



TREKKING IN NEPAL FOR FINNISH TOURISTS

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ABSTRACT

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Nepal has evolved tourism business starting from trekking and mountaineering. These are the most famous tourist attractions in the country. Once known as zone of peace Nepal was in civil war for ten years with Maoist as rebels. The political and social turmoil in Nepal have affected its tourism business to downfall. The country's main economic source tourism was badly hit by the civil war, which resulted with shutting down of many tourism destinations and businesses. However, after the war the country's trekking business is getting into a road map with positive vibration.

The main aim of this thesis was to sort out the trekking potential and to research it for the benefit of Finnish customers. Nepal has a lot to offer in trekking for anyone in the world. The country's landscapes and terrains are a gift for many trekkers and it is a climbers' paradise. In a nutshell, the results of this study show that if Nepal focuses on trekking with new tools of marketing and innovation, it can succeed in a short time. Moreover, remote trekking trails, which have been opened recently, are receiving lots of foreign currency and increasing the standard of living of the people who live in remote areas.

However, the problem appeared quite big in the course of this study, but there seems to be hope also in trekking business in Nepal. After the opening of the Great Himalaya Trail in remote areas trekking tourism will bring money and help locals to uplift their standard of life. Teahouses which are lodges in those trails are making some money and have at some point stopped migration for search of jobs in other countries. Youth migration is a huge problem in Nepal so if trekking or tourism industry will be opened more, the migrating number will be reduced to some extent. The ecotourism and adventure tourism in Nepal have remarkably made more satisfactory results than any other form of tourism. Trekking and mountaineering are also making good outcomes to the nation's economy. Although the trekking in Nepal is very old and it has been practised for many years, there are still plenty of new potential opportunities, which are to be opened. So many parts of Nepal are untouched by human beings. Therefore, this place can venture more trekking industry in order to keep tourism alive. Whether there is climatic challenge or any social challenge Nepal has a good potential in trekking.

Key words: trekking, Nepal, adventure, ecotourism

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1 INTRODUCTION

The main aim and objective of this study was to find out new tourist destinations for Finnish people through marketing and marketing communications. Nepal is a country of diverse cultural and natural landscapes. Nepal has one of the best treks and expeditions in the world. Trekking is defined as a travel made by foot to the region where the transportation is not easily accessible. Moreover, trekking is done in a mountainous region where the nature is untouched.

The main literature for this thesis, which could be used were nature and adventure tourism and ecotourism. In addition to this, nature and adventure tourism is defined as a tourism, which is based on nature and adventure. Both are related with one another, as without nature adventure is almost impossible. Trekking in Nepal could be one of the exotic tourism practices for Finnish tourists. The main research question for this thesis was how to attract Finnish tourists for trekking in Nepal? What can be done better about the trekking expedition in Nepal and what can make it worth for tourists? The research was carried out by using a questionnaire, surveys, and data, which were available. Moreover, some interviews and videos have been also taken as references. All these data collecting methods helped the author to find out the answers to the research questions. Through this research the profound knowledge of trekking and ecotourism are being illustrated. In addition to this, this shows the negative and positive impacts of tourism in Nepal. The main advantages of this thesis are marketing of Nepal's trekking routes and Nepal's well being.

As in Nepal the trekking is performed in landscapes, which are untouched and remote, some of the adventures have to be done with help of the local people. As the landscape is untouched, some well being and conservation ideas must also be implemented for the tourists. Therefore, ecotourism and knowledge towards the tourists and the business operators with the help of local people can result to an eco-friendly trekking destination in future. The introduction of new trekking routes through impoverished communities will encourage micro tourism projects in places that are too remote for infrastructure development. By creating value in regions that previously have had little to offer to tourism, it is hoped that the relevant government will established a network of national parks and conservation areas as a trans-border corridor for animal migration, which

would reduce illegal hunting and help to save many endangered species. The snow-covered crown of Asia may then become one of its greatest assets.

Many communities continue to hunt and log without any thought for the environment upon which they rely so heavily. By promoting sustainable tourism throughout the Himalaya it is hoped that remote communities will stop destroying pristine habitat and that the government will see the benefits in declaring more conservation and national park areas. Eventually this could link current reserves and create the first international trans-border animal corridor truly a goal of Himalayan size! The financial benefits for the community are obvious in the main trekking regions of Everest, Annapurna, and Langtang but when you visit remoter regions of the Great Himalaya Trail it becomes apparent that even US\$ 10 can make a difference to some villages. By spreading tourists' dollars the Great Himalaya Trail helps to alleviate poverty and to address the enormous wealth disparity in Nepal.

2 MAIN CONCEPTS

2.1 Trekking in Nepal

Nepal, in the Himalayas, is a very diverse place of its authentic culture and natural landscapes. The greatest mountainous scenery in the planet inspires the country itself. Out of twelve, eight highest peaks are situated in Nepal's territory. Since 1950, many trekkers throughout Nepal have explored the countless valleys and peaks of midhill (pahar), and high ranges of Himalaya. The three main trekking regions, Everest, Annapurna and Langtang attract tens of thousands of trekkers every year. Now the new popular destination Kanchenjunga in the extreme east and Dolpa in northwest Nepal are gaining ground. The government has an outcome with a number of heritage trails where one can combine a trek with a peek with the cultures of the local communities. Facilities have never been better and easily accessible in those trekking trails, which can be found in Europe and elsewhere.

The fascinating country style teahouse in Everest and Annapurna can give more luxury. However, the question is how you want to explore a trekking. Trekking trails and paths are well maintained and safe, which are guarded by local people with a happy face and lots of smile. The dense rhododendron forests and woodlands give more anxiety for the trekkers to walk through those trails. You cannot help admiring yourself or any other whom you meet on the trail about their courage and boldness while doing trekking in Nepal. In 2002, the Nepali government reconciled all border disputes with China, the northern neighbour. This demilitarised seven border areas and for the first time in 50 years, tourists were allowed to explore them.

Trekking Agencies' Association of Nepal (TAAN) was established in 1979 in order to promote adventure tourism in Nepal, mainly trekking. TAAN has enormously come up with many good ideas about the trekking trails. The instructions for the trekking are well presented with adequate knowledge on the subject.

