnaires were then forwarded to collect responses from different respondents. For the interview part, research was carried out at cultural heritages of Kathmandu Valley and was analyzed accordingly. Through some help from our friends in Nepal interview with the respective authorities were carried out in those areas.

4.1 Interview with the authorities

The main aim of this research was to study the cultural aspects of tourism in Nepal from the perspectives of Nepali people, the cultural dimensions they think will attract tourists the most, the resources and opportunities for the development of cultural tourism, the necessity for the development of cultural tourism, the actions of local government authorities for the development of cultural tourism, the effect of tourism on the lives of locals and so on.

For the purpose of research as the researcher could not visit Nepal himself to take interviews, help from electronic media was taken for conducting the interview. First of all, contacts with two people involved in the authority boards of cultural heritages of Kathmandu Valley were obtained with the help of friends in Nepal. After that, the open-ended questions were sent to them regarding what they saw as the important aspects of cultural tourism, the challenges faced by cultural tourism sector and so on. This helped the author create the questionnaire for the second phase of the research.

4.2 Online questionnaire

The quantitative approach of the research is fulfilled by the online questionnaire set. 14 sets of questions were chosen carefully and included in the set. The questionnaire was designed and created using Google forms; an online survey tool from google. A small detail about the survey and why it is being conducted was written at the top of the questionnaire before the questions.

The author first asked few of his friends and fellow students regarding the questionnaire. Some improvements in the questionnaires were made according to the suggestion. After that, the questionnaire was shared through Facebook and Gmail to the university students of Nepal. The response was very good in the beginning with nearly 60 responses within the first two days. But, the rate for response declined in the latter days. A large amount of power cut in Nepal leading to difficulties for students to spend time on the internet and fill the questionnaire might have played a role in the sharp decline in the number of responses. Attempts were made to get more responses by sending the questionnaire again and re-sharing in social media. This was successful to an extent and a total of 156 responses were generated. However, this number is a bit less than what we had expected.

The online questions contained altogether of 14 questions related to the actual survey and three other questions that asked respondents' age, gender, and level of education. The questionnaire included few statements where the respondent had to give their opinion on the level of their agreement with the statement. Some of the questions were dichotomous with yes/no as answers while others provided a list of options for respondents to choose. The questionnaire was made available for about a month before it was removed.

5 Data Analysis and Result

The data collected through the interview, online surveys and other secondary sources are listed and analyzed in this chapter. Results are generated through analyzing these data,

which are, then with the help of figures and tables. The analysis is carried out in a best suitable way using various kinds of statistical tools and data presentation methods.

5.1 Demographic factors

The first three questions of the survey were about the demographic information about the respondents. Data related to gender, age and education were collected to have a general overview like which gender, age group, and education group responded more.

The following table shows the distribution of respondents according to gender.

Gender		
	Number	Percentage
Female	62	39.70%
Male	94	60.30%
Other	0	0%
Total	156	100.00%

Table 2: Respondents by Gender

Out of total 156 responses, 62 responses (39.70%) were from the female respondents whereas 94 responses (60.30%) were from the male respondents. The reason behind the number of male respondents being more than female might be that while sending or forwarding the online questionnaire randomly through the web and social media somehow the links were forwarded more to the male respondents. Another probable cause might be that more male respondents actually filled the forms as compared to female respondents. However, the author has not gone through any statistical data on this topic. So, it is only based on authors' own assumption.

The pie chart showing this information is shown below:

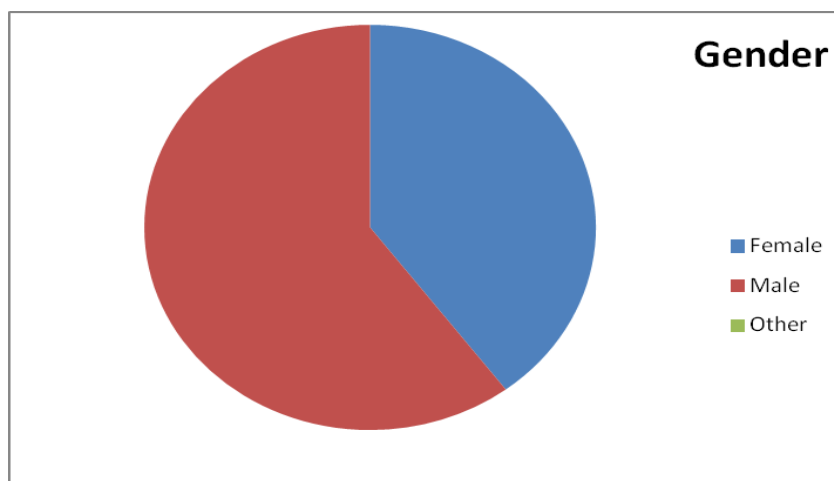
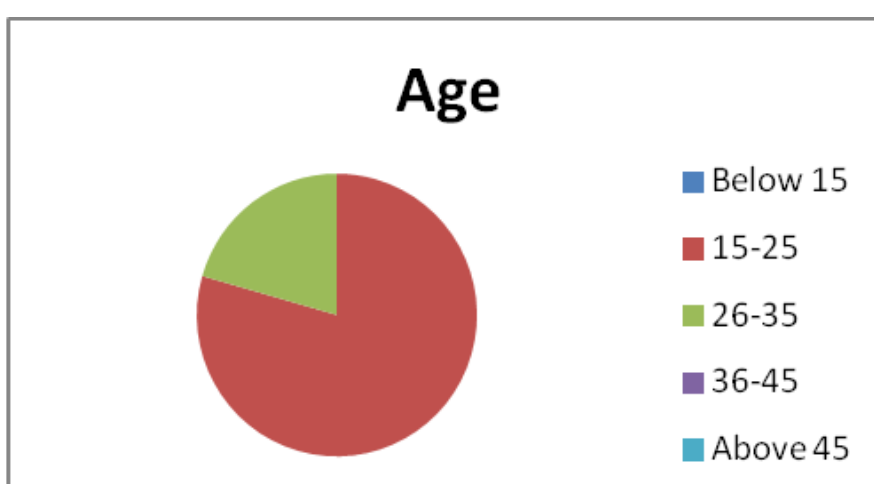


Figure 3: Pie chart showing respondents by gender

Information regarding respondents' age was also collected. The table below shows the number of respondents by different age groups.

Age		
	Number	Percentage
Below 15	0	0%
15-25	124	79.50%
26-35	32	20.50%
36-45	0	0%
Above 45	0	0%
Total	156	100%

Table 3: Respondents by age group



124 respondents belonged to age group 15 to 25 whereas 32 respondents belonged to age group 26 to 35. No responses were received from age category below 15 and above 35 years old. Although attempts were made to include all age groups in the survey, it didn't become possible due to the less and nominal use of Internet in Nepal by that particular age group. Questionnaire link was sent to few people above the age group of 35 old years via Facebook but no responses came back. It might be due to their busy work life or this whole thing wasn't of their interests.

