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DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM BUSINESS

Comparative Analysis on Nepal and Finland

Thesis

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ABSTRACT

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<p>The tourism business is the most important source of income for Nepal. The tourism industry has been key source of generating economic activity in Nepal. Likewise, the foreign tourists in Finland are growing except now in this COVID-19 situation.</p> <p>The thesis aimed to find a comparative tourism analysis between Finland and Nepal, considering major tourist destinations in both countries. This thesis also focused on identifying the similarities and differences between the two tourist destinations and the overall tourist inflow statistics.</p> <p>This thesis contains observational data and statistical data. The internet, books, journals, articles, tourism statistics, and a survey were a source of information used in the thesis. After analyzing the collected data, it has been concluded that marketing, the accommodation, transportation facilities, information center, tourist helpdesk are the essential factors to take into consideration for improving the tourism business in Nepal.</p>		

Key words SWOT analysis, tourism plan, tourism strategies

ABSTRACT

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
2 TOURISM BUSINESS	3
3 TOURISM IN FINLAND AND NEPAL.....	4
3.1 Categories of Tourism.....	4
3.1.1 Adventure Tourism	4
3.1.2 Cultural Tourism	4
3.1.3 Spiritual and religious tourism	5
3.1.4 Business tourism.....	5
3.2 Tourism in Nepal.....	5
3.2.1 Tourism planning and importance in Nepal.....	6
3.2.2 Management of tourism.....	7
3.2.3 Tourism marketing	7
3.2.4 Revenue from tourism	7
3.2.5 Tourism destinations.....	8
3.2.6 Role of social media in marketing.....	8
3.3 SWOT analysis on the status of Nepal	9
3.4 The status of tourism in Finland.....	10
3.4.1 Tourism destination in Finland.....	11
3.4.2 Tourism governance and funding.....	12
3.4.3 Tourism policies and programs	13
3.4.4 Tourism statistics in Finland.....	14
3.4.5 Revenue from tourism	16
4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	18
4.1 Research design	18
4.2 Research strategies.....	19
4.3 Study population	20
4.4 Data collection using a questionnaire	21
5 RESEARCH ANALYSIS	23
5.1 Data analysis on the questionnaire retrieved from Nepalese and Finnish tourists.....	23
5.2 Comparative data analysis and discussion	25
5.2.1 Main interests in selecting destinations.....	25
5.2.2 Challenging problems while choosing Nepal	26
5.2.3 Challenging problems while choosing Finland.....	27
5.2.4 Things that attracted to visit Nepal	28
5.2.5 Things that attracted to visit Finland.....	29
5.3 Findings.....	30
6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION	31
REFERENCES.....	32
APPENDICES	

FIGURES

FIGURE 1. Finland organizational chart of tourism bodies (OECD 2020).....	12
FIGURE 2. Finland tourism revenue (Finland tourism revenue)	17
FIGURE 3. Tourists interests in selecting destination.....	25
FIGURE 4. Tourists problems while choosing destination.....	26
FIGURE 5. Challenging problems faced by tourists in Nepal.....	27
FIGURE 6. Challenging problems faced by tourists in Finland.....	28
FIGURE 7. Things that attracted to visit Nepal.....	29
FIGURE 8. Things that attracted to visit Finland.....	30

TABLES

TABLE 1. SWOT analysis on status of tourism in Nepal	9
TABLE 2. Night spent by non-residents in 2018 (Business Finland 2018)	16
TABLE 3. No. of international visitors in Finland between Jan and March 2020 (Statista 2020)	17

1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism is the act of going away from home to have recreation, relaxation, enjoyment, and satisfaction. Tourism was just an act of exploration years ago, but now it has grown into different types of tourism called modern tourism. Modern tourism is an increasingly comprehensive, commercially efficient, business intended set of activities such as business tourism, pilgrimage tourism, medical tourism. The tourism business is a very dynamic and competitive industry. It is necessary to have the ability to adapt continuously to customers changing needs and preferences because the customers security, fulfillment, and happiness are the focus of the tourism business.

Tourism has been one of the critical sources of income for many countries like Nepal. It would not be wrong to say that tourism is the world's largest industry. In comparison to Finland, in many developing countries like Nepal, economies are in transition states, and tourism has merged as the dominant tool for economic growth. The most crucial problem of the country that is unemployment has been reduced by tourism at some level. There are many tourist places in Nepal which are still undiscovered and have not gotten enough attention compared to Finland. Thus, to promote these undiscovered tourism places, a government level comparative research is crucial.

The main objective of this thesis is to conclude status of tourism in Nepal and Finland in terms of opportunities and problems. This thesis also presented the idea of how one country could benefit from identifying issues and remedy them. In other words, the research and analysis will provide possible solutions that Nepal, which is lagging in tourism, could learn from Finland. It could be in many ways, either in terms of infrastructural or marketing.

This thesis draws the analysis of data collected from different visitors both in Finland and Nepal. The main goal of this study was to develop a comparative analysis of tourism in respective countries. Therefore, the conclusions of this study surely help to enhance the tourism business in both countries.

In this thesis, Data were collected by using primary and secondary data collection methods. The source of primary data was from respondents. Respondents received questionnaires, and they filled up with data. Pokhara, one of the emerging tourist destinations in Nepal, was chosen, and Lapland, the most visited region, was selected to study the respondents' data. Furthermore, the source of secondary data

was from different international reports, articles, newspapers, government tourist websites, and world travel and tourism council.

This thesis aimed to compare the status of tourism in Finland and Nepal. The intention was to find the future possibilities of tourism business co-operation between Nepal and Finland. This thesis's outcome would give both countries recommendations on how each other could benefit from tourism and its positive impact on the economy.

Indeed, another intention of this thesis was to give the reader the famous tourist destination and its status in both countries. Thus, this would help a lot of visitors to visit each country and contributing to the economy. It also increases the importance of investing in tourism businesses.

In this thesis, chapter one briefly describe the introduction of tourism, its present status, impact on the economy, and possible co-operation between Finland and Nepal. In the following chapters, chapter two presented the structure of the thesis, types of tourism, and tourism business status in Nepal and Finland. Moreover, chapter three elaborated on the research methodology used in this thesis. Furthermore, chapter four analyzed the collected data from the research to get the result. Finally, chapter five outlined the recommendations and conclusion based on what the writer has experienced from this thesis.

2 TOURISM BUSINESS

For the past six years, tourism has given rise to 20% of total world employment. Developed countries such as France, Spain, and the USA are competing over leadership in this sector. The tourism industry is a profitable business because it contributes to cultural wealth, revenues, and economic growth for a country. According to a World Tourism Organization report, the percentage of the world population that needed an entry visa to visit abroad countries decreased from 75% in 1980 to 53% percent in 2018. In addition to that, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council, 10.4% of the world's GDP is contributed by the tourism industry, making it one of the largest economic sectors worldwide. (Loss 2019.) However, the situation is different in 2020 due to the novel COVID19 virus. Many countries have benefited from the tourism industry. Thus, they are investing more in the tourism industry, along with several campaigns and strategies.

Tourism is ever increasing industry, which can be called as economic engine too. In addition to that, it can also be called an employment engine. Besides the manufacturing sector, the tourism industry is the best in terms of job creation. Tourism has contributed 20% of the jobs over the past five years. It proves that the tourism business has been a source of employment by employing a large workforce, even creating jobs for younger people. To conclude this, Spain's tourism accounts for 15% of its GDP. It proves that the tourism industry has become one of the fundamental sources of economic growth in many countries. (Loss 2019.)

3 TOURISM IN FINLAND AND NEPAL

Nepal is a developing country. There are still many places that have not been explored yet. There are resources but has not been used fully because of lack of direction and lack of education. But this is entirely different in the case of Finland. Finland is a developed country and one of the happiest countries in the world (Bloom 2020). Thus, Finland is famous in the world. It has got robust infrastructures to manage the tourist sector. But in Nepal, there is no well-structured infrastructure. In addition to that, there are considerable differences in the cost of living, technology access, and healthcare access for tourists. The following chapters present the comparative analysis of tourism in terms of business.

3.1 Categories of Tourism

Based on the social, demographics, cultural and economic aspects, there are different kinds of tourism. It mainly involves travel for leisure and business purpose. This makes clear that each type of tourist has a variety of needs and objectives. (Balkrishna 2020.) There are both similar and dissimilar categories of tourism in both Nepal and Finland. However, the following section discusses the common tourism categories existing.

3.1.1 Adventure Tourism

Adventure tourism is the type of tourism that involves movement of the people for travel, exploration to distant, unfamiliar areas. This includes skydiving, mountaineering, scuba diving, and activities in nature. This kind of tourism has become popular nowadays. Its because people must out of their comfort zones to do adventure tourism. This kind of tourism is full of uncertainties and happens to be exciting for young age tourists. Thus, adventure tourism mostly happens outdoor. One must prepare for some level of risk and uncertainty. (Tourism Notes 2020.)