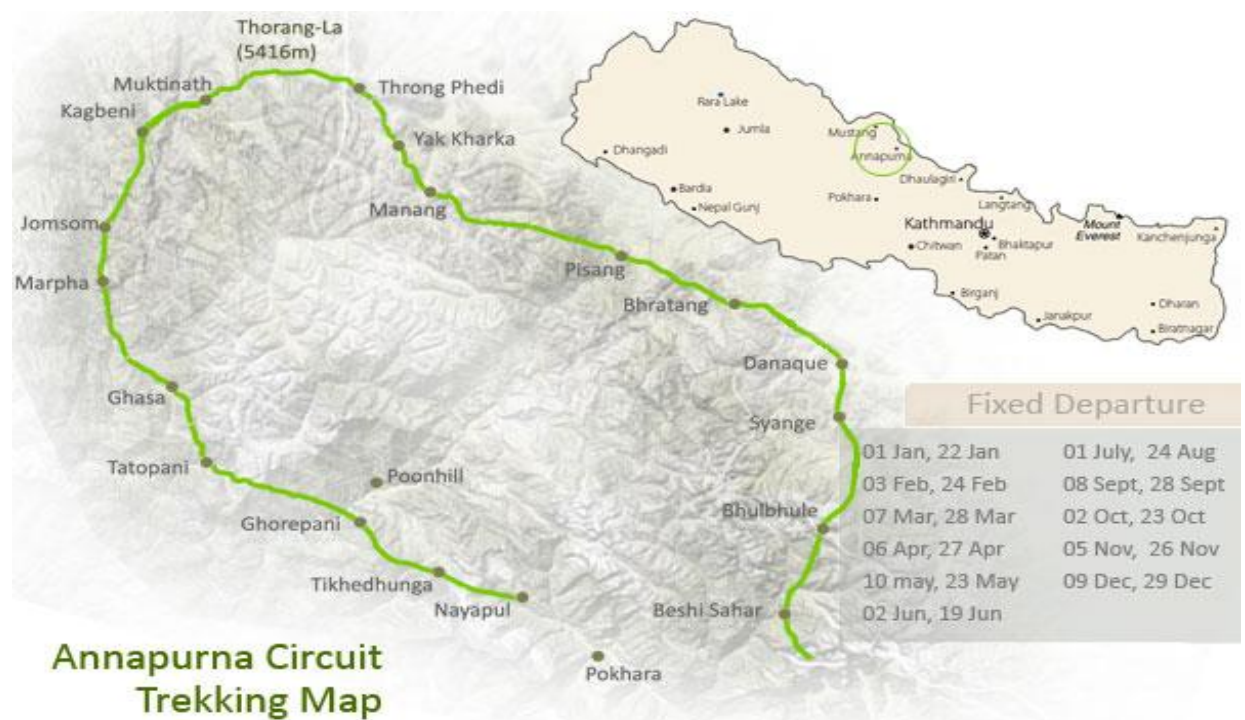
2.1.1 The Great Himalaya Trail

The Great Himalaya Trail is composed of the trails and the way that had been used by the locals for thousands of years to trade or as means of roadways. In these Himalayan trails yaks, ponies have been used since thousands of years for the sake of trade. For many centuries, they tried to find the easy trail to make it easier and faster for them. The famous Silk route is an example of the trail network from Indochina to Afghanistan. For many years the people of Himalaya were cut out from the rest of the world as Nepal, Tibet, Ladakh and Bhutan all kept their borders closed from colonial eyes. Jesuit missionaries were the first Europeans to penetrate deep into the Himalaya in the seventeenth century. Moreover, it is considered that William Moorcroft is the father of modern Himalayan exploration. His first trip took place in 1812 for the search of Tibetan goats and another followed in 1819-25, when he disappeared without traces. Exploration activities increased from 1850s when British Raj, Russian Tsar and Chinese Qing empires all vied ascendancy in the region.

In 1880s with WW Graham, Sir Martin Conway and Freshfield mountain climbing arrived in Himalaya as a new sport. After the World War 1 number of expeditions were held to climb significant peaks. However, the mysterious disappearance of George Mallory and Andrew “Sandy” Irvine on Mt. Everest in 1924 ignited more the climbers’ imagination and determination. On 29th May 1953 Sir Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tenzing Norgay reached the summit of Mt. Everest. Therefore, the point of all these expeditions was to identify new peaks and climbing routes that began, which we call now trekking. Later on in Helambu, Langtang, Kali Gandaki valley and Everest region Bill Tilman intent on walking rather than climbing so he became the first Himalayan trekker. From 2002 Nepal has opened every one of himals (mountain) to permit-based trekking. Along with new trekking areas in Tibet, Bhutan and India, the Great Himalaya Range and its trails are now open to trekkers.

The Great Himalaya Range stretches 2400 km, forming a natural barrier between India and China with Nepal covering the central third (865km) of the highest peak. The Nepali section of the Great Himalaya Trail takes about 160 days to walk which means multiple visits if you want to walk it all. Although GHT crosses many high passes, there

is lower elevation section in between suitable for the novice trekker. Much of the trail requires full camping equipment but it passes through all the major trekking routes and it is possible to rely on teahouses for the section through the Everest, Langtang and Annapurna region. There are many high passes that have to be crossed, some requiring ropes, so groups should have alpine climbing and rescue experiences. Plans and contingencies for emergency should be taken seriously, rescue from any areas along the trail could be very difficult. There is no "main trail" that can duplicate the joy and sense of achievement of the Great Himalaya Trail.



PICTURE 1. Annapurna circuit trekking map

http://www.allnepal.com/nepal/annapurna_circuit.php



PICTURE 2. Trekking

<http://oystertrekking.com/>



PICTURE 3. Trekking in Nepal

<http://www.trekkingandtours.com/trekking-in-nepal.html>

2.1.2 Ecotourism

The term ecotourism is defined as "travelling to relatively undisturbed. Or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring and enjoying the scenery and its wild habitat as well as existing cultural manifestation (both past and present) found in those areas" (Thompson 1995). Moreover, it could include the travelling or expedition to the areas, which are untouched and profound. Trekking in Nepal is one good example of ecotourism. While trekking through the high mountains people come along through many hills, natural and cultural habitat.