Apart from the gender and age group, data of respondents educational background was also collected which is presented below in a tabular form:

Education		
	Numbers	Percentage
No formal education	0	0%
Primary School	0	0%
School Leaving Certificate	0	0%
High School or 10+2	12	7.70%
Under Graduation	98	62.80%
Post Graduation and above	46	29.50%
Total	156	100%

Table 4: Respondents by Education

Out of total 156 respondents, most of the respondents belonged to undergraduate educational category. The reason behind this is, the author himself is an undergraduate student and most of his colleague and friends are moreover from the same category. 46 responses were received from the people with post graduation and above background. There were a few responses from high school students as well.

5.2 Resources and opportunities of cultural tourism in Nepal

To know respondents perspective about the existing resources and opportunities for the development of cultural tourism in Nepal, the author included three questions in the survey.

Do you think the resources and opportunities exist for the development of cultural tourism in Nepal?

Yes	146	93.60%
No	10	6.40%

Table 5: Existence of resources and opportunities for cultural tourism development

146 respondents out of 156 believe that resources and opportunities exist in Nepal for the development of cultural tourism. It was followed by another question to know that to what extent do they believe those resources are actually established there.

Fully established	8	5.10%
Not yet established	38	24.40%
In the process of being established	86	55.10%
Not at all established	24	15.40%
Total	156	100.00%

Table 6: Establishment of resources for the development of cultural tourism in Nepal?

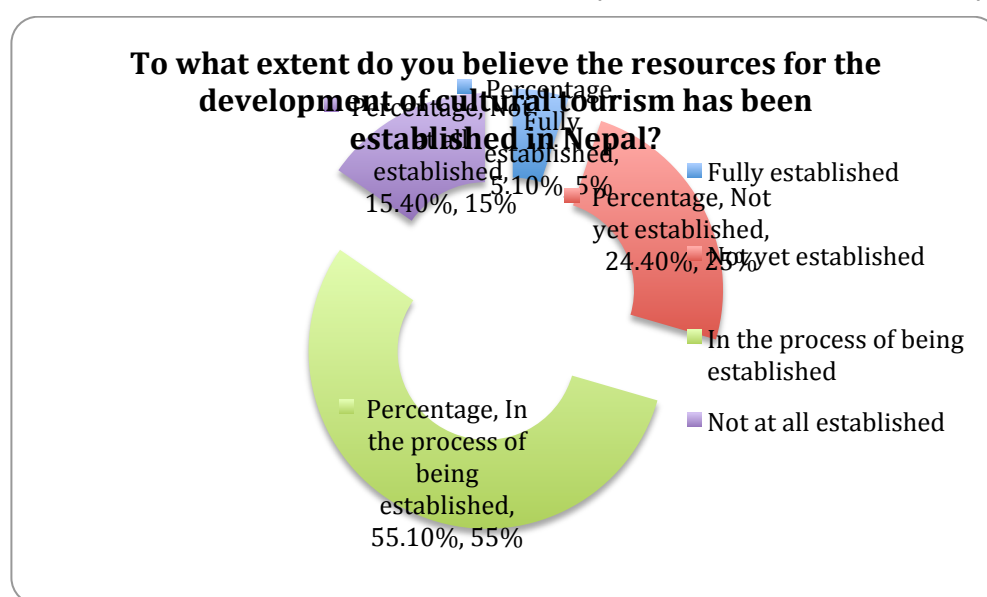


Figure 4: To what extent do you believe the resources for the development of cultural tourism has been established in Nepal?

More than half respondents believe that the resources for the development of cultural tourism in Nepal are in the process of being established and 10% respondents believe these resources are fully established. They are pessimistic about the future of cultural tourism in Nepal. Whereas 24.40% respondents believe that Nepal can establish these resources but it hasn't yet and 15.40% of respondents feel that the establishment of resources for the development of cultural tourism has not been established at all.

Further answering to the question what resources and opportunities do you believe are most available in Nepal the respondents showed the following mixed view.

Abundance of historic and cultural sites	98	62.80%
Temples and monasteries	100	64.10%
Customs and traditions of different ethnic groups	106	67.90%

Folk arts	58	37.20%
History of Nepal	48	30.80%

Table 7: Most available resources and opportunities in Nepal

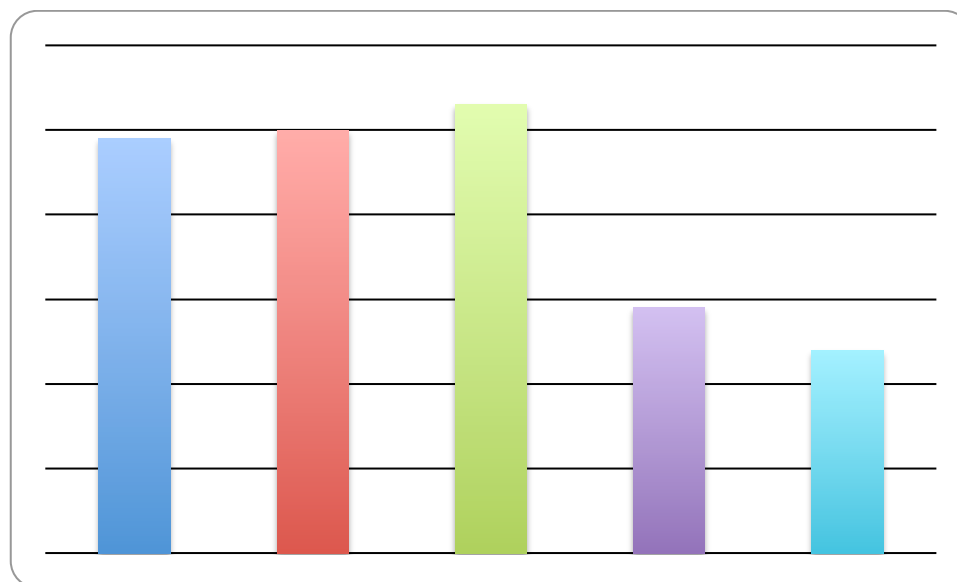


Figure 5: What resources and opportunities do you believe are most available in Nepal?

Among different resources for cultural tourism, respondents believe that the most available resources which can also serve as an opportunity for cultural tourism development are customs and traditions of different ethnic groups (67.90%) followed by temples and monasteries (64.10%) and historic and cultural sites (62.80%). 37.20% and 30.80% of respondents believe that the folk art of Nepal and history of Nepal are the most available resources for cultural tourism development in Nepal respectively.

5.3 Reasons for tourist visiting Nepal

Opinions of respondents were taken regarding the reasons for tourist visiting Nepal. Respondents were asked to rate five different alternatives on five rating scale ranging from 1 to 5, 1 being the most likely reason and 5 being the most unlikely reason. The five alternative reasons provided in questionnaire for tourist visiting Nepal were:

- Natural beauty and holiday pleasure
- Trekking and Mountaineering
- Historical monuments and Nepali culture
- Pilgrimage
- Business conventions and other official purposes

It was to understand whether how the respondents think about the importance of culture in tourism when other alternatives are also presented.