3.1.2 Cultural Tourism

Cultural tourism is a kind of tourism that mainly offers cultural attractions such as historical sites, cultural events, and shows. This kind of tourism is also a principal value for the tourism business. Each

country is somewhat related to specific cultural values. Also, this tourism includes the involvement of rituals and festivities of varieties of culture. Thus, this promotes the exchange of authentic aesthetic procedures between locals and visitors. This is also called ethnic tourism. Eventually, this tourism plays a crucial role in boosting economic growth. (IGI Global 2020.)

3.1.3 Spiritual and religious tourism

Spiritual and religious tourism has been a fundamental factor in society, which is also called a pilgrimage. There is a complicated relationship between the origins of civilization and religion. People travel to the most visited religious centers around the world for worship and spiritual peace. They even travel long distances to fulfill their wishes. Thus, this proves that religious / faith / spiritual tourism is a key and constant portion of the tourism industry. Personal belief, cultural preservation, media, expanding market, and increased travel agents are the main factors that the religious and spiritual tourism industry is expanding. (Griffin & Raj 2017.)

3.1.4 Business tourism

Business tourism is a kind of tourism which includes all types of travel arrangements such as airline packages for personnel to attend such occasions as conferences, seminars, meeting, demonstration, and training activities. In addition to this, business tourism is also business visiting colleagues or clients in another country or continent. More than that, businesspeople also travel to natural and cultural sites and even for sightseeing. This could be the host's business or businessperson's public relations approach. Furthermore, in some cultures, being hospitable and knowing guests are essential for more partnership business dealings and negotiation. (ACS 2020.). Hence, business tourism is prevalent in both countries.

3.2 Tourism in Nepal

Nepal is rich in ancient cultures with the land of discovery and unique experiences. In Nepal, many places are still undiscovered, untouched, and uncovered. It's the perfect tourism destination for people who wants to experience authentic places. There is a lot of diversity in many ways. To put it in another way, Nepal's tourism consists of three main categories: Nature, adventure, and cultural beauty. There

are steamy jungles, Terai plain lands, icy peaks of the world's highest mountains, the Himalayas, which include a range of activities such as mountaineering, trekking, rafting. More than that, it has fifteen national and wildlife parks, rarest animal Asiatic rhinoceros, and the royal Bengal tiger. People in Nepal are always welcoming to tourists. The traditions, ancient culture, and religion always attract tourists with a big heart. In the ancient cities of Nepal, such as Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, and Lalitpur, are authentic places to visit and get to know more about Nepalese culture. Nepal has eight out of the ten highest mountains in the world. It concludes that Nepal is a hotspot for mountaineers, rock climbers, and people who are keen on adventures. The ancient religion of Hindu and Buddhist cultural sites is the most visited part of Nepal. As per the statistics from Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), a total of 598,204 foreign tourists visited Nepal in 2012. But the number grew to 1.17 million in 2019. Thus, data shows that Nepal is one of the tourist destinations in the world. Tourism is one of the mainstays of the Nepalese economy. (MOFA 2019.)

3.2.1 Tourism planning and importance in Nepal

Nepal is renowned in the international arena due to its richness in natural beauty, ancient cultures, welcoming people, and cultural heritage. Tourism has been one of the primary sources of income for many years. It has earned foreign money, employed large numbers of people. Thus, Nepal is continuously looking for opportunities to reform laws and policies to attract more tourists. His Majesty's of Nepal government declared 1998 as visit Nepal '98 to attract tourists and enhance the positive image of Nepal in the world. Policies and plans are essential for identifying and solving issues that inhibit the development of tourism. By improving infrastructure and well planning, the country can hugely benefit. The Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation co-operation with the Nepal Tourism Board oversees preparing the annual reports and responsible for carrying out tourism-related activities such as planning and advertising. In the Nepal context, tourism has been playing a vital role in the nation's economic development. Thus, the ministry of Tourism has collaborated with the participation of the local community, private sectors, and educational institutions conducting programs to enhance the local awareness towards tourism. (Thapa 2012.)

3.2.2 Management of tourism

In Nepal, Nepal Tourism Board manages tourism-related activities. It is a national tourism organization that was established in 1998 by an act of parliament in Nepal. This organization's primary goal is to develop and market Nepal as an attractive tourist destination in the world. This organization works with the private sector to provide the best service for tourists and marketing. NTB's primary goal is to promote Nepal in both the domestic and international markets. In addition to that, it also manages tourists who are stranded, helps those who are in difficult situations to make back home. It has branches in a different part of the country which provides security and rescue for tourists. Furthermore, NTB provides necessary travel advisors for visitors and give permissions for those who needed. (NTB 2020.)

3.2.3 Tourism marketing

Tourism in Nepal has seen many developments in the history. The tourism industry suffered heavily when the 25th April earthquake hit in Nepal. After that, Nepal Tourism Board took initiatives to attract more foreign tourists in Nepal. According to the Post Disaster Need Assessment Study (PDNA), the total loss of tourism was 60 billion dollars. Thus, after analyzing these figures, Nepal Tourism Board, Nepal embassy, launched a marketing campaign along with the Hotel Association of Nepal (HAN). Their main goal was to raise awareness that Nepal is the safest tourist destination. At the same time, the Tourism Recovery Committee and National Tourism Committee came into effect to collaborate with the efforts. Besides that, their main aim was to report false claims of international media that Nepal is not safe and damaged by earthquakes. Thus, the Nepal tourism board has been regularly inviting overseas journalists and other relevant personnel from travel and tourism to show Nepal as a safe and peaceful country. (Visit Nepal Tibet 2020.)

3.2.4 Revenue from tourism

Nepal has been taking advantage of the tourism business for many years. A research report by world travel and tourism 2018 states that Nepal's tourism sector generated revenue of NPR 240.7 billion and assisted 1.05 million jobs directly and indirectly. Also, Nepal's travels and tourism business contributed to 7.9 percent of its GDP, which was up from 3.6 percent. Thus, these data show that Nepal's tourism

business is enormous, and the country has many possibilities to benefit from its travel and tourism business. These statistics overcome on the amount of economic contribution by industries such as airlines, hotels, and commerce. Besides international tourists, domestic tourists also contributed to 56 percent of the total revenue of NPR 240.7 billion achieved by the tourism industry in 2018. (Nepali Sansar 2018.)

3.2.5 Tourism destinations

Nepal is a diverse country in many ways. It has plain Terai lands, the Himalayan region, and steep mountain rocky area. Culturally, there are various cultures people all over Nepal. They have their tradition, culture, religion, and living lifestyle. But everyone is so welcoming to tourists. This is because every Nepalese are keen to welcome and respect tourists no matter where they belong. Many travelers spend some time in Kathmandu visiting sacred and historic places and then move to other areas of Nepal. There are the best places to visit in Nepal other than Kathmandu. Chitwan National Park, Pokhara, Lumbini, Mount Everest, Annapurna Trekking area, Langtang National Park are the most visited places in the country. Chitwan national park is famous for wildlife seeing and jungle safari. Pokhara is a beautiful city in Nepal. (Planet Ware 2020.)

3.2.6 Role of social media in marketing

Every business sector, including tourism, has seen a rapid breakthrough in technologies. Service providers are pushing themselves in the market to deliver the best solutions with the best marketing strategies. At the same time, consumers habit is changing due to recent advancement in technologies. Social media is one of the technologies that are being tremendously important for the tourism industry. Social media contains many varieties of tools that make it possible for internet users to access, share and post media files and other information quickly on the web. Consumers have become even more knowledgeable in searching for the most convenient accommodation, and recent technologies have made it possible. Social networks like TripAdvisor, YouTube, and Twitter can share and give feedback that directly impacts the tourism business. Thus, the tourism business has become very challenging because of extensive ICT use. Destinations must maintain their brand for more visitors to come to their place and get benefits. (UKEssays 2017.)

3.3 SWOT analysis on the status of Nepal

SWOT analysis is a strategic drafting method devised to assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats associated with any project. In the context of Nepal, modern history of tourism begins after Tenzing Sherpa and Edmund Hillary climbed Mount Everest in 1953. Tourism development has been the core policy of the Nepalese government. Various political and rebel groups have agreed to boost the tourism industry in Nepal. Despite the financial crisis and global competition, Nepal still represents the enormous potential from the emerging global power countries like China and India as neighbors. Thus, this proves that community-based tourism is highly beneficial for the Nepalese tourism industry. The only way to promote local culture, tourism places are through the involvement of local bodies. Another reason that tourism is increasing in Nepal is that Nepalese belief of 'Guests are God'. They treat both domestic and foreign tourists as a form of God. The unique Nepalese people lifestyle, beautiful villages, sparkling mountains, magnificent waterfalls, thrilling and adventurous wildlife tour, diverse ethnic people living under social harmony, ancient religious places have contributed the tourism of Nepal to the next level. The government of Nepal is fully aware that tourism is an integral part of national development to decrease poverty, increase employment, and improve the national economy. (UK Essays 2017.)