Concepts of ecotourism varied in definitions in early times as for example, Laarman and Durst in their early reference to ecotourism defined it as a nature tourism in which the traveler is drawn to a destination because of his or her interest in one, or more features of that destination's history. The visit combines education, recreation and often adventure (Laarman and Durst 1987). A subsequent definition by these authors identifies conceptual differences between ecotourism and nature tourism. In their research, they define nature tourism as a tourism focused on natural recourses such as relatively undisturbed parts and natural areas wetland, wildlife reserves and other areas of protected flora and fauna. Within the consensus mounting in the literature, ecotourism is described as one part of a broader nature based tourism.

Some of the earliest studies on ecotourism attempted to classify ecotourists based on setting, experience and group dynamics. For example, Kusler (1991) typified ecotourists as belonging to three main groups including Do-it-yourself ecotourists, ecotourists on tours and school groups or scientific groups. Conversely, Nelson emphasised the importance of dedication and time as function of defining different types of ecotourists including what tourists wish to experience from ecotourism where they wish to travel and how they wish to travel. Lindberg (1991) found four basic types, hardcore nature tourists, dedicated nature tourists, mainstream nature tourists, casual nature tourists.



FIGURE 1. Ecotourism framework

In the view of the relationship between the two concepts, there does seem to be some merit in linking ecotourism to nature tourism, given the tremendous variety of nature related tourism interest however, there is also ambiguity in separating nature tourism from other forms of tourism, all of which rely upon the use of natural resources. Even mass, resort base tourism relies upon undeveloped resources, as a central component of the product and experience. An important aspect of high wins, discussion includes the fact that not all types of nature tourism are necessarily compactable with each other or the environment. The importance of management in guiding the ecotourism product was central to the work of Fennell and Eagles (1990), who included the resource tour as the principal component of the ecotourism experience; the service industry including tour operation, government policy, resource management and community development; and visitors' experiences, based on marketing, visitor management and visitor attitude.

2.1.3 Tourist arrivals in Nepal by purpose of the visit

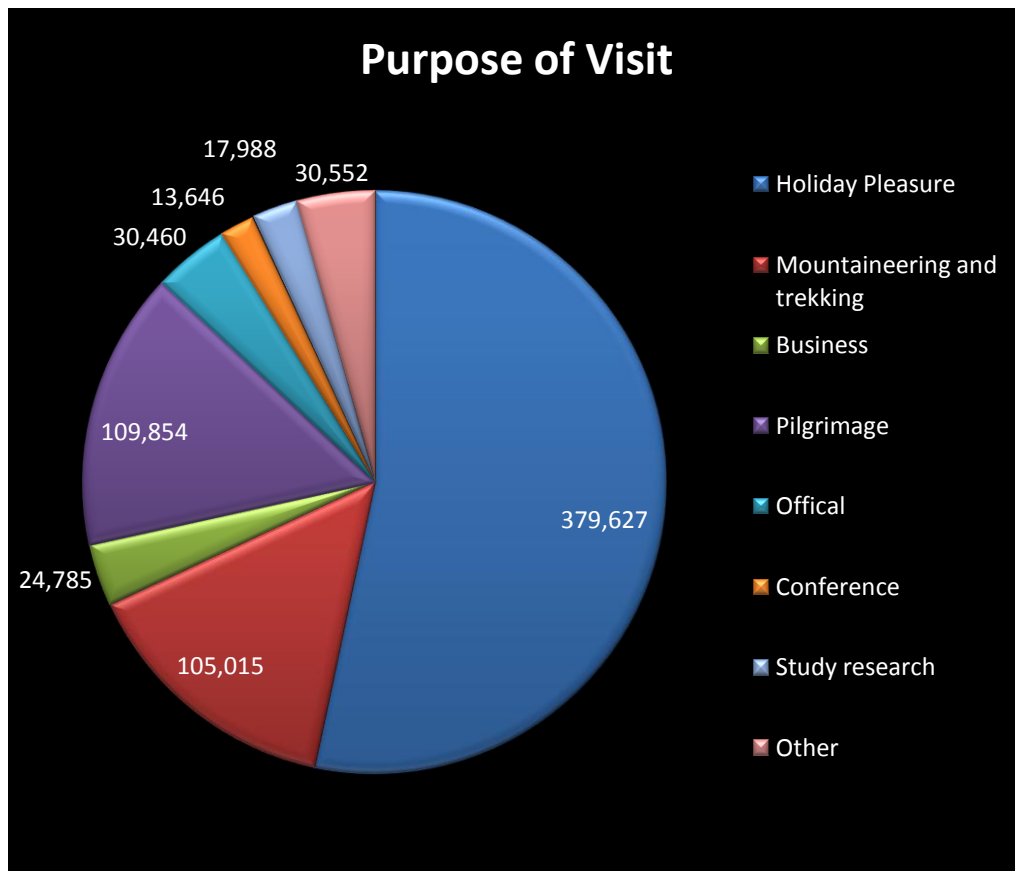


FIGURE 2. Purpose of the visit to Nepal in 2012

The above chart shows that the main purpose of the visit of the tourists to Nepal in year 2012 was for holiday and pleasure. More than three hundred thousand tourists visited Nepal for this purpose. Following were the pilgrimage and mountaineering and trekking tourists. In Nepal, more number of tourists is for holiday and relaxing. As per the norms of travel in Nepal, mountaineering and trekking could be one of the best places on earth to visit. Pilgrimage is more often Hindu and Buddhist pilgrimage to pay homage to different gods and goddesses. As Nepal is the birthplace of Buddha many Buddhists do visit the country through the year to pay homage. In this scenario in Nepal for the sake of mountaineering and trekking there are still many improvements needed to be done.