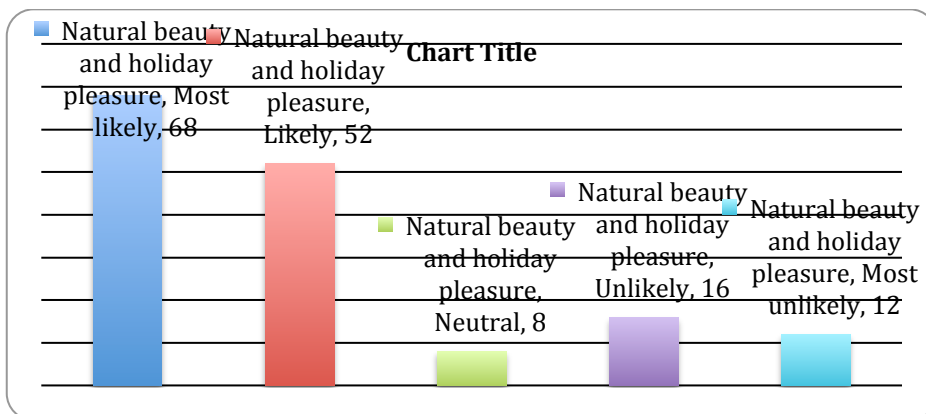


Figure 6: Natural beauty and holiday pleasure

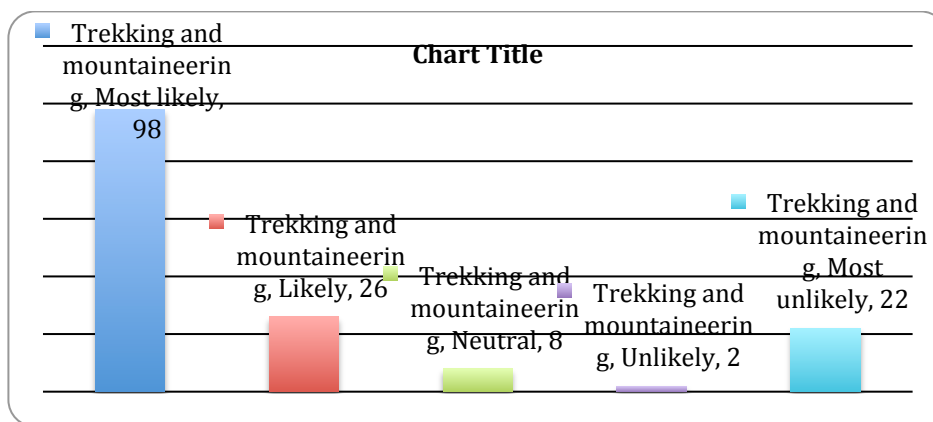


Figure 7: Trekking and Mountaineering

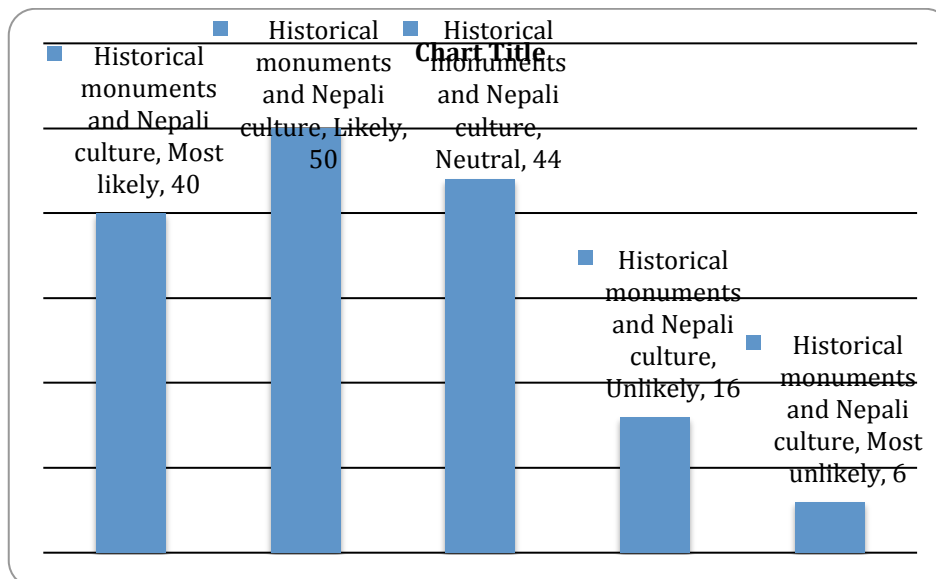


Figure 8: Historical monuments and Nepali Culture

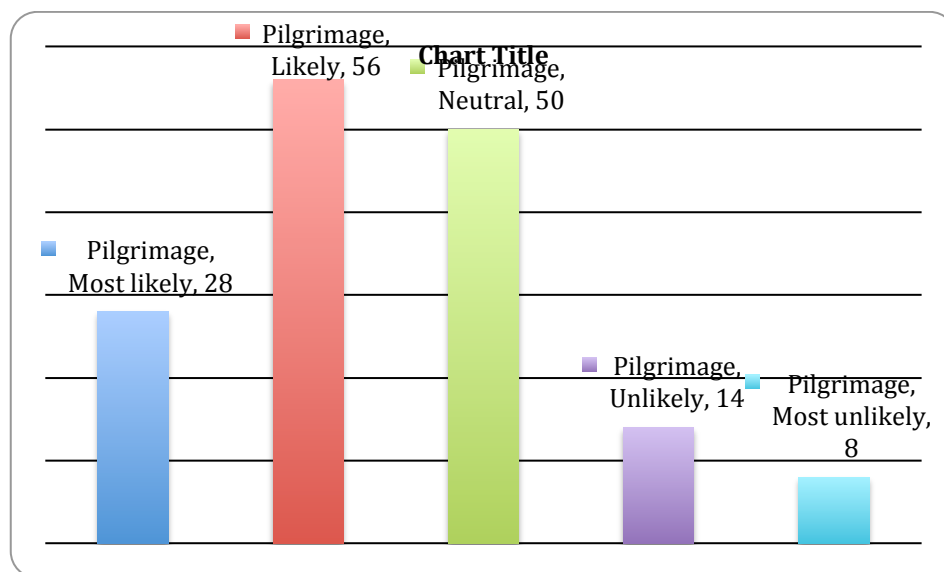


Figure 9: Pilgrimage

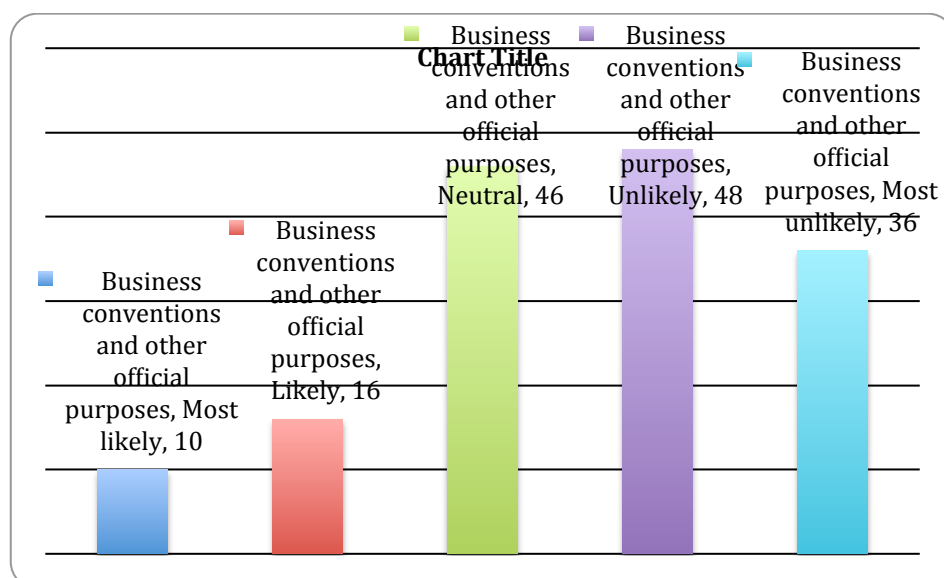


Figure 10: Business conventions and other official purposes

Maximum respondents think that 'Historical monuments and Nepali Culture' is one of the likely reason tourists visit Nepal. Out of 156 responses, 50 responses were in favor of likely reason whereas 40 responses were in favor of most likely reason. 44 respondents were neutral. 16 and 6 respondents believe that it is the unlikely and most unlikely reason respectively.

As per the received responses, the most likely reasons tourists visit Nepal are

- Trekking and Mountaineering (98 responses)
- Natural beauty and holiday pleasure (68 responses)
- Historical monuments and Nepali culture (40 responses)
- Pilgrimage (28 responses)
- Business conventions and other official purposes (10 responses)

Likely and Neutral responses were maximum for Pilgrimage (56 likely and 50 neutral) followed by historical monuments and Nepali culture (50 likely and 44 neutral) whereas maximum response for unlikely and most unlikely reasons tourists visit Nepal was for the business convention and other official purposes.

As per the perspective of respondents, they think that Nepali culture is one of the important reasons for tourists to visit Nepal. But, they don't think it is the most likely reason. Most of them believe that most tourists visit Nepal for trekking and mountaineering and natural beauty and holiday pleasure rather than cultural factors.

5.4 Cultural services

The author included a few questions about services and facilities related to cultural tourism. Respondents were asked if they believe there is a social demand for the development of cultural tourism in Nepal. 89.7 % of the total respondents answered 'yes' for an answer whereas rest 10.3% answered 'no'.