TABLE 1. SWOT analysis on the status of tourism in Nepal.

Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birthplace of Lord Buddha • Second richest country in the water resource • Mount Everest lies in Nepal • Lowest valley in the world called Arun valley • living goddess in the world "Kumari". • Lake at the highest place in the world called Tilicho lake. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the decrease in poverty as tourism is under national policy • peace environment for building infrastructure • increasing hotels and motels to facilitate tourism • increasing international airport • economical emerging neighbor India and China • a huge possibility of developing adventure tourism in the mountains and rivers.

<p>Weakness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • only one international airport so far • landlocked country with no access to the sea • lack of good infrastructure • most of the cities are air polluted • health infrastructures are less 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pollution • political instabilities and strike • competition on the global market • security problems • global financial crisis

Table 1 show that health, water, roads, and safety are the primary factors that should be well maintained. Community-based tourism is the best tourism strategy for developing countries like Nepal. Promoting new tourist places and protecting cultural heritage sites are the essential tasks for Nepal. (Dangol 2009.)

3.4 The status of tourism in Finland

Tourism in Finland has continued to grow from the previous year 2018. Travel and Tourism industry is growing faster than ever due to globalization. This indicates that Finland has the potential to become the major travel destination country among Nordic countries. According to Business Finland, travel and tourism sector companies are focusing on steady growth-oriented work on global markets. (Business Finland 2019.)

Finland aims to gain sustainable growth in tourism destinations among Nordic countries. Growth in tourism is important for Finland to generate employment and well-being of its citizens. Finland's goal is to ease the sustainable growth and recreation of the tourism business. The tourism industry contributed to 2.6% of Finland's GDP and employed 123,500 people in 2017. Tourism business experts believe that this will reach 164,000 by 2028. (Business Finland 2019.)

3.4.1 Tourism destination in Finland

Finland contains varieties of tourist destinations. Mainly, there are two seasons with summer and winter. Summer season is full of lights, while winter is full of darkness and snow. However, tourists can take advantage of both seasons in Finland by exploring various places and doing activities. Helsinki is the capital of Finland. It is a modern city known for its design and high technology. It is a seaside city with great green parks and many exciting places. Tuomiokirkko is a cathedral which is one of the most visited places in Helsinki. In the suburb region of Helsinki, there is the fortress of Suomenlinna. Its just a short ferry ride away from the center of Helsinki. It has got different atmospheres for visitors to explore sites. Tourists can spend cheerful time there with friends or walking across diverse routes and locations on the island. (Visit Finland 2020.)

Another famous tourist destination in Finland is Porvoo. This town is the second oldest town in Finland, which dates to the middle ages. Porvoo has been a source of inspiration for many artists because of its unique traditional arts and charming streets. It's not a coastal city, but it is connected to the Gulf of Finland by the Porvoo river. The river is also the main attraction which passes through well-known landmarks: its red shore houses. People travel to visit Porvoo's cafes, restaurants, intimate interior design shops, and modern art shop. (Visit Finland 2020.)

Turku is both a combination of the medieval city and vibrant modern city. There is the riverfront, the market square, the castle, and the cathedral. It was a European Capital of culture in 2011. Tourists enjoy walking through medieval cobblestone streets along the Aura river. People enjoy eating and gathering at riverbank during the summer season. Also, there are cruises sail daily to travel the archipelago or Naantali. (Visit Finland 2020.)

Cottage life and sauna are different experiences for tourists. They are often lying in lakes. They are an essential constituent of the Finnish way of life. They provide a physical and mental gateway from the daily hustle. Various refreshing activities such as boating, canoeing, yard games, fishing, sauna are part of cottage life. There are 188 000 lakes in Finland. Lakes are present from the metropolitan area around Helsinki up to Inari in Lapland. The country's greatest lake is called Saimaa, which is in the eastern part of Finland. (Visit Finland 2020.)

Tampere is a large city in Finland with a population of around 200,000. The city's landscape lies on a narrow isthmus between Nasijarvi and Pyhajarvi. There are plenty of old industrial buildings, which

nowadays serve as restaurants, museums, and cinema halls. In addition to that, there is a Pyynikki ridge, the highest gravel ridge in the world. Visitors can see magnificent views over two lakes and beautiful housing in Pispala. (Visit Finland 2020.)

Lapland is also one of the most popular tourist destinations in Finland. It is geographically located in the northernmost part of Finland. During summertime, there is 24-hour sunlight, while winter days are light up by northern lights. Finland is the best place on earth to witness Northern lights. There are different seasons in Lapland. Winter season is an absolute wonderland, while the summer season is the majestic season for traveling to fall, national parks, and breath-taking sceneries. In addition to that, there are other exciting places to visit; Santa Claus, restaurants, reindeer in Rovaniemi. (Visit Finland 2020.)

3.4.2 Tourism governance and funding

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment is the decision-maker for tourism-related activity. It is responsible for drafting necessary legislation on tourism, manages international relations. Visit Finland is responsible for promoting tourism destinations in Finland, promoting Finnish travel companies in the global market, and growing Finnish high-quality travel products. These activities are closely monitored by an inter-ministerial group chaired by the Ministry of Economic affairs and employment. This committee also eases the efficient exchange of information on tourism and gives recommendations on tourism to respective decision-makers. They held meetings multiple times of the year and consists of the ministries of Transport and Communication, Environment, Agriculture, International affairs, and Education and culture. In addition to that, Business Finland, Visit Finland, and other several enterprises play a vital role in the maintenance of Finland's tourism environment and nature-based tourism. (OECD 2020.)

Business Finland Tourism Advisory Board consists of representatives from different branches of tourism. It eases the collaboration with the private sector, which accompanies the work of Visit Finland. Furthermore, private sector collaboration also happens regularly between the ministry and labor market organizations.

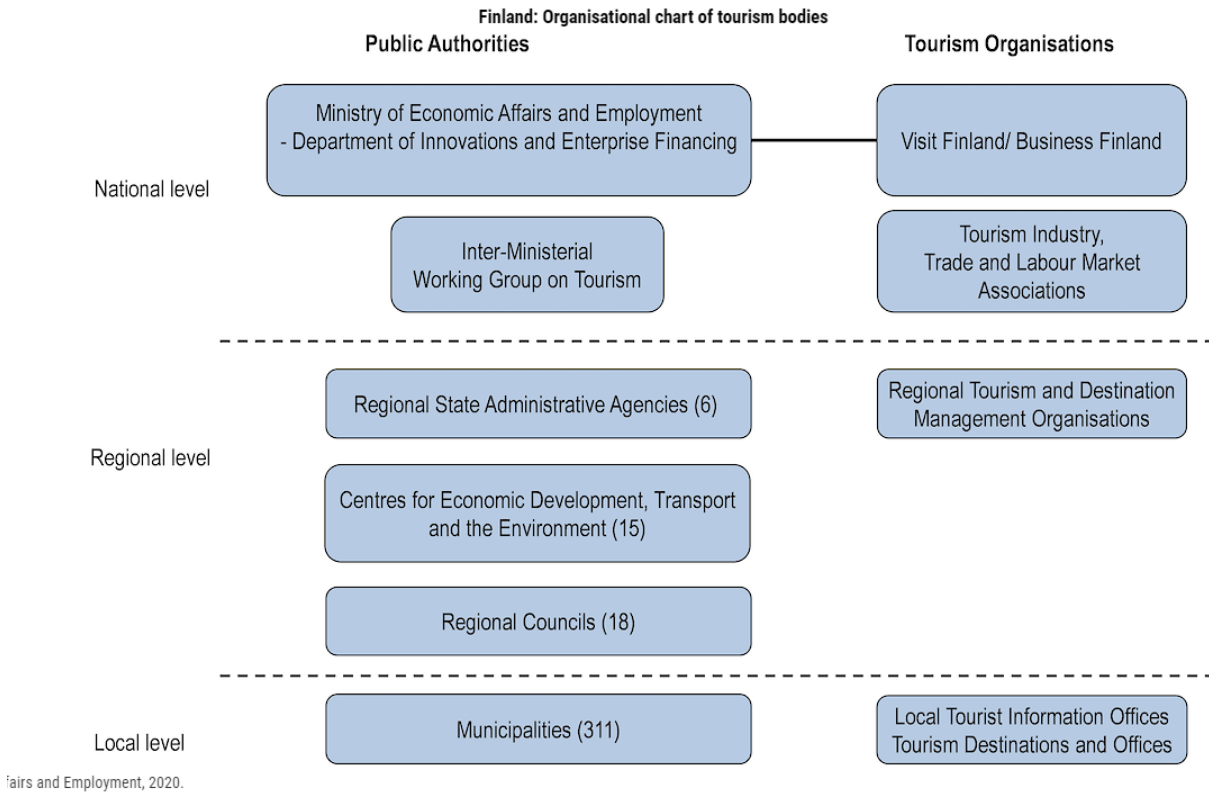


FIGURE 1. Finland's organizational chart of tourism bodies (OECD 2020).