2.2 Adventure tourism

The term adventure means different to everyone. However, the typical definition is "Recreational travel undertaken to remote or exotic destinations for the purpose of exploration or engaging in a variety of rugged activities". Modern adventure tourism was born decades ago with first planned trek to the Himalayas in Nepal. Rafting trips in Ethiopia was another adventure tourism that came along. The extreme tourism such as bungee jumping, rafting, trekking, mountaineering, skydiving etc. can be forms of adventure tourism. There are two types of adventure tourism - hard and soft adventure tourism. Trekking can be referred as soft adventure tourism, but in Nepal it is referred as hard due to the varied land altitude. Trekking in Nepal is done in high altitude areas in hilly regions where different mountains can be seen. Nepal has many high mountain peaks, and for seeing the mountain closely, trekking is done. Moreover, trekking is done in such remote areas where tourists can have peace of mind and harmony while participating a mountain expedition. The research question also included the aspect of how to define ecotourism as well. Ecotourism is tourism based on nature tourism where the nature is not touched often by the human population.

Trekking in Nepal is a good example of adventure tourism. Depending upon the persons' desire and physical abilities adventure tourism can include number of passive activities, guided tours and mystery. There are two kind of adventure tourism; hard and soft adventure tourism. Hard adventures are the ones with extreme adventures such as mountaineering, bungee jumping, rock climbing, rafting etc. whereas soft adventures are trekking on high altitude with relaxed mind, paragliding, mountain flight, kayaking or rafting. Adventure tourism is one phenomenon of travelling with lots of courage. Getting out from the comfort in adventure tourists have to undergo many hardships and difficulties while performing adventure tourism. Adventure tourism is new kind of tourism in present world which helps travelers to achieve a mental state characterised as rush or flow. While performing these activities one can undergo culture shocks and many other aspects. So adventure tourism is tourism while having fun, thrill and full of suspense. In the nutshell adventure can be determined by different means; with the help of nature it can be accomplished but precaution level must be implemented through the process.

2.2.1 Nepal's culture and people

Nepal has diverse natural and cultural landscapes. The country shares the border in south, east and west with India and in north with Tibet. The Himalayan range lies in the northern part of Nepal. The country is divided into different regions. There is the mountain region with world's top eight highest peaks. The hilly region is combined of valleys, hills and gorges. The final regions are the plain (terai) areas which are located in the southern, eastern and western part of Nepal. The spectacular mountains with panoramic views and mountain regions make the country more vibrant and beautiful. The diverse landscapes give to lots of tourists different scenarios. Nepal is not only a country for mountaineering or trekking but it also offers different regions. Nepal has a huge potential for extreme tourism activities, and some of them are in operation. Bungee jumping in Bhotekoshi River near Tibetan plateau, white water rafting with the strong flow of river, paragliding from the top of a hill are some extreme tourism activities. For many tourists Nepal could be a small country, but although it may be small, the diversity in landscapes is phenomenal.

Nepal is a country of cultural diversity. Nepal has its own unique folklore, and lots of stories, music and other activities are shown through this folklore. The folklore is shown with the help of dance and music. Nepal has its own distinct New Year and calendar. The New Year starts in mid-April and the year is divided into 12 months. Nepal still follows its own calendar, which is full of festivals, celebrations. Nepal is a country of celebrations and festivals. Every day it seems like there is a festival or party going on due to varied cultures and ethnic groups. The food gives more insight to many celebrations and festivals. In 2006, Nepal declared to be a secular country. The religions that are practised in Nepal are Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity. However, most of the people practise Hinduism and Buddhism. Religion has become a part of everyday life in Nepal, which means there is at least something in every month, some festivals or celebrations due to vast religious diversity. Cow is the national and religious animal in Nepal. It resembles mother to many Nepalese. Moreover, cow dung and its urine are used frequently to purify someone. In the time of menstruation, women are considered as impure and put into different rooms for four days. Usually men go to work and women stay at home. However, in the cities the scenarios have changed and now both the husband and the wife have jobs. In addition to that, most of Nepalese people abide

by the caste system in their living habits or marriage. There are four main castes and thirty subs castes in Nepal.

About the food; if somebody asks what the main cuisine in Nepal is, it is very difficult to give one right answer. The foods differ from region to region but the Nepali foods have influences from India and Tibet. However, the authentic Nepalese cuisines are Newari and Thakali cuisines, which are among the most popular cuisines among most Nepalese people. In addition to that, the main food that every Nepalese eat every day is rice with lentils soup, vegetable curry accompanied by pickle. Flatbreads and dhedo (boiled flour) are also common foods, which can be found in some house cooking. Moreover, MOMO (steamed or fried) dumpling is a very famous snacks for not only Nepalese but also for many tourists. Nepal having five seasons on its own has different foods and fruits in different seasons. The perfect way of understanding the diverse Nepalese culture is through attending different festivals and events. Most of the festivals are religious, however, they can still be divided into religious, seasonal, agricultural and legendary festivals. Most of the festivals consist of dance, songs or play which are combined and show all the culture with its own practice.

2.2.2 Adventure tourism in Nepal

Nepal with its diverse landscapes has a huge potential in adventure tourism. Now the country offers all these adventure tourism activities:

- mountaineering
- trekking
- rock-climbing
- white water rafting, canoeing, kayaking
- bungee jumping
- mountain biking

Out of 14 highest peaks above 8000 m, Nepal has eight highest peaks within its reach so mountaineering is one of the most popular tourist activities in Nepal. It attracts thousands of tourists each year. The mountains are opened for climbing in all four seasons

- Spring (March-May)
- Autumn (September-November)
- Winter (December-February)
- Summer (June-August)

Trekking in Nepal is widely popular; out of four three tourists come to Nepal to do at least trekking. Most treks go through altitudes between 1000 to 4000 meters but the popular ones can exceed to 5000 meters. Mountaineering is more difficult and challenging than trekking. Trekking for many tourists is one of the best ways to experience Nepal in its own unique way. All trekkers have to obtain a permit from TIMS for their own safety and security. Some special entry fee or passes might be required in some conservation or national park areas. Rock climbing is a challenging sport for the outdoor lovers. The rocky hill in valleys allows rock climbing to be more natural and distinctive.

Rock climbing in Nepal is operated by well-trained climbers with all precaution required. Due to the mountainous steep terrain Nepal has some of the best white waters in the world. The magnificent vistas of traditional houses, terraced paddy fields, deep gorges and valleys encountered on the way makes rafting trip more worthy and delightful. There are options in rafting one can choose from like to go alone canoeing or kayaking or paddle rafting as a team.