Following the previous question, respondents were asked what factors they think are important to improve cultural services in Nepal. It was a multiple choice question. Mixed responses were received.

What factors do you think are important to improve cultural services in Nepal?		
Publicizing Nepalese culture around the world	88	56.40%
Protection and preservation of the cultural heritage	94	60.30%
Positive economic influence	102	65.40%
Provide for sustainable social development	62	39.70%
Others	10	6.40%

Table 8: What factors do you think are important to improve cultural services in Nepal?

Most respondents answered that positive economic influence in Nepal would improve the level of cultural services provide to tourists in Nepal. Nepal is an economically poor country and still is in the path of developing. Most people believe that improvement in the economic status of Nepalese people would certainly bring improvement the cultural services they offer to the guests.

Protection and preservation of the cultural heritages of the nation and publicizing the nation's culture around the world is equally important. This survey was taken post-earthquake that hit Nepal on 25 April 2015 with a magnitude of 7.8 Mw. The nation suffered huge human, physical and property loss. Various famous old temples, monuments, palaces, and monaster-

ies listed in UNESCO world heritage list got destroyed. Nepal is currently in its phase of reconstructing these monuments as soon as possible.

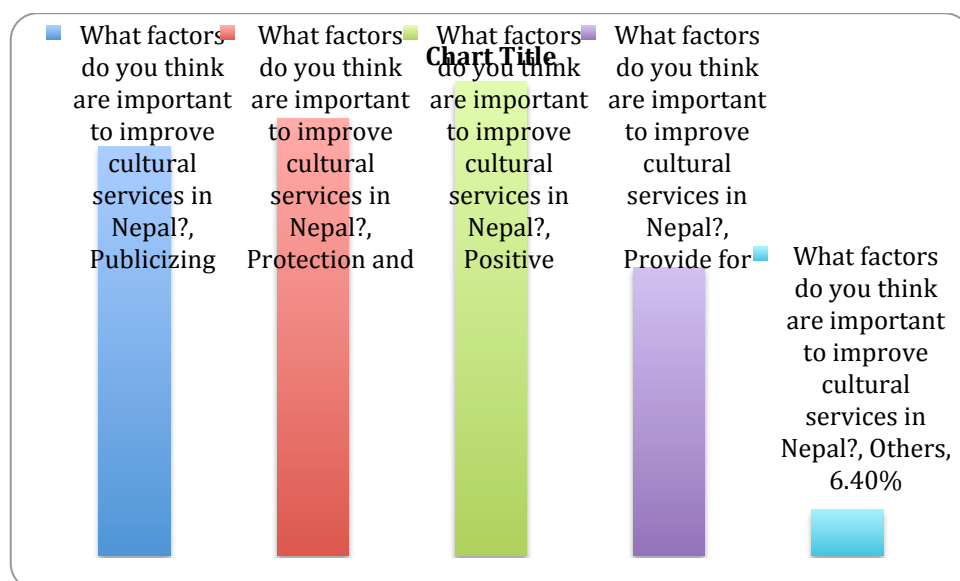


Table 9: Important factors to improve cultural services in Nepal

Respondents were also asked to give their views on the types of cultural services which they think would appeal more to the tourists. Most of the respondents agreed on displays of traditional customs followed by folk and classical arts performance. Religious rituals and sales exhibition of handicrafts received an equal number of responses. 37.20% of responses were received for international festivals.