At the regional level, to promote regional competitiveness, well-being, and sustainable development, the centers for economic development, transport, and the environment contribute financial, advisory, consulting, and training services to tourism businesses. In addition to that, regional councils offer support for uplifting tourism-related projects, marketing, advisory services, training, and research. Furthermore, there are 70 regional tourism development organizations with varieties of objectives, goals, and ownership framework. However, at the local level, tourism-related issues are managed by municipalities and local tourist information centers. In 2018, Finland's structural fund's programmer funded 25 million euros for tourism-related projects. (OECD 2020.)

3.4.3 Tourism policies and programs

In Finland, the tourism business has seen growth mainly because of key strength; digitalization, authenticity, security, and nature. However, due to price competitiveness in Nordic countries, Finland is no

different than others. In addition to that, High taxes and labor costs, difficulties in finding skilled workers are contributing factors for challenging the tourism business in Finland. (TEM 2020.)

According to the New Tourism Strategy 2019-28 and Action plan, Finland is ambitious to achieve together- Sustainable growth and renewal in Tourism. It aims to double the present tourism exports and become the most sustainable tourism destination country in the Nordic region. It has identified four key factors that promote growth in the tourism sector. They are supporting activities that encourage sustainable development, acknowledge to digital transformation, better convenience, and assure an operating environment that braces competitiveness. Collaboration with suited stakeholders also plays a leading role in enhancing the tourism business. A range of recent separate policies are proposed under the strategy. The Finnish Food Policy, Food 2030, constitutes an ambition to intensify food tourism. Several strategies such as the Arctic Region, the Baltic region sea strategy, the updated National Forest Strategy 2025, and the new Maritime policy guidelines are ongoing to protect the valuable natural environments and resources. However, the main goal of Finland's tourism is to flourish a new tourism market, such as nature tourism. (TEM 2020.)

The Finnish government knows tourism is important for the growth of Finland's economy. Government fund for tourism was increased by providing additional support for the Tourism 4.0 Action Programme for period 2018-19. This action leads to the implementation of national tourism strategy, growing investment in marketing, upgraded digitalization, and progress in elevating the sustainability of tourism businesses. Eventually, the principal goal was to create a sustainable travel destination in Finland. Finland launched a two-year program called Matkailudiili and pilot tourism employment projects in January 2018. The purpose of these programs was to fulfill the skilled worker's shortage in the tourism business. In addition to that, the Finnish tourism sector launched a roadmap for the digitalization in 2018 to become a smart, leading tourism destination country that brings value to the visitors during their time of stay. (TEM 2020)

3.4.4 Tourism statistics in Finland

Both domestic and international tourism has been growing in Finland over recent years. Tourist numbers are increasing fast except in this corona pandemic situation. There are mainly four tourism destinations that are unique worldwide: the Lapland, Helsinki region, the Finnish lake, and sauna, and the archipel-

ago. These are the places that attract many tourists every year. The world Tourism Organization (UN-WTO) estimated that international tourism would increase by 3-4 percent in Europe. More than 53% of foreign tourists came from the European Union, while 16% of tourists are from Asia. According to the European Travel Commission (ETC), it is estimated that Finland has the most significant potential for tourism growth in the near future. In 2019, the top five countries visiting Finland were the same as usual before. They were Russia (816,000), Germany (628,000), the United Kingdom (595,000), Sweden (560,000), and China (385,000). (Business Finland 2019.)

TABLE 2. The night spent by non-residents in 2018 (Business Finland 2018).

	Night spent, pc	Change in nights spent,%
Russia	816000	-0.7%
Germany	628000	+0.8%
United Kingdom	595000	+1.5%
Sweden	560000	-6.3%
China	385000	+6.3%
France	299000	+6.9%
United States	289000	7.4%
Netherlands	246000	+8.3%
Estonia	223000	+1.4%
Japan	216000	-9.5%

However, in the year 2020, international tourism numbers have sharply dropped due to COVID-19. According to Statista Research Department, 643 thousand international visitors arrived in Finland in between January and March. The numbers of foreign visitors were at the same level as usual in January and February. However, the number of visitors dropped sharply in March due to the outbreak of the COVID-19. As usual, the highest number of visitors were from Russia. (Business Finland 2019.)

TABLE 3. No. of international visitors in Finland between Jan and March 2020 (Statista 2020).

	2020 to date	January	February	March
Russia	100,518	61,710	26,732	12,076
Germany	59,474	17,892	28,147	13,435
United Kingdom	43,615	17,781	19,624	6,210
China	40,927	32,233	7,455	1,239
Sweden	37,437	15,541	15,112	6,784
France	36,998	13,347	16,682	6,969
Netherlands	28,779	10,790	13,130	4,859
United States	24,829	9,185	10,713	4,931

3.4.5 Revenue from tourism

According to the tourism satellite account (TSA), lately, tourism has become an essential part of the Finnish economy. Tourism has generated EUR 14 billion in revenue for several consecutive years. The revenue achieved from tourism increased to EUR 15 billion in 2017, and foreign tourists spent around EUR 4.6 billion in Finland. In addition to this, 140,200 people were directly employed in 2018. Indirectly, tourism also has multiplier effects on other sectors; construction, transport, and commerce.

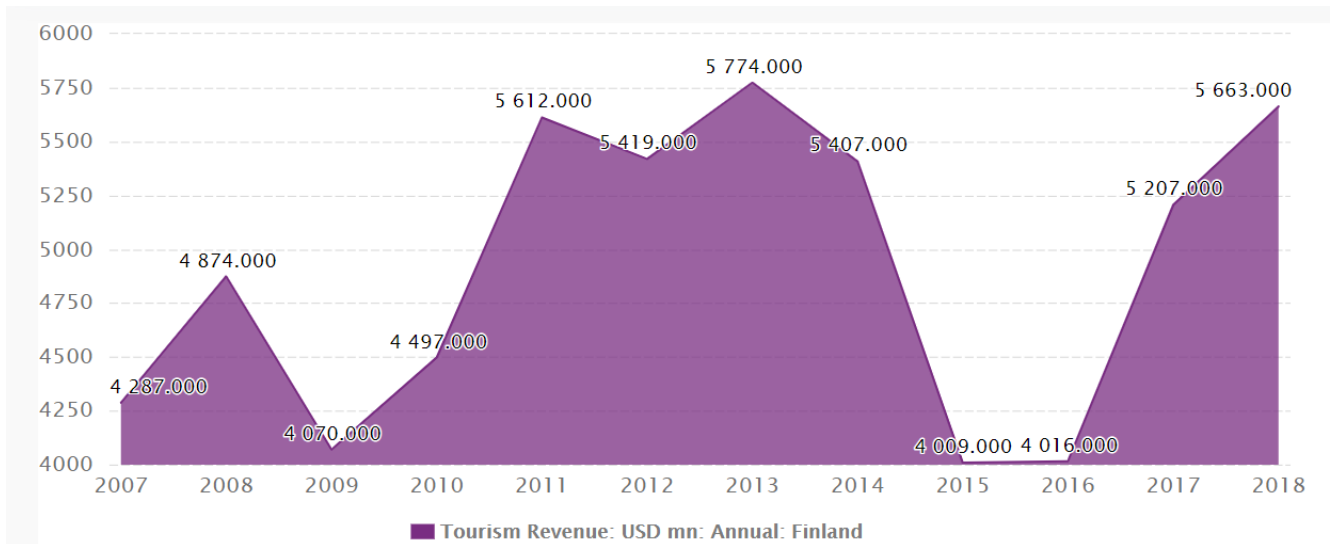


FIGURE 2. Finland Tourism Revenue (Finland tourism revenue).

From the above figure 2, the low period was in 2009 because of the world economic recession period. However, the quietest period was from 2015 to 2016, where the revenue was USD 4 billion. The highest period was in 2013, where the tourism sector recorded USD 5.7 billion. After the year 2016, the revenue of the tourism sector is growing continuously.

4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this methodology chapter, various methods and strategies will be implemented to answer the research questions, and the purpose will be discussed and analyzed. The research design used in this research is explained in this chapter, which is followed by the research strategy employed and the specific population in the research study. After that, the chapter explores the method of data collection, patterns, and handling of sampling of the gathered data. The author will try to explain each section on the methodology chapter selected for research purposes.

4.1 Research design

The research design has been combined with various research methods used in such a way to accomplish the purpose of the thesis. The research focused on supporting an analysis of the economic developments in the tourism and its impact on each countries. The research was intended to find out what Nepal must learn from Finland in the tourism business activities and developing infrastructures. For the research part, both quantitative data and qualitative data are needed. The research was intended to get an effective data in the real situation in the field to analyze the collected data efficiently.