The ultimate and most exciting thrill of bungee jumping can be now experienced in Nepal. One of the New Zealand leading bungee consultants designed it and all well trained experienced bungee jumpers with all precaution available operate it. Bungee jumping in Nepal is situated 160 m over the wild Bhote Koshi river with a 166 m wide suspension bridge that joins two sides of a deep valley and is a start point for many trekkers. The diverse terrain of Nepal makes it one of the best for mountain biking. Biking through the rural hilly regions to mountains can be done and what easily can be seen is the innocent beauty with its own dynamics. Mountain biking could be done to explore the whole of the country's terrain and innocent beauty.

3 FRAMEWORK OF TREKKING INDUSTRY IN NEPAL

3.1 Planning a trek

Nepal has become one of the world's best trekking destinations with thousands of trails and endless mountain views. Choosing the right trek to suit the holiday has become a challenge in itself as the Nepal Himalaya offers a path for everyone, regardless of fitness level, experience or time available. Here are some tips to help to identify when to trek, what styles of treks best suit for the needs, and which destination matches the expectations. First decision when to trek is the most important factor to make trek more memorable. Nepal has monsoonal climate; heavy rains driven from the Bay of Bengal engulf the country from June to September and sometimes in October too.

This means the regions in the east like Kanchenjunga and Makalu, receive heavier amounts of rainfall than the Western part of Nepal. Moreover, Nepal tends to have more severe winter due to its northerly latitude. The monsoon season from June to September is not a popular time for trekking as the valleys that approach the mountains suffer from high rainfall, lots of leeches, transport delays and limited views. After the monsoon has finished, stable, dry conditions predominate throughout the Himalaya for two or three weeks until storm front of unpredictable intensity will affect more areas, usually third or fourth week of October.

The weather then stabilises again, probably until late November when the chance of occasional showers coincide with the beginning of a colder weather pattern. The clear skies and cold nights of December and November are in turn replaced by winter storms in mid to late February.

The beginning of March sees the sun regain intensity, and the weather becomes unstable for alternating periods of three to five days. By the end of March dry, warm weather is the norm but haze begins to build in the lower valleys. As temperature rises through April, the remaining rainclouds disperse to be replaced by hot, hazy conditions largely produced by dust blowing up from the plains of India and local fires. May is the hottest month of the year, only cooled by occasional pre-monsoon storms which gradually gain in intensity until the monsoon begins with vigour, usually in mid June.

3.1.1 Trekking styles

There are three main styles of trekking but the choice will depend on the destination, budget, and time available and personal preferences. There is no better or worse style, in fact you might find yourself combining styles in some destinations to provide broader experiences.

Fully independent trekking or independent tea house trekking: For many the idea of finding own way and living of the land is what the mountains are all about; it is to be completely free to plan the day to have all the gear on your back to interact with one on one with locals and this is a liberating experience; due to the nature of independent trekking it is normally a good idea to trek with friends or in a small group of up to four for safety - larger groups tend to find it difficult to secure accommodation. Being an independent trekker does not mean to say that you cannot have a porter.

The introduction of the trekkers' information management system (TIMS) has made this option little more complicated, but it is still possible to employ a local for almost any period. Most independent trekkers prefer to trek the main routes of Annapurna, Everest and Langtang regions as they offer a broad spectrum of tea house accommodation to suite every budget and standardised menu. Trails in these areas are well marked and many of the local people speak enough of a range of languages that the individual can get by with basic Nepali. Moreover, you may walk on your own, or with a local porter, it is in fact very rare that you will find yourself without company, especially in the evening when you sit in a teahouse communal dining room.

Trekking with a guide or teahouse trekking: Recent years have seen a dramatic change in both number and quality of teahouses on the main trails. For example, Namche in the Everest Region now boasts 24hour electricity, a laundrette, multiple internet cafés, bakeries and all the trappings of Thamel (the tourist district in Kathmandu) but at 3500 meter! It is no surprise therefore that teahouse trekking has become incredibly popular. The continuance of the main trekking routes in Everest, Annapurna and Langtang is a major draw card for tens of thousands of trekkers every year. The subsequent level of investment by local communities in these regions is extraordinary compared to the level of poverty elsewhere in Himalaya. Guides are normally hired through a trekking agency in

Kathmandu or Pokhara, as professional registration is a necessary qualification to lead groups within national parks. It is important to make sure that the guide has been to or preferably comes from the area that one wants to trek.

Trekking with a camping crew: The most flexible, comfortable and hygienic way to explore the Himalaya is on a camping trek. To have unrestricted access to trails, viewpoints and passes you need to be self-sufficient, with the support of a team of experienced staff. For many trekkers their first trip to Nepal will be teahouse based but the lure of what lies beyond the main trails is so strong they return for a camping trek, often to the more remote areas. Trekking in Nepal was initially exclusively camping based so there is a substantial experience pool that means even the first time campers will be comfortable and well looked after. Each morning a smiling Sherpa followed by bowl of water to wash your face will wake you with a mug of tea. Breakfast is preferably served al fresco in the morning sun as your crew packs up the camp. At some point along the day's trail a cook will have prepared a lunch at a scenic spot before completion of your journey to the next campsite and extensive dinner menu. In fact camping in Nepal is frequently more comfortable and less crowded than teahouses.

With the increasing popularity of teahouse trekking, companies that specialised in camping treks are becoming more competitive so it is important to check the details of your trek before you depart.

3.1.2 Trekking summary

Trek	Highlight	Best Times	Accommodation
Mustang Circuit: P197	Like nowhere else does today collide obviously with the middle ages	April-November	Basic tea house or camping
North of Lo Monthang: P205	Add the valleys and gompas along and ancient trade routes to Tibet	April-November	Camping
South east of Lo Monthang: P206	The remote Damokar Kund and trails to Phu and Muktinath	April-November	Camping
Upper Dolpa Circuit: P210	Mysterious, spectacular, rarely visited and authentic culture	April-November	Camping
Lower Dolpa Circuit: P217	Amazing variety in the trans-Himalayan biodiversity area	April-November	Camping
Great Himalaya Trail from Jomsom to Ghamdi: P217	Nine 5000 m+ passes and authentic cultures make this beyond compare	April-November	Camping
Rara Lake: P227	Sublime beauty, old growth forests and ancient history all in one trek	March- May October -November	Camping
Khaptad National Park P232	The gods chose to honeymoon away from the crowds	March- May October -November	Camping

This table is a summary of trekking that is carried out in Western Nepal.