What types of cultural services do you think are to be offered to tourists so as to appeal to them?		
Folk and classical arts performance	84	53.80%
Sales exhibition of handicrafts	68	43.60%
Museum displays	54	34.60%
Displays of traditional customs	88	56.40%
Religious rituals	68	43.60%
Arts exhibition	34	21.80%
International festivals	58	37.20%

Table 10: Types of cultural services to be offered to tourists so as to appeal to them

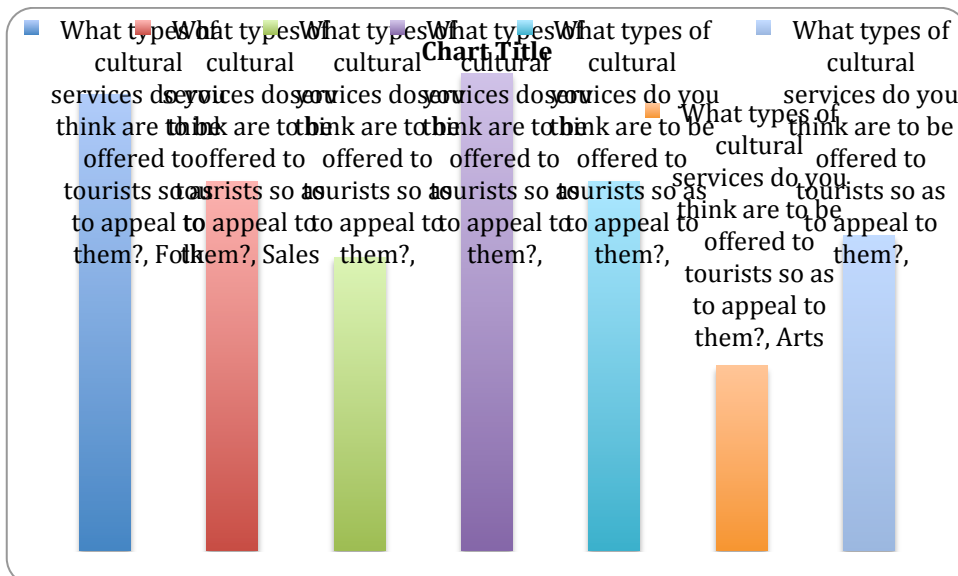


Table 11: Cultural services to be offered to tourists so as to appeal them

Tourist guides are also important services offered to tourists. When it comes to cultural tourism I believe that a guide should be very well known about the facts and information. He/she should be able to satisfy the query of tourists and make them feel comfortable, welcome and happy. So, we asked our respondents if appointing guides from the local community would help more to promote cultural tourism in that area. 94.9% of responses received were for the 'yes' while 5.10% responses were for the 'no'

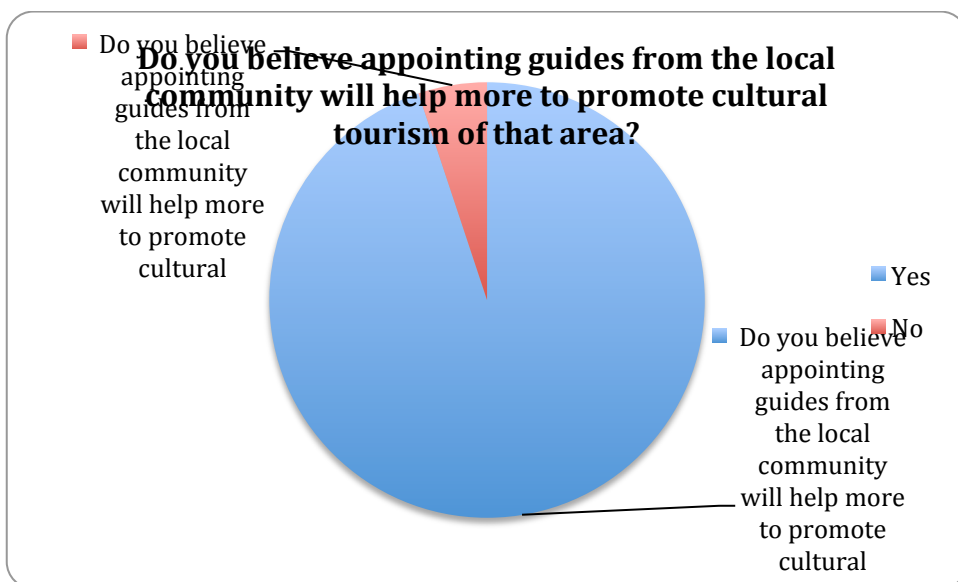


Figure 11: Appointing guides from the local community

We also asked our respondents to give their opinion on if homestay facility would serve as one of a means for developing cultural tourism. 93,6% of respondents responded positively while remaining 6.4% didn't.

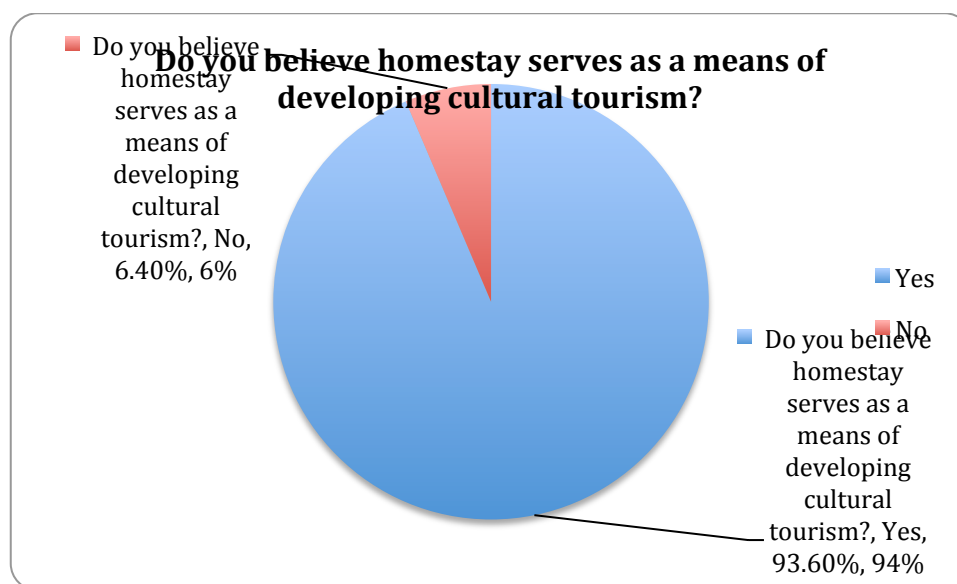


Figure 12: Homestay as a means of developing cultural tourism

5.5 Advantages and problems

Tourism brings in different advantages and disadvantages along with itself. The author included few questions related to the advantages and problem that cultural tourism could possibly bring into the society, community and nation as a whole. Respondents were asked if they thought tourism was positively affecting the lives of people of their community.