In a quantitative research study, the aim was to find generalized knowledge about the motive of a phenomenon. A survey was conducted for the quantitative analysis of data. Survey research defines collecting data to a group of people by querying them and evaluating outcomes. Survey questions included the experiences of different social groups from Nepal and Finland. It was intended to find out what international tourists from both in Finland and Nepal have thoughts about overall tourism infrastructures, services, and destination places. In addition to that, the research questions also consisted of personal preferences and personality traits while visiting another country. The survey was done only once. Thus, the survey was cross-sectional studies. The target population of this survey was international tourists who visited Finland from Nepal and vice-versa. A questionnaire was distributed by mail or in-person to respondents and filled it out by themselves. The questions that the authors asked respondents were thoroughly examined and sent out to respondents. In qualitative research, authors aimed to get contextual real-world knowledge related to attitude, social system, and mutual beliefs of a distinct group of people.

4.2 Research strategies

During the research, it is necessary to have a research strategy to conduct research systematically. A research strategy is a continuous flow of action plan that directs thoughts and efforts for handling research methodically and on time to achieve a quality outcome by performing research. Thus, it helps researcher to stay focused, motivated, lower frustration, increase quality. In addition to that, it also saves time and resources. The research strategy is the ground base of application because it explains research and experiments that are needed to accomplish the desired objective. (Dinnen 2014.)

Various factors determine the research strategy to be used. The key elements are time allocated, the amount of knowledge on the specific subject, and ethical attention. The thesis has put forward four objectives. The first objective of the thesis was to set up the status of the tourism sector in Finland and Nepal. The second objective was to find and describe a key tourist destination in Finland and Nepal. The third objective was to analyze the contribution made by the tourism sector in both country's economies. The final goal was to identify the obstacle of blocking the development of tourism in Nepal. For addressing the four objectives of the research, the research strategy was drawn accordingly in the thesis. (Kratochwill 2013.)

There are mainly five types of research strategy: case study, qualitative interviews, quantitative survey, and action-oriented research. Most used for research strategies are case study, qualitative and quantitative, while action-oriented research is rarely in practice.

Case studies are based on studying an in-depth investigation of a single case. In the case of study research, data is collected from multiple sources through observations, surveys, interviews, and analysis of the report. Data can be qualitative or quantitative or mix of both while collecting data from various sources mentioned above. Mainly, the case study allows multiple aspects of the investigation of the problem.

Qualitative interviews are the most generally used method for collecting data. Structured, semi-structured, and unstructured are the categories of qualitative interviews for gathering data. An interview is a perfect way for more information. It requires comprehensive planning for a better strategy to carry out interviews. Planning is decisions about who to interview and how to conduct interviews, groups, or individual interviews, and analyze the collected information. Interviewees play a significant role in con-

ducting a better interview. They require a wide range of skills, social skills, listening skills, and communication skills. The unfortunate aspect of interviews is that they are time-consuming and likely to problems and biases, which need to be lessened during the designing strategy.

A qualitative survey is also a broadly used method in business research. Many participants are involved in this type of survey. The widespread use of the internet made it possible for the cheap distribution of surveys and the collection of responses. Although it's easy to make questions and give answers, it is difficult if a meaningful questionnaire is being used in the research. Questionnaires are supposed to be short, appealing to respondents, transparent, and uncomplicated. It is necessary to measure the issue with proper research. It is recommended to use questionnaires that are already available on the market and have passed validity. It is mandatory to decide the sample size under the survey and whether the questionnaires represent the whole target group.

Action-oriented research is business-related research with the end goal of making change. It consists of theory and practice, action, and reflection. Usually, this kind of research strategy is carried out inside organizations frequently. This happens because, for useful action-oriented research, active participants are needed to develop possession of the project. After finishing the data collection and analyzing them, participants are required to implement the change. However, this action-oriented research is not recommended and achievable in practice because of its complexity in data collection. (OpenLearn 2020.)

This thesis is informative because its objective is to give a conclusive explanation of the status of the tourism business sector in Finland and Nepal. Thus, the Qualitative survey method was chosen for the research strategy. It happened because of the availability of respondents both in Nepal and Finland. The research has used both structured and semi-structured queries in gathering data. The researcher finds out that by taking a survey to a representative of a population, the objective of the result can be met. Furthermore, the research can point out the differences between government input in the tourism status of both Finland and Nepal.

4.3 Study population

Research studies contain a sample of the population rather than whole populations. It is challenging for researchers to select a random sample from the target sample, which would be generalized. Due to this, bias occurs in some sampling of research. It is measured with the extent of prejudice, a lesser or greater

degree. Researchers should be aware of the population from where the sample has been taken. This is the ultimate evidence for generalizing sample results to the entire population.

The current research methodology is taking samples from a small population and generalizing the results to a larger population. It is mandatory to find necessary information about the population before conducting any research. Thus, the research questions must clarify the suitable definition of the population to be examined. It includes location, age group, sex, or occupation of the population. (Banerjee & Chaudhury 2010.)

The study population for this research comprised of tourists from different cities in Finland and Nepal. The sample population is appropriate for this research because it involves the people from the tourism sector in both Finland and Nepal.

4.4 Data collection using a questionnaire

In this thesis, questionnaires were sent to the respondents as a means of data collection. As mentioned in the first chapter, the main aim of the thesis was to analyze the status of tourism in Finland and Nepal in terms of economy, infrastructure, and policy. Tourism is a key source of income in Nepal. Thus, questions were designed in such a way that respondents will give their opinions about tourism recommendations to improve the tourism business in Finland and Nepal.

This type of data collection method is popular nowadays, mostly used by researchers, students, companies, and governments. It's an essential part of primary surveys. A questionnaire is a kind of instrument consisting of a variety of questions, together with the option of answers, typed in a form used for collecting information for a specific purpose. In this method, queries are sent to the persons involved requesting to answer them and return the questionnaire. The recipients are expected to read and understand the questions and give answers in the provided space below each item. It is beneficial for research purposes because it is low cost even when the studied population is widely expanded geographically. The results obtained by questionnaires are in their uniformity because all receive the same questions. It is also bias-free because the answers are solely dependent on the respondents' point of view. Thus, in this

thesis, a good questionnaire has been made and sent to a specific sample of the population. The questionnaire contains a well-written list of questions and interesting questions among respondents. It is short, but questions are presented broadly. The questionnaires were designed in such a way that it would give the desired result for further data analysis. The format of the questions were both restricted and unrestricted. (Aryal 2019.)

This survey is carried out from the 24th of June to the 19th of July in different tourist destinations in Nepal and Finland. The research was intended to reveal the international tourist's perspective in Nepal and Finland. To participate more tourists into the survey, questionnaires were designed to finish within 10 minutes. In this thesis, 146 questionnaires were distributed to respondents. Of the questionnaires, 132 were retrieved, recording a 90% return rate.

5 RESEARCH ANALYSIS

The research analysis is the process of reducing data to a story to derive insights from researchers. Similar patterns and summarization methods were used for data analysis and reduction. It is time-consuming and messy, but the data being brought after the analysis is vital for research purposes. Researchers are keen to find some exciting patterns in data to conclude that issue. It is necessary for the researcher to stay open, unbiased towards patterns, and results. For the research purpose, both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods were implemented.

Qualitative data contains words and descriptions. It is observable and subjective, yet harder to analyze in the research. In the survey, similar questions were asked to respondents: their nationality, main interests in selecting a destination, most challenging problems, and attractions in different countries. Data analysis and research in qualitative data are a little different than analyzing quantitative data. The reason is qualitative data contains words, descriptions, and objects. Thus, it requires an analytical research process to analyze complicated information. A common word based is the most widely used technique for research.

Quantitative data were also measured in this research. In the survey, the satisfaction rate of international tourists in both Nepal and Finland was measured. Visitors were asked to rate the overall tourism infrastructure in Nepal and Finland.

5.1 Data analysis on the questionnaire retrieved from Nepalese and Finnish tourists

The researcher analyzed the data retrieved from respondents currently living or visited Finland and Nepal. It was intended that the percentage of people supporting or objecting an item asserted in the questionnaire. Therefore, data were presented in tables and graphs to give the survey's clear information. There were different age ranges respondents were involved in the survey.

Respondents were asked to answer their primary interests in selecting a destination, 65% of them were interested in nature sightseeing tourism, 50% of them were interested in adventure tourism and both 35% of respondents were interested in history and culture.

80% of the respondents reported that they are concerned with language difficulties. 45% of the respondents said that they also look for the international tourist information center. 40% of tourists reported that they also keep an eye on the reliability of service providers in the respective country.

Based on the question of the most challenging problems that visitors faced while visiting Nepal, 65% of the visitors were concerned about the reliable tourist information center in Nepal. 60% of the respondents reported that security was the second most challenging problem for them.

Similar questions were asked from respondents regarding the tourist's most challenging conditions in Finland. 72.22% of the respondents pointed out the language problems. 50% reported that Finland is expensive, while 5.56% of the visitors revealed that issues of accommodation and security status in Finland.