3.2 Nepal and you

The mountains are spectacular but it will probably be the people who draw you back to Nepal repeatedly. Building good relationship with the people, the crew and those around you will not only make your holiday significant but can change your own perspectives in life. Nepalese are well known for good hospitality and to build up a friendship today is more important than what might or not happen tomorrow.

Choosing a guide and a crew is very essential. Trekking with a guide and a crew is a wonderful opportunity to develop a better understanding of Nepal. The days or weeks that you will spend on the trail together will provide many opportunities to delve into the lives and perspectives of those around you. Therefore, if you have the opportunities to select your own guide it is worth spending a little time in making the right choice. Once you have found your ideal guide he will take responsibility for the choice of a crew, but you can have input as well. Finding a guide can be difficult in peak season, but if you arrive before the rush of groups in mid-October or April then one is able to find good candidates in couple of days.

A good start is to ask returning trekkers or some local trekking agencies if they know any guide with knowledge of a specific area or issues. Guides sometime present their trekking or climbing story in a scrapbook or a simple resume and it is important to ask for and check references from the outset. Nepalese will almost certainly answer yes rather than lose face. It is surprising how many guides will assert knowledge of places they have heard about second or third hand. So your first question could be what is it like? How many times have they been there before? For how long ago? In addition, have they been the senior member or guide of the group each time?

Rates for guides vary depending on experiences, level of responsibility, trek difficulties and requirements. You may not get the chance to negotiate with many guides, as they will insist on using a particular agency to organise your trip. This has become common since the introduction of TIMS (Trekkers' Information Management System) and porter insurance. KEEP (Kathmandu Environmental Educational Project), IPPG (International Porter Protection Group) and Nepali Government all have recommended minimum wages and conditions for guides and the crew. By trekking with a crew one is undertaking to look after the welfare of one's staff so also ask your trekking company, IPPG and

KEEP about your responsibilities towards your crew. You should also develop a clear idea of which jobs and responsibilities belong to you, and of those ones your guide will handle. Some guides can speak multiple languages and dialects from Nepal, which can make bargaining trail finding much easier. Perhaps the most common problems a trekker suffers from are the Nepali propensity to answer question with "Yes". As well as using open questions, also make sure the person is qualified to answer your question. Encouraging your crew to have a small party after a day on the trail is an excellent idea as Nepalese love to party after work and they do love drinking.

3.2.1 Before departure

Life in Nepal is much easier than what others might be used to which makes working with locals' concept of time and efficiency a particular source of frustration to many tourists. Therefore, if someone is planning to travel alone or independently then it is obvious to put some smile on face and manage anger to certain level. The most important thing is if someone has planned to travel to Nepal, the first thing to do is to book your flight as most airlines run at full capacity in peak season. In addition to that, check for all the gears that are needed for the trekking. All equipment, footwear, clothing, maps and walking guides are most essential things needed while planning for trekking.

3.2.2 Visas and permits

Many tourists organise a visa prior to arrival in Nepal, but it is a straightforward process to apply for visa if arriving in Kathmandu at Tribhuvan international airport (currently 100\$ for 90 days). Similarly, most trekking regions require National park conservation area permit and TIMS permit. Therefore, it is essential to organise permits through a registered trekking company. Always carry a copy of your passport when trekking and be prepared to register at police check posts whenever requested to do so.

You can check arrangements with one of the Nepal embassies or consular offices but the most reliable source of information is currently the Nepal department of immigration website - www.immi.gov.np. Currently most trekking regions require

- National park or a conservation area permit
- Trekkers' Information Management System (TIMS) permit.

You may also require a special area permit or a special trekking permit depending on the region. It is essential that you organise permits through a registered trekking company and if this is all you do, the company will charge you a processing fee. Final formality is to register online or in Kathmandu with your embassy or consulate or register at the Himalayan rescue association. If there is no consulate to be found, find out which if any country represents your country in Nepal. This can be determined from your foreign affairs departments.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research design and questions

The research design is the method of making and designing the research to be carried out efficiently and effectively. Here the author has subsequently designed the research to be done by using both quantitative and qualitative data collecting methods. The author was researching about the trekking in Nepal for Finnish tourists. The author is from the same country and has been to some trekking destinations in Nepal. The research study in this thesis was done in order to help and support the trekking industry in Nepal by finding new tourists from Finland. The main purpose of this research was to find out the problems and solutions for trekking in Nepal.

It was also a study to remedy the caution level about Nepalese Great Himalaya Trails. The interviews and the recent news were also included so far. The climate change and its effect in the trekking in Nepal were also the main agendas of this research while performing the research how do the local people of those trekking areas get affected by the global warming and climate changes in this world. It was more clear than how innocent people get affected by the act of other human beings and what is their suffering in climate changes.

Finnish people like to travel in order to gain different tourism experiences. But trekking in high altitude is not that famous among Finnish people. In order to make Finnish people to understand how is trekking done in Nepal in high altitude and how is Nepal itself the author chose to do this research. Through this research both the product and people can benefit. Trekking in Nepal is not widely known to people of Finland. They know about the mountaineering in Nepal rather than trekking. So the objective is to attract the tourists for trekking which could be more new and fun among Finnish tourists. In other hand it will be an opportunity for Nepali tourism industry to have new tourists. Moreover Nepal can introduce more trekking routes among the people who are willing to do trekking.

The research question also consisted of how to define ecotourism as well. Ecotourism is tourism based on nature tourism where the nature is not touched often by human popu-

lation. For the effort how this can be done in Nepal, different surveys will be implemented about the changes. The marketing of trekking is more important and this is less done by the Nepalese side. There are different tour operators who operate for trekking in Nepal through Finland but still it is not enough. In order to fulfill the demand and to make new destinations known for Finnish tourists the author decided to choose this topic to do more research. Through the opportunity of doing face to face interviews with some Finnish tourists who recently visited Nepal and did a trekking the author found out more profound things. The tourists who had been in Nepal for trekking had had very average experiences during their trekking. They had done the trekking in Annapurna region and when they started the weather was not in their favor. It was cloudy and they were unable to see the mountain even though they had been on the base camp. So here we can see that the weather is the essential factor for many trekkers to get their satisfaction. Out of 100 around eighty trekkers get satisfied results and twenty can get some challenging distractions by the weather.