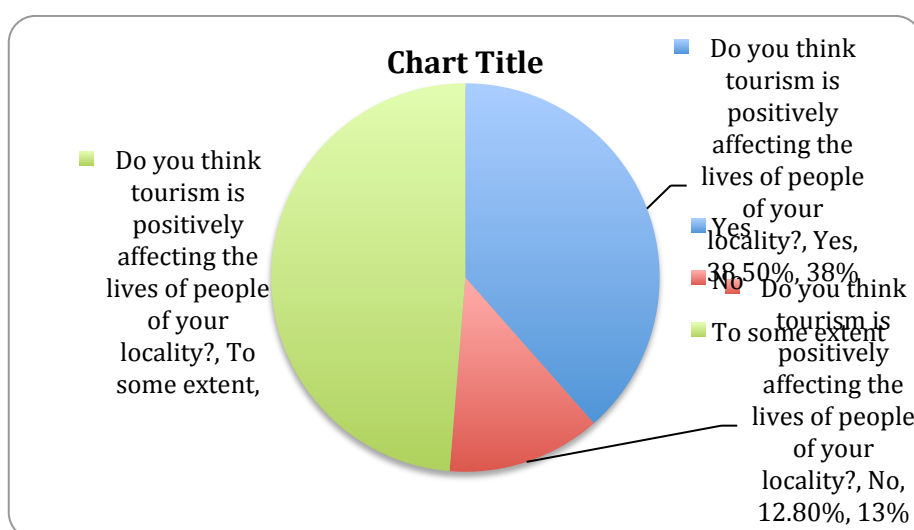


Figure 13: Cultural tourism positively affecting the life of people

12.80% respondent didn't think that tourism had positively affected the life of people of their locality while remaining respondents answered they did think that tourism had positively affected the lives of people in their locality out of which 38.50% agreed to the fullest and 48.70% respondents agreed to some extent only.

When asked if any appropriate actions were being taken by the local government authorities to attract tourists in their area 71.8% respondents answered 'No', 20.5% respondents answered 'No Idea' and only 7.7% respondents actually answered 'Yes'. This shows that there is no participation of local government to promote cultural tourism in many areas or is very low and unnoticeable.

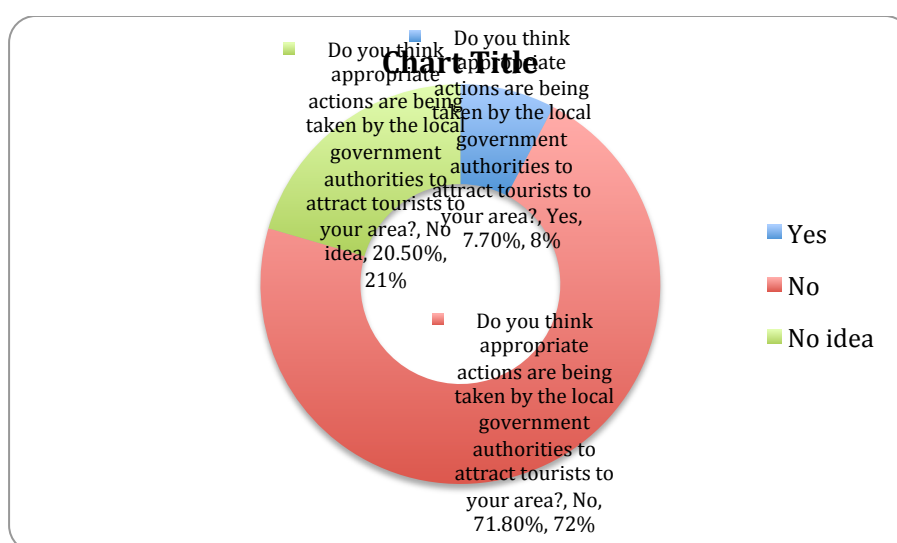


Figure 14: Appropriate actions by the local government authorities to attract tourists

The last question in the survey was related to the problems of cultural tourism in Nepal. Despite rich culture and potential, the country isn't able to attract more tourists as targeted. Thus to know what were the actual problems from the perspective of respondents, the author included this question. Respondents were asked to choose multiple answers of their choice. The results are shown below in the tabular and graphical form.

What do you think are the problems of cultural tourism in Nepal?		
Lack of promotion/advertisements of culture to attract tourists	92	59.70%
Cultural deterioration	48	31.20%
Lack of infrastructures like transportation, the internet, etc. in culture rich areas	100	64.90%
Lack of effective tourism policies	80	51.90%
Other	4	2.60%

Figure 15: Problems of cultural tourism in Nepal

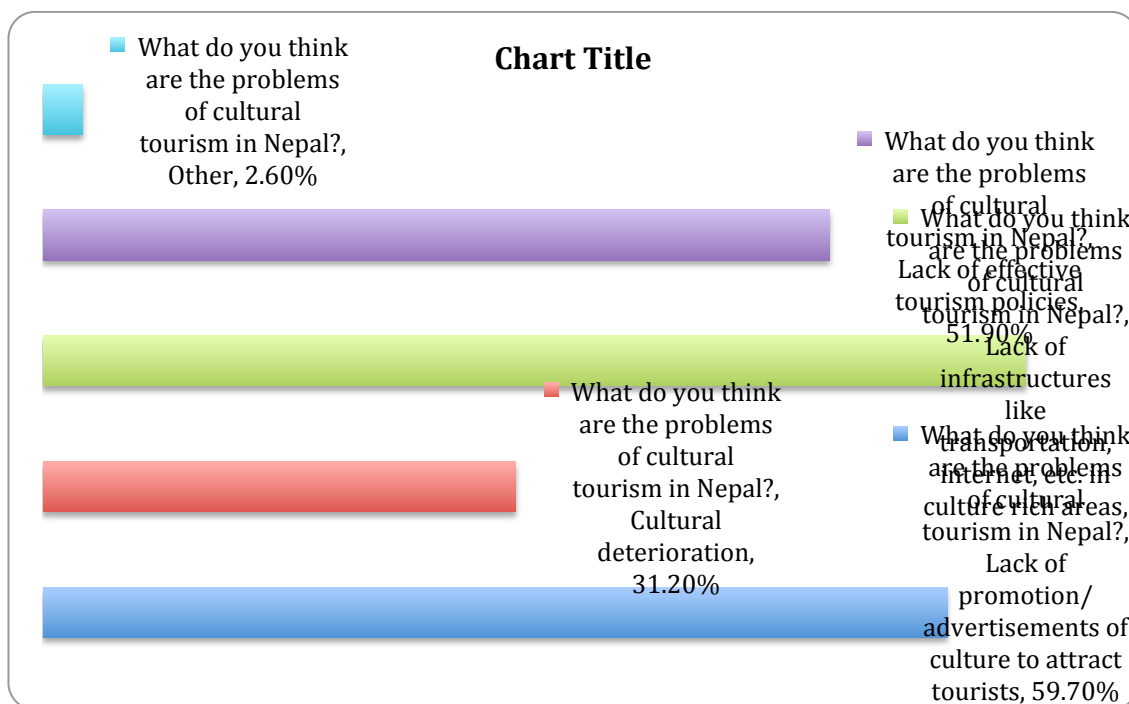


Figure 16: Problems of cultural tourism in Nepal

As per the responses received most people think that the problem of cultural tourism in Nepal is due the lack of infrastructures like transportation, the internet etc in culture rich areas (64.9%). Lack of the many infrastructures in such areas has made them inaccessible and these areas do receive only nominal tourists. 59.70% respondents agreed that the problem of cultural tourism in Nepal is the lack of proper promotion and advertisements to attract the tourists. 51.90% of respondents blamed it on the lack of effective tourism policies and 31.20% believed it is due to the cultural deterioration.