The question of what are the things that attracted them to visit Nepal was included in the questionnaire. 84.21% of the respondents reported that they would like to explore the natural beauty in Nepal. 63.16% of the respondents were willing to go on adventure tourism in Nepal. 26.32% of the respondents were interested in exploring the geography of Nepal.

Based on the question of what are things that attracted them to visit Finland. 83.33% of the respondents were satisfied with the tourism infrastructure in Finland. 50% of the respondents reported that natural beauty is another reason to visit Finland, while 27.78% of the visitors said they visit Finland for recreational activities.

The question of whether the tourists were satisfied with tourism in Nepal. 80% of the respondents reported that they were satisfied with tourism in Nepal, while 83.33% of the respondents were satisfied by visiting Finland.

The question on the status of tourism infrastructure in Nepal was measured by weighted calculation. Respondents reported that they are very dissatisfied with the tourism infrastructure in Nepal by giving the highest 75 scores. Forty-three points were given for the very satisfying option by respondents. In Finland, the highest score with 79 respondents pointed out that they were very satisfied with the tourism infrastructure in Finland.

5.2 Comparative data analysis and discussion

This section contains the discussion and analysis of the statistical calculations retrieved from questionnaires. The objective of this part is to give a clear picture of data in visual form and explanatory form. This section analyzes the similarities and differences between tourism in Nepal and Finland.

5.2.1 Main interests in selecting destinations

In the following figure 3, tourists' main interests in selecting destinations is presented below.

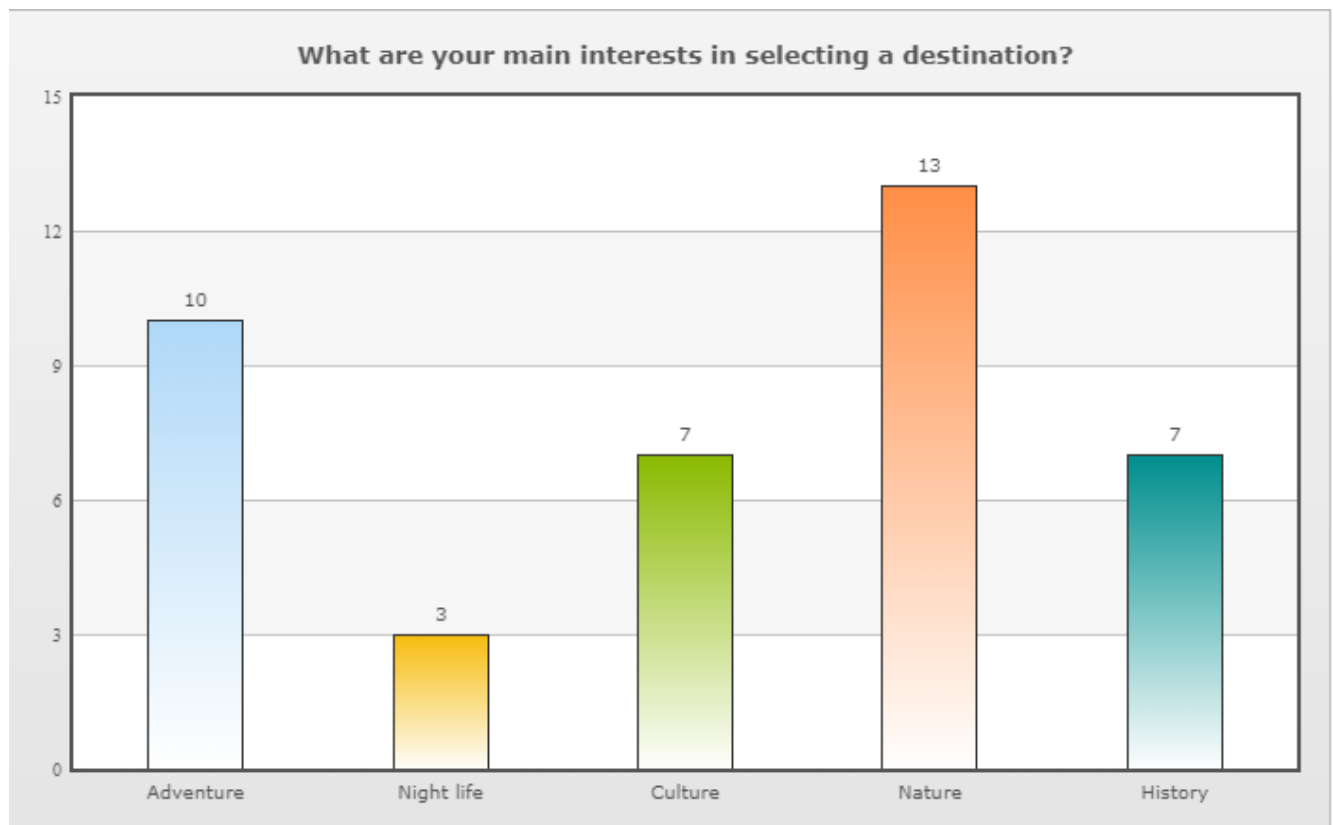


FIGURE 3. Tourists' interests in selecting destination.

It concludes that many tourists are interested in visiting natural places. Besides that, adventure tourism comes into the second position. Nepal and Finland both possess vast possibilities of growth in tourism

due to richness in natural resources. Thus, it is a fact that many tourists travel to Nepal for nature to explore and adventure tourism every year. (NTB 2020.)

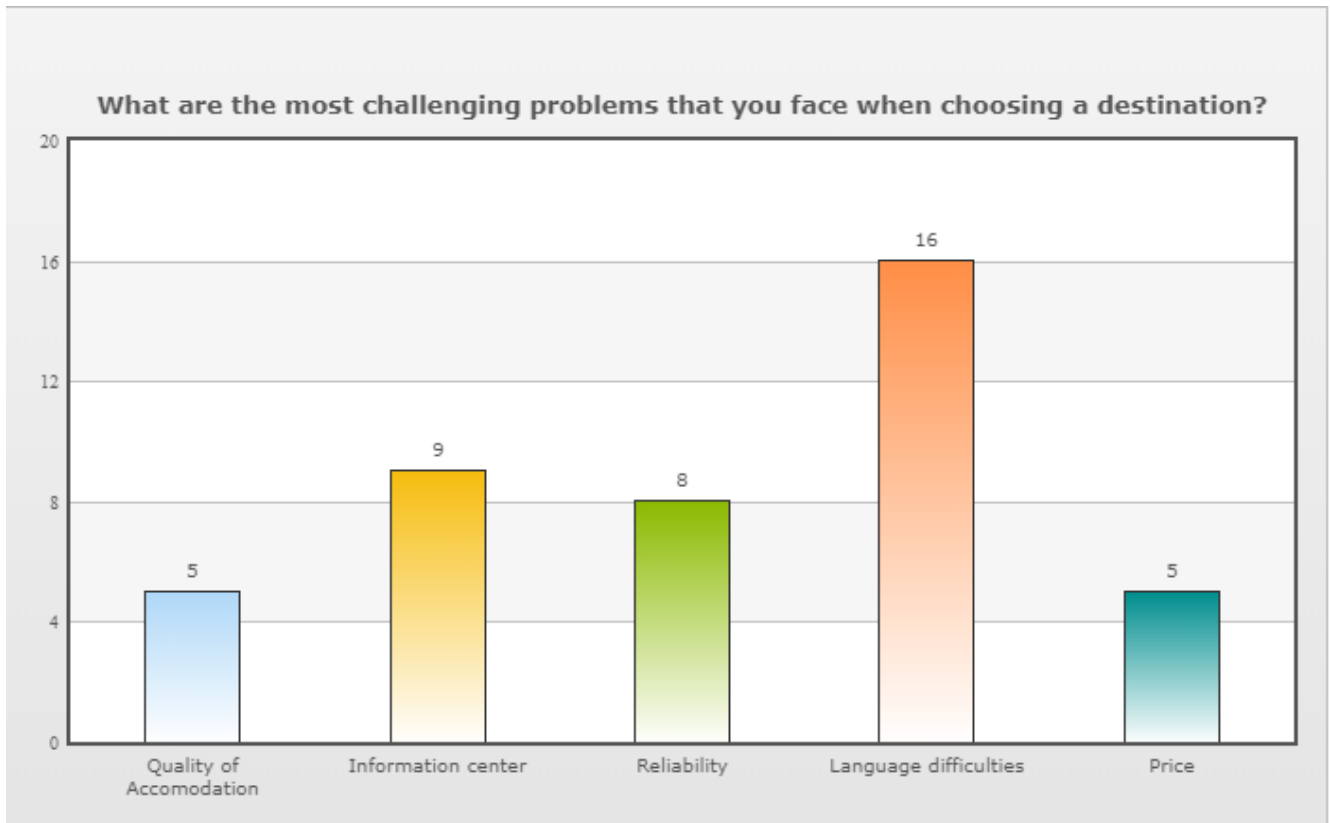


FIGURE 4. Tourists' problems while choosing a destination

In the above figure 4, tourists from both countries state that language problem was the main problem while choosing a travel destination. Every country has its official language. Thus, visitors are mindful of the language barrier. It, followed by the information center for international tourists, is the second thing travelers look for while visiting the country. Without information, it is challenging for tourists to know geography and make a travel plan. Reliability of information, the place is also an important thing to keep in mind for travelers.