The Finnish tourists also stated that they had fun in the festival celebrations of the locals and many more. One of the male tourists was a smoker but while in Kathmandu he did not smoke because now in Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal they are rebuilding roads so there are lots of dust and dirt in the air. The author got positive and negative reviews from the tourists. It was kind of mixed up reviews about Nepal. Of course Nepal has lots of beautiful places for trekking but the management and political scenarios have changed the expectations of the people. There are lots of strikes and the long roads which are dangerous on its own are the problems arising in Nepal. It was clear that the tourists are scared to take the domestic flights of Nepal, as there were lots of accidents near the base camp of Everest. So the tourists who were there in Nepal decided not to take flights.

Moreover, the unmanaged system of Nepal causes drawbacks for tourism industry to flourish. The hospitality of the people was far more better than the other infrastructure. Pollution, ignorance and unpunctuality are the main factors of Nepalese trekking industry not to be able to flourish. In the conversations with those tourists in a nutshell what the author found out was the problem of the Nepalese infrastructure on tourism, lack of information on the internet, lack of roadways and transportation facilities that all are the drawbacks of these businesses. The climate changes have also affected the country's natural beauty and landscapes. Now the snow of Mount Everest has melted more than in

any other years and the mountains have been starting to become black rocks rather than snow-capped mountains.

4.2 Data collecting methods and nature and drawbacks

As the topic itself is about expedition and exploration this study requires several methods to fulfil the needs of its own. The main primary data was collected through the help of observations, interviews. Here the author knew some Finnish tourists who have travel to Nepal recently. Therefore, the informal interview was taken with them. They went for short trekking in Nepal. Therefore, it was easier to find what they experience and what was not working for them. Many videos that have been posted with interviews were also a means of data collecting methods. Face to face interviews with authors Finnish friends about trekking in Nepal was also good data collecting methods.

As many researches have been done about Nepal tourism industry some facts and figure were also good data for this research. Secondary data was collected from different books, journal, newspaper, and internet. The Nepal tourism Board and Trekking agency of Nepal (TAAN) was also the main information centre for this research. Textual analysis was the main tool for this research as the author was unable to visit Nepal. Facts and figures published by the government of Nepal and Nepal tourism board (NTB) were the main source of data collecting methods. While doing the research there was a big and most deadly incident in the history of Mount Everest. A deadly avalanche on 18 April 2014 killed 16 Sherpa guides. After this incident, Mount Everest climbing was closed.

There were several drawbacks and limitations of the studies:

- Lack of adequate books in Finland about Nepal.
- Too little amount of material in the internet and other means of communication
- The author was from the same country but unable to visit Nepal.
- While calling to different agencies in Nepal about trekking industry they were unable to know the problem and the solution to it.

4.3 Where to stay in Kathmandu?

- Thamel

Most travellers find Thamel the most convenient area to stay in, although it is largely a tourist's ghetto. Everything one could want is available there, with over hundred guests' houses and hotels, good restaurants, souvenir shops, a bookstore, a communication centre and travel agencies.

- Freak Street

In the halcyon days of the 60s and 70s when Kathmandu was a major stopover on the hippie trail, Freak Street just off Durbar Square was the place to hang out. Although the hash dens are now all closed it still retains a quaint charm. Welcome to Freak Street free entry to all tourists, a sly dig at a Durbar Square entrances fees. Its 15 or so hotels and restaurants are all in the rock bottom to cheap bracket.

- Other areas

Away from the intense tourist's scene are other small hotels scattered throughout Kathmandu. In Patan, there are two budget hotels of Durbar Square and a few good upmarket hotels. Buddha and Swayambhunath have some simple hotels favoured by Buddhists and travellers.

4.3.1 Challenges and problems of trekking in Nepal

As Nepal evolved out from 10 years of civil war, even though the country is in peace state the political situation is still unstable. The election of constitution assembly is not still able to give a right constitution to Nepal. The main challenge in trekking in Nepal is that tourists still are scared to go to remote and rural areas. Nepal's geography and its frequent aircraft crashes are also a big challenge for the trekking industry to come up with new ideas. The weather and climate changes are also becoming new challenges to the Nepalese trekking industry. Recently there was an avalanche in Mount Everest and sixteen Sherpas lost their lives. This was the most deadly avalanche so far in the history of Mount Everest. It was unpredictable, so the summit on Mount Everest has been shut down due to this avalanche. To climb one needs to do lots of hardship and to have dedi-

cation so the tourists who come for the mountaineering have had very bad experiences from this.

Trekking in Nepal has very great potential but the routes and the guides are not easy to determine. The same routes and guides are the issues of getting fewer tourists. Moreover the Nepalese roadways are too dangerous and unsafe in many aspects. As a consequence of these challenges it is not easy to maintain good quality of trekking. Nepal has a big problem of load shedding which means no electricity for around twelve hours so this factor has also caused tremendous effect to trekking business. There exists also very little Nepal's trekking marketing. In the internet, it is very difficult to find something about the trekking in Nepal. Even though TAAN and NTB have their official websites there is very little information available. Some published sites are either under construction or something else. Strikes, unstable political situation and corruption are the main big challenges for the improvement of the Nepalese trekking industry. In addition to this, Nepal airlines are very poorly operated. Domestic airports are not in good condition and the country has no flag carrier airline anymore. Domestic airports in rural areas of Nepal are very dangerous and risky. Each year there are some plane accidents. The altitude is the reason but also the planes, which are in use, are not to mark. The main problem with the trekking industry is that nobody has stepped up to take any responsibility. In order to overcome the challenges there is a need to implant some steps to certain level more effectively and efficiently. The trekking routes are also not under control by any means and this needs to be checked.