6 Limitations, Validity, and Reliability of the Research

The result from the data limits only within Nepal as the web-based survey was conducted among the people of Nepal only. It was studied through the perspective of Nepalese people only. Therefore, the findings might not be suitable to generalize the situation of whole tourism industry since other countries were excluded from this part of research. Authors got help from a friend in Nepal to conduct brief interviews with the people around cultural heritage sites. The results from the interview were collected through the internet later and might have affected in the results. If authors themselves had been involved in the process the responses collected could have or haven't been somewhat different due to the difference in approach, attitude, style and many other factors. The online questionnaire link was first sent to a circle of friends of author via social network who were further requested to send it forward to other people. It caused the online link being distributed only among a certain age

group of people residing in the urban and sub-urban area only where the internet facility is available. If the number of respondents from various backgrounds of different age and living in different parts had participated, It was possible for the survey results to be bit different. The number of responses collected online is less than what author has expected. As the researcher could not visit Nepal himself to conduct this survey, help from electronic media was taken.

Applications of both qualitative and quantitative research methods are made to make the results of the survey more valid and reliable. For gaining initial insight regarding culture and tourism, online material related to different cultural monuments and places of historical importance within and outside the Kathmandu Valley were referred. The websites of Nepal Tourism Board and Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation were analyzed to get a clearer picture of tourism in Nepal. The online questionnaires were developed with the necessary consultation of the thesis guide, detail review of the literature and with due consideration of the main objectives. The researchers' own thesis guide was also consulted for necessary assistance. This section was followed by questions related to resources and opportunities for cultural tourism in Nepal. It was to focus on the subjective matter of research. Respondents were required to scale the five different reasons for tourist visiting Nepal. The five different reasons were a natural beauty and holiday pleasure, trekking and mountaineering, historical monuments and Nepali culture, pilgrimage and business conventions and other official purposes. Further, they were asked the questions related to cultural services. At the bottom of the questionnaire, they were asked three questions related to advantages of cultural tourism to Nepal and the problems related to it.

The questionnaire was designed simply and was very time convenient to participate. A total of 156 respondents from age group 15 to 35 had participated in the survey. However, there is a possibility for some respondents not to answer the questions sincerely. Also, this survey was conducted post-earthquake that Nepal faced (on 25th April 2015) so the results for reconstructions and maintenance regarding monuments and old heritages might have been influenced more due to this incident as well. Since the survey fulfilled the required information of the research, it is valid and the objective was also achieved.

The survey showed that Nepali people have positive hopes for cultural tourism. It has influenced their life to some extent too. At the time of the survey, Nepal was in poorer economic condition due to the post-earthquake effect. The country suffered a huge loss at the time and is still struggling on reconstruction. This caused a direct effect in tourism industry too. Nepal was receiving a very nominal number of tourists and this effect is still continuing due to the frequently recurring aftershakes. The obtained results might be somewhat influenced by these issues as well. However, the survey covered the cultural tourism perspective of Nepali people and most probably the information is reliable for that particular time.

7 Conclusion and Recommendations

The primary aim of this research study was to understand the perspective of culture and its impact on the tourism industry of the host country and evaluate the perceptions of the Nepali people regarding cultural impacts on the tourism industry. In order to fulfill this aim, both descriptive and analytical data results were interpreted to attain some interesting findings of the perceptions of the people of Nepal on the cultural effects on the tourism industry.

Nepal despite being a small landlocked country presents uniqueness in its socio-cultural diversity and natural beauty. The visitors who come and spent time in different parts of the country have always admired it. The country is very rich in cultural heritage, architecture, temples and monasteries, unique music, dance, literature, painting, sculpture, traditional folk arts, and crafts. Those who have known or heard even a little about Nepal's beauty and culture absolutely adores it. Nepal was also recently listed as the one of the 50 places you should see before you die list published by BBC Holiday.

Nepali people believe that the country has opportunities for the further development of cultural tourism but the nation is lagging behind due to the limited resources especially the financial resources. But these resources are in the process of being established and hopefully will take the cultural tourism of Nepal to a new height. Nepal is a country with an abundance of historic, cultural and diverse ethnic traditions, which could attract tourists from worldwide, but lacking the proper promotion they aren't famous and well known to the general crowd.

Nepal gets visitors from around the globe for various purposes. The country offers a lot from natural beauty and holiday pleasure to trekking and mountaineering to pilgrimage and lot more. As per the Nepal tourism statistics report 2014, Nepal received a total of 790,118 visitors from worldwide during the year 2014. But this number has gradually fallen from 803,092 and 797,616 during the years 2012 and 2013 respectively. The political environment in Nepal has been very unstable since last 15 years. The government at times has tried to launch different programs to uplift the tourism industry but none of the programs have been that effective to raise the bars.

It can be confirmed that the tourism industry in Nepal is definitely a job generator; both services oriented and products oriented. Directly and indirectly, large numbers of people are associated with this industry. Nepal being one of the poor countries around the globe should put economic concern at the top of its priority list. The country receives good revenue from the tourism industry in the forms gross foreign exchange, foreign exchange receipt, royalty from foreigners visiting protected areas and consumption of many other goods and services.

The report from the National Planning Commission of Nepal estimated damage/ losses of NPR 19222 million due to the earthquake (April 2015) in culture/ heritage sector and damage/loss of NPR 81737 million in the tourism sector. The country needs to strengthen the industry performance to recover these losses and damages.

Most Nepalese people believe that the low performance of tourism industry in Nepal is due to the lack of publicity of Nepalese natural beauty and culture around the world. Very few people think that the governments are taking the appropriate actions to attract tourists in national and local level. Lack of proper promotion, infrastructure, and effective tourism policy is the problem of cultural tourism in Nepal.

The analyzes of the data collected suggest the following general recommendations:

- To increase the number of tourist arrivals, the country needs intense international and national promotional activities through the public and private sector. Nepal's historical and cultural value, traditions and festivals should be documented and publicized to attract more number of tourists.
- The infrastructures to support the tourism industry should be established and developed such a way that visitors find it accessible.
- The historical, cultural sites and heritages should be reconstructed and renovated maintaining the looks and feel from the past.
- Communities and localities should be encouraged to run tourism center point in major tourists' area to develop various sorts of entertaining yet cultural and traditional programs, homestay services and local guide facilities.
- Various programs related to folk and classical performances, exhibition of arts and handicrafts, displays of traditional customs and religious rituals and their promotion should be encouraged from local as well as national level.