5.2.2 Challenging problems while choosing Nepal

There are limited tourism information centers in Nepal. These tourism centers provide necessary information about places, maps, foreign exchange currency. (Pant & Bisht 2018.) Data received from the survey regarding the challenging problems in the tourism sector of Nepal is presented in figure 5.

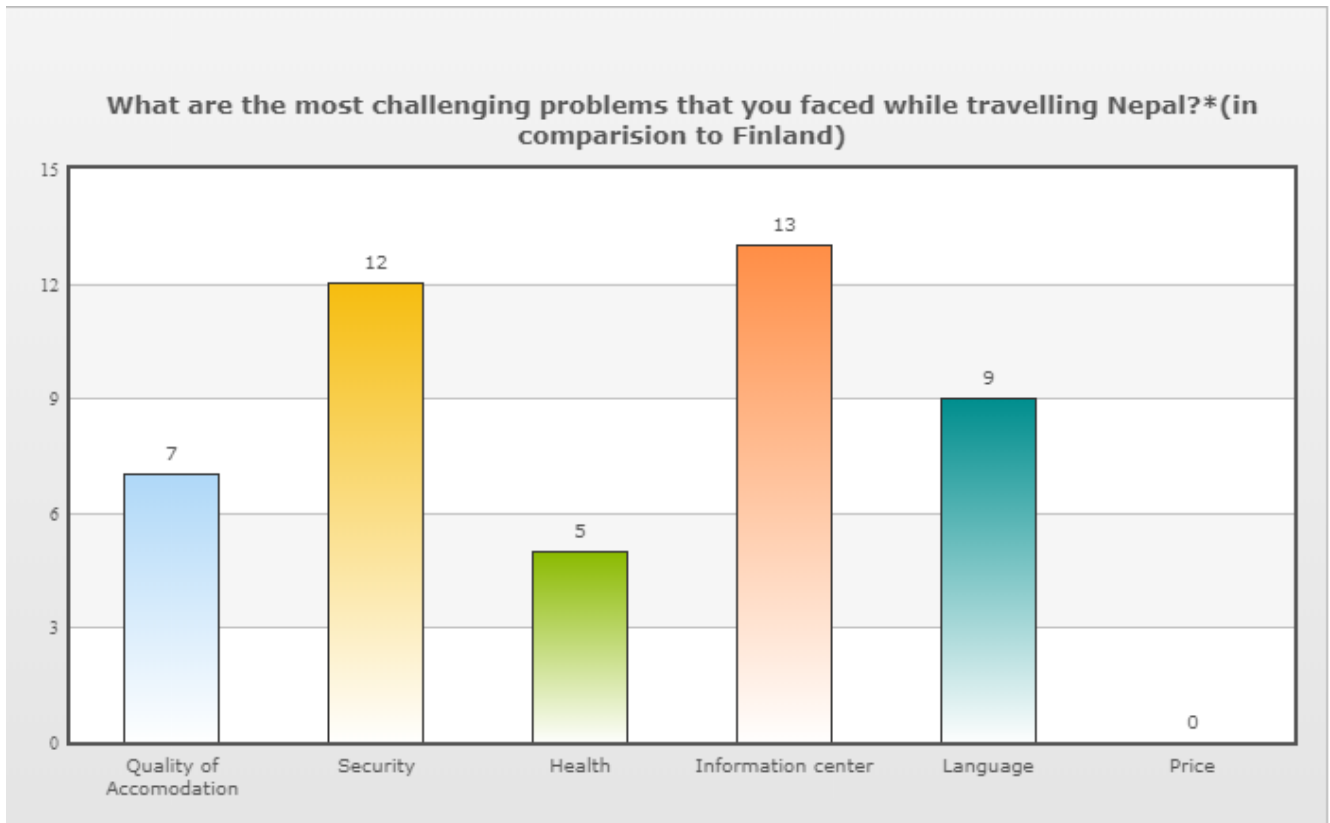


FIGURE 5. Challenging problems faced by tourists in Nepal.

Tourists from Finland faced problems with an information center, security, language barrier, and quality of accommodation compared to Nepal. Figure 5 proves that Nepal still lacks the information center resources, the safety of tourists in a remote area, and the quality of accommodation.

5.2.3 Challenging problems while choosing Finland

In comparison to Nepal, international tourists in Finland were concerned with language barriers. However, price comes under second-most problems faced by foreign tourists in Finland. Nepali tourists find that living costs are high in Finland than in comparison to Nepal. Furthermore, tourists are less concerned about the security and quality of accommodation in Finland, which are shown in figure 6.

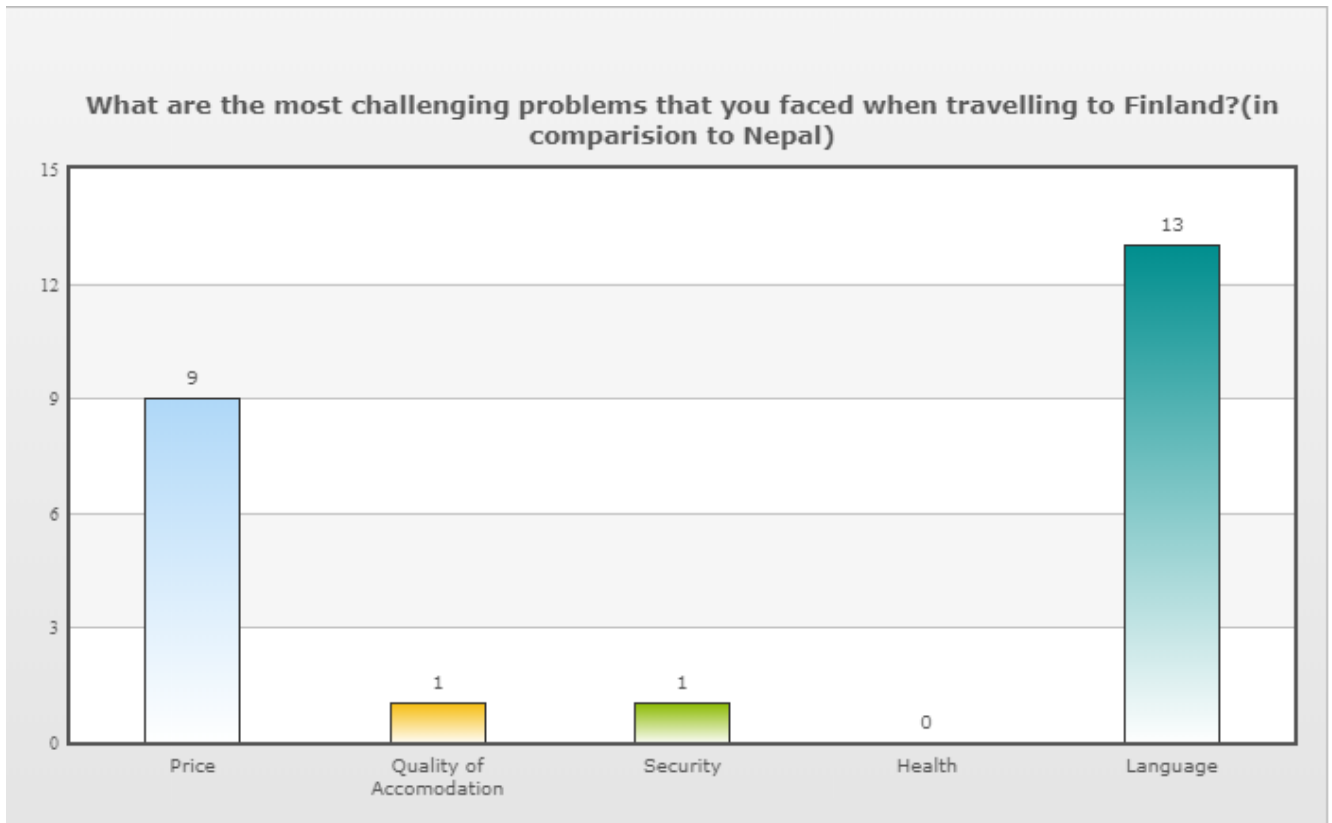


FIGURE 6. Challenging problems faced by tourists in Finland.

5.2.4 Things that attracted to visit Nepal

Nepal is a country with beautiful natural places to visit. It has mountains, Himalayas, plain land, lakes, and waterfalls. All these beauties attract many tourists from all over the world. It is famous for the world's highest mountains, the birthplace of Lord Buddha, and various traditions. To sum this up, Climatic variety, cultural variety, and biodiversity are common in Nepal. (Pant & Bisht 2018.) This is explained in figure 7 below.