4.3.2 Positive reviews about Nepal's trekking

Even though there are big problems about the trekking or tourism industry in Nepal, some positive solutions have been implemented. In Nepal now new trekking routes have been invented with the help of TAAN and Tourism Board of Nepal. In the nature there is going on some positive social work constraining. In Everest region in order to control the pollution, lots of things are not being allowed to take in. The locals have become more effective about the trekking business. Many teahouses are being operated on the trekking routes, which have resulted the economy of the rural areas to grow. Nepal Airline Corporation is buying two airbuses from France by the end of 2014. With this Nepal will operate some international flights from Europe with the national flag. The

unique feature is that even the state and NGOs are paying attention to the growing climate change issues in Nepal in order to prevent lots of things.

In Kathmandu, the roads are expanded and some express roads are under construction. Lots of hydropower is being generated and of course, some sort of positive reviews are being implemented. Nepal is in process of peace and the security level is getting better year by year. In addition to this, the airline crashes are also not very often in the news. Now after this avalanche a lot of mountaineers and trekkers want to come back home but still they have problem - getting an airline. However, two or three more flights are being generated in these days in order to overcome the chaos. Therefore, in a nutshell not only for the sake of the trekking industry but for the whole country, the country is trying and working to get it better and safe. The author of this research saw lots of problems before but in a nutshell, he was able to find out some positive reviews of Nepal and its tourism. The economic growth due to tourism has increased in recent years.

5 DISCUSSION

The research made by the author showed him that he sadly has to admit that Nepal is in a crisis. Its political, natural, geographical and demographic conditions are in a sad state. The main aim of this research was to find out how to improve the quality of trekking in Nepal for Finnish tourists. After meeting with some of the Finnish tourists who went to Nepal for a trek the author got average reviews. Finnish tourists are willing to go but the bad state of the country is letting them down for visiting Nepal, and not only Finnish people but also other European nationals also. The main problems which the author found out through this research are the unstable political situation, safety and security. The tourists are not willing to go there as they have been victimised by the strikes. Many tourists have been stuck in the Everest region or any other trekking region for many days because of the bad weather or something else. Therefore, these things are not proper to any tourists. Even though Nepal has jumped in many scenarios it is still lacking behind due to security issues. When the author did interviews and received reviews and videos from the trekkers about Nepal it was easy to find out that trekking has a huge potential in Nepal. Things lacking behind are the issues of the unstable political situation and corruption.

The corruption level is high and the author found out from one trekker, that he was asked for the bribe in order to enter some restricted national parks. The main objective of this research was to give some recommendations to the tourism industry, and especially to the trekking industry some tips on how to operate the trekking business in a way that is more successful. The trekking industry suffered a lot in Nepal due to the violent civil war for ten years. Those wars still have feared many trekkers to go back again. So in order to gain reviews that are more positive the state of Nepal needs seriously to use more effort and power. Some parts of Nepal are still untouched. Far western regions of Nepal have magnificent trekking routes and potential. However, nobody has even identified them until today. The main problem for Nepal is that large number of youth is migrating to Arabian countries in order to earn money, which has resulted growth in economy by remittance, but the local resources are not being well used. There are so many exotic places in Nepal still in order to maintain good flow of tourists. The marketing of trekking in Nepal is not up to the mark. Marketing strategies are needed more for Europe in order to get more tourists to Nepal.

Recommendations for the development of trekking in Nepal could be:

- Stable political situation in Nepal could bring many tourists to Nepal, and in case for the amount of Finnish tourists to increase; more marketing is needed from the state level.
- New modern marketing techniques and tools are needed in order to develop trekking in Nepal.
- More flexible and new trekking routes are to be invented and research from different level is needed.
- Some parts of the exotic Nepal are still untouched so there is a need for more investments in those areas.
- Secured environment is in great need in the trekking routes of Nepal in order to give more relaxation and peace.
- Airlines business is to be expanded more with good quality as Nepal is a land-locked country and airline is the main means of the transport
- Most of the airports need to be renovated and made up to the mark
- Lukla airport is one of the most extreme airports in the world, and it is dangerous on its own so these kinds of airports are to be put up with technologies that are more modern.
- Internet marketing and web marketing should be more on focus in order to get more international customers.
- Nepal needs to have at least one flag carrier airline to operate soon in order to get more tourists from European nations.
- Finnish tourists are honest and obedient people so there is need for some special effort in order to make Nepal more visible for them
- New roadways and airways have to be found in order to get more customers safe to the site and more vibrant places have to be found.
- The main problem Nepal is facing now is migration; many youths are migrated in order to get jobs in Arab countries, Europe and Australia. In order to prevent youth migration and have their innovations for the tourism sector, businesses need to be opened. Nepal has potential in tourism so new investments are needed to get more youth in action.

- New professionals in tourism industry are needed and trained trekkers are getting rare so new guides have to be trained with new dynamics.
- There is a need for school and university level studies about trekking and expeditions in Nepal and this has to be done through the nation from the government sector. If these things are taken into consideration then not hundred percent but eighty percent of the problems could be solved. While doing this research these observations and reviews were studied.

Crisis in Mount Everest region

News: Sixteen Sherpas were killed in an avalanche on 18th April 2014, which resulted shutting down of Mount Everest climbing. This was the most deadly incident ever happened in Mount Everest region. Discovery Channel's Mount Everest special tracking climber Joby Ogwyn was shaken by the incident, and this was posted to Washington Post. This resulted to many climbers to come back and back down. Many climbers' moral is down on climbing Mount Everest. This incident was due to the climate change happening in the world. Isolated Everest region or any other trekking region, which are exotic, get more affected by the global warming or climate changes. The innocent environment or the locals are more victimised by these incidents. Moreover, these people have nothing to do with pollution or any other unnatural things; still they are the ones who suffer. So now, it is time to join hands together in order to save our earth by respecting it more and by reducing the use of its resources. If we continue to disrespect the nature then soon mountains like Mount Everest will no longer be snow-capped mountains. Now in summer the snow is melting so rapidly that we can just see the top of the mountain, black rock. In a nutshell what the author realised is that we need to respect the nature more and do take care of our environment. Innocent people who live in remote places are getting more victims of this climate change rather than the ones who are responsible so it is our duty to be responsible for them. May the souls of those departed Sherpa who died in this recent avalanche rest in eternal peace. R: I: P provides all of us wisdom.

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