References

Book References

Naresh k. Malhotra & Satyabhusan Dash. 2014. Marketing Research: An Applied orientation. Sixth Edition. Pearson

David J. Luck & Ronald S. Rubin. 2011. Marketing Research. Seventh Edition. PHI Learning Private Limited

Ram Niwas Pandey, Pitambar Chettri, Ramesh Raj Kunwar, and Govinda Ghimire. 1995. Case study on the effects of tourism on culture and the environment: Nepal; Chitwan-Sauraha and Pokhara-Ghandruk. UNESCO Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

Hari Prasad Shrestha & Prami Shrestha. 2012. Tourism in Nepal: A Historical Perspective and Present Trend of Development. Himalayan Journal of Sociology & Anthropology-Vol. V

Prayag Raj Sharma. 1995. Culture and Tourism: Defining Roles and Relationship. International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD). Discussion Paper, Series No. MEI 95/2.

Pradeep Acharya. Socio-economic Impacts of Tourism in Lumbini, Nepal: A Case Study

Bishnu Prasad Gautam, Ph.D. October 2011. Tourism and Economic Growth in Nepal. NRB Economic Review. Vol 23-2.

Kapil Khanal. 2011. Changing socio-cultural status in Rural Nepal: A case study of Bandipur VDC of Tanahun District, Western Nepal. Memorial Center of Excellence (MemCoE) and Office of Dean. Institute of Forestry. Pokhara, Nepal

Electronic References

Wikipedia Org. 2015. Viewed 18.11.2015
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Research_design

Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation. 2015. Viewed 2.12.2015
<http://www.tourism.gov.np/np>

mymarketresearchmethods.com. 2015. Viewed 10.12.2015
<http://www.mymarketresearchmethods.com/types-of-data-nominal-ordinal-interval-ratio/>

Wikipedia Org. 2015. Viewed 11.12.2015

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quantitative_research

slideshare.com. 2015. Viewed 2.12.2015

http://www.slideshare.net/FaribaMianji/the-impact-of-culture-on-benefit-in-tourism?qid=52fdc643-994e-4b64-b1d9-d3418f777c4b&v=qf1&b=&from_search=1

Nepal Tourism Board .2015. Welcome Nepal. Com. Viewed 5.12.2015

<http://www.welcomenepal.com/know-nepal/culture/>

Figures

Figure 1:Manifestation of Culture at Different Levels of Depth (HOFSTEDE 1997)	6
Figure 2: Tourist Arrival by Purpose of Visit, 2012	8
Figure 3: Pie chart showing respondents by gender	16
Figure 4: To what extent do you believe the resources for the development of cultural tourism has been established in Nepal?	18
Figure 5: What resources and opportunities do you believe are most available in Nepal? ..	19
Figure 6: Natural beauty and holiday pleasure.....	20
Figure 7: Trekking and Mountaineering	20
Figure 8: Historical momuments and Nepali Culture	20
Figure 9: Pilgrimage	21
Figure 10: Business conventions and other official purposes	21
Figure 11: Appointing guides from the local community	24
Figure 12: Homestay as a means of developing cultural tourism.....	25
Figure 13: Cultural tourism positively affecting the life of people	25
Figure 14: Appropriate actions by the local government authorities to attract tourists	26
Figure 15: Problems of cultural tourism in Nepal.....	26
Figure 16: Problems of cultural tourism in Nepal.....	27

Tables

Table 1: Tourist Arrival by purpose of Visit, 2012	7
Table 2: Respondents by Gender	15
Table 3: Respondents by age group	16
Table 4: Respondents by Education	17
Table 5: Existence of resources and opportunities for cultural tourism development	17
Table 6: Establishment of resources for the development of cultural tourism in Nepal? ...	18
Table 7: Most available resources and opportunities in Nepal.....	19
Table 8: What factors do you think are important to improve cultural services in Nepal?..	22
Table 9: Important factors to improve cultural services in Nepal	23
Table 10: Types of cultural services to be offered to tourists so as to appeal to them	23
Table 11: Cultural services to be offered to tourists so as to appeal them	24

Appendixes

Appendix 1:Online Questionnaire36

Appendix 1: Online Questionnaire

Dear Respondents,

In light of the current situation of Nepal, it is important that the first thing we, as Nepali people, can do is to stand on our own by utilizing our competitive strength. And, it is of no doubt to anyone that promoting tourism is one of the best ways to do so. So, we are conducting this research to identify the perception of Nepali people regarding cultural tourism in Nepal and what steps we can take to promote it further.

Your time and effort to complete this survey are much appreciated. Please be assured that the responses furnished in this questionnaire will be used at the aggregate level for the purpose of the study and will be held strictly confidential.

Thank you!

Gender

- Female
- Male
- Other

Age

- Below 15
- 15-25
- 26-35
- 36-45

Education

- No formal education
- Primary School
- School Leaving Certificate
- High School or 10+2
- Graduation
- Post Graduation

1. Do you think the resources and opportunities exist for the development of cultural tourism in Nepal?

- Yes
- No

2. What resources and opportunities do you believe are most available in Nepal?

- Abundance of historic and cultural sites
 - Temples and monasteries
 - Customs and traditions of different ethnic groups
 - Folk arts
 - History of Nepal
- 3. Do you believe there is a social demand for the development of cultural tourism in Nepal?**
- Yes
 - No
- 4. What type of advantage do you believe this type of tourism will bring to society?**
- Publicizing Nepalese culture around the world
 - Protection and preservation of the cultural heritage
 - Positive economic influence
 - Provide for sustainable social development
 - Others
- 5. Do you believe there is a social demand for the development of cultural tourism in Nepal?**
- Yes
 - No
- 6. What type of advantage do you believe this type of tourism will bring to society?**
- Publicizing Nepalese culture around the world
 - Protection and preservation of the cultural heritage
 - Positive economic influence
 - Provide for sustainable social development
 - Others
 -
- 7. To what extent do you believe the resources for the development of cultural tourism has been established in Nepal?**
- Fully established
 - Not yet established
 - In the process of being established
 - Not at all established

8. What types of cultural services do you think are to be offered to tourists so as to appeal to them?

- Folk and classical arts performance
- Sales exhibition of handicrafts
- Museum displays
- Displays of traditional customs
- Religious rituals
- Arts exhibition
- International festivals

9. Rank the followings as the reason for tourists visiting Nepal according to your view (1-most likely reason, 5- least likely)

	1	2	3	4	5
Natural beauty and Holiday Pleasure					
Trekking and Mountaineering					
Historical Monuments and Nepali Culture					
Pilgrimage					
Business Conventions and other official purposes					

10. Do you think appropriate actions are being taken by the local government authorities to attract tourists to your area?

- Yes
- No

11. Do you think tourism is positively affecting the lives of people of your locality?

- Yes
- No
- To some extent

12. Do you believe appointing guides from the local community will help promote cultural tourism more?

- Yes
- No

13. Do you believe homestay serves as a means of developing cultural tourism?

- Yes
- No

14. What do you think are the problems of cultural tourism in Nepal?

- Lack of promotion/advertisements of culture to attract tourists
- Cultural deterioration
- Lack of infrastructures like transportation, the internet, etc. in culture rich areas
- Lack of effective tourism policies
- Others