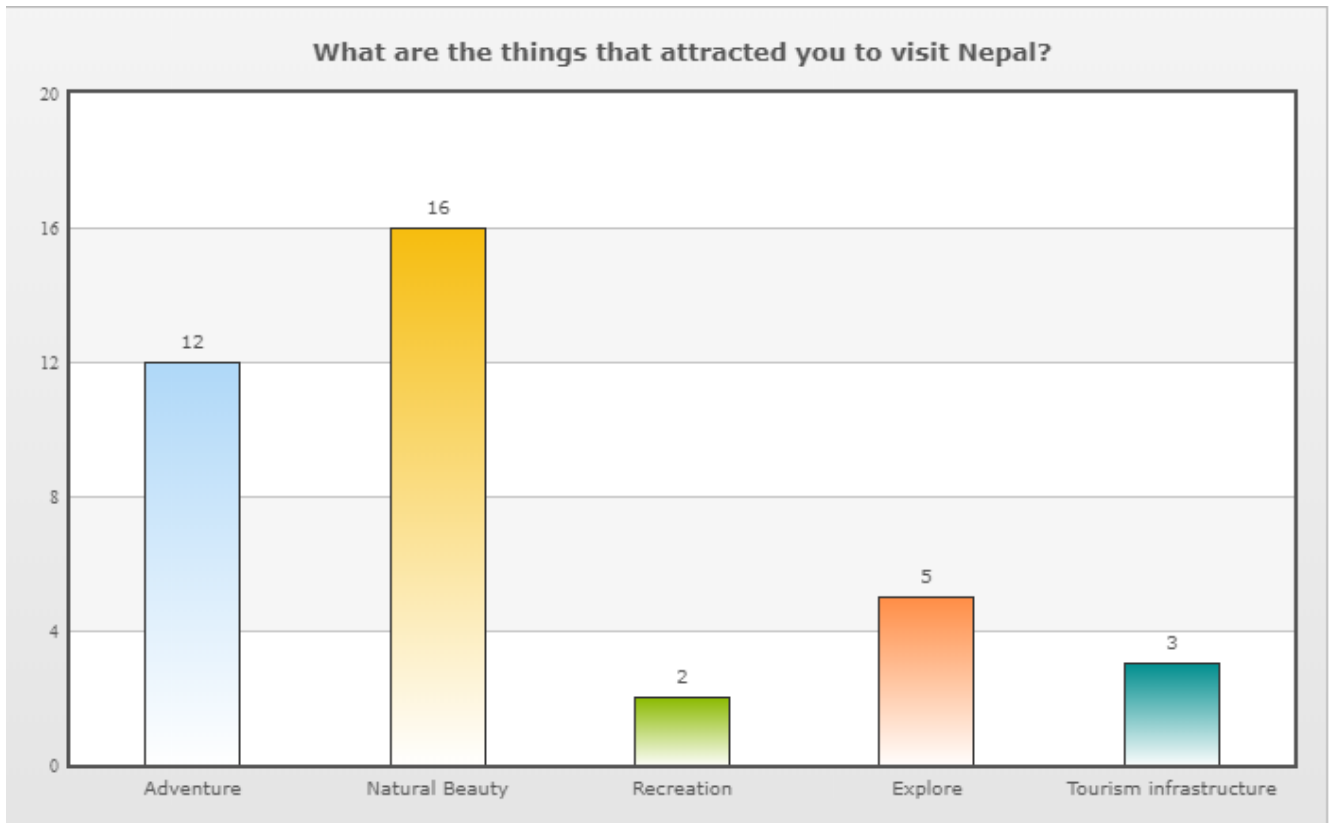


FIGURE 7. Things that attracted to visit Nepal.

5.2.5 Things that attracted to visit Finland

In the below figure 8, international tourists are highly satisfied with the tourism infrastructure in Finland. The growth in tourism is due to the Finnish government's effective policies and programs. Finland's key strengths: nature, security, cleanliness, authenticity, and sustainable development are contributing to tourism in Finland.

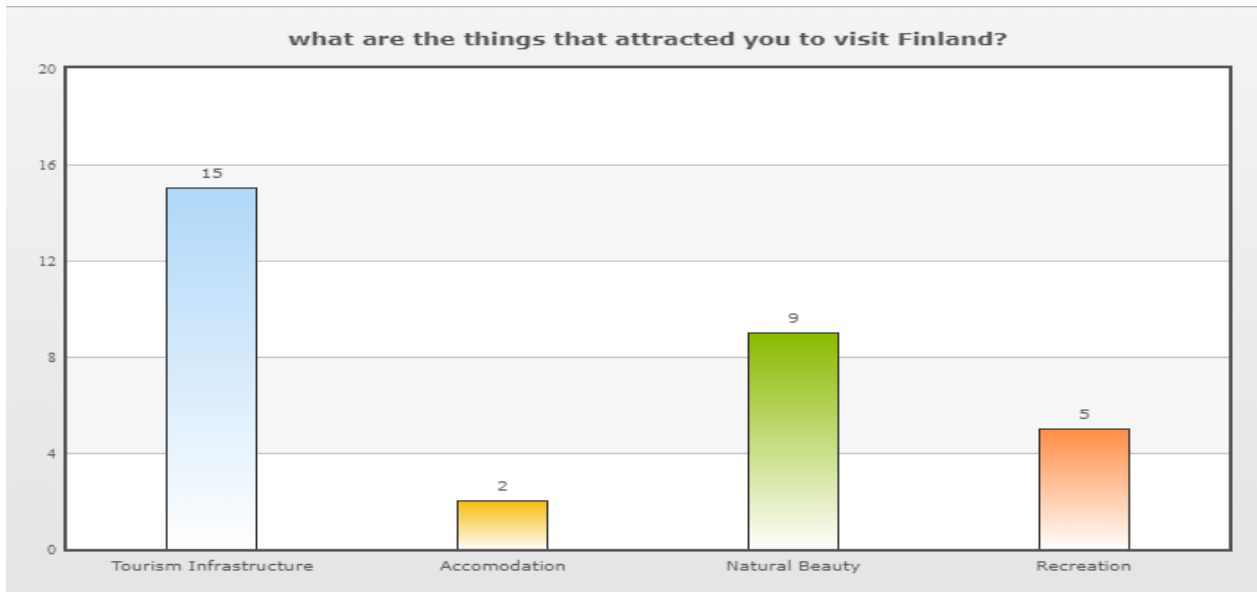


FIGURE 8. Things that attracted to visit Finland.

5.3 Findings

The research collected feedback from respondents to analyze the status of tourism and its business in Finland and Nepal. The comparative analysis of the state of tourism between Finland and Nepal revealed that there is room for a significant improvement in the tourism sector of Nepal. In comparison to Finland, the contribution of tourism business to the economy of Nepal is high. Although Nepal lacks development in infrastructure, Nepal has enormous potential to maximize its resources for economic development. The research pointed out the reasons preventing tourism development in Nepal. It includes the unavailability of independent bodies in charge of tourism, lack of co-operation between different tourism development organizations, less funding, and lack of long-term goals to improve the tourism sector.

Nepal needs to learn the tourism strategies employed by the tourism sector in Finland. It includes the hierarchical organization of bodies in charge of tourism, enhancing sustainable development. (OECD 2020.) Nepal tourism board and key stakeholders in the tourism industry need to adopt that well-planning, private sector contributions, human resource development, effective marketing and management, enhancement of tourist information center.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The research aimed to critically analyze the tourism sector in Nepal and Finland, as was mentioned in the introduction chapter. The objectives of the research were to examine the status of tourism, the possibilities of growth in the tourism industry, and the key tourist spots in Finland and Nepal. Also, the research got access to evaluate the contribution of tourism in Nepal and Finland's economy. Furthermore, the research finds out the barriers that prevented the growth of the tourism business in Nepal.

The research collected data by using the survey method. Only primary data were used in the data collection method. Questionnaires were sent to respondents who have visited once Finland and Nepal. Finnish tourists evaluated the status of tourism in comparison to their country. Similarly, Nepalese tourists assessed the status of tourism in Finland and gave suggestions to improve further.

Despite the low timeframe and small survey population, the objectives of this thesis were accomplished. The status of tourism, tourism contribution in economy, key tourism spots, potential tourism spots, and further improvements were identified. This was achieved by an analysis of the response from the survey and official tourism websites and international journals.

The research has exposed the current barriers to the growth of tourism in Nepal and provides solutions and recommendations for further improvements in the coming days. Sustainable development, effective planning, improvement in marketing, digital information, and tourism development infrastructure are the essential factors that need immediate action by the government of Nepal. Nepal is a country with the enormous potential of growth in tourism. However, lack of tourism centers, limited security, lack of quality health, accommodation, increased pollution, decade-long civil war, crowded population, political instability, and lack of qualified workforce are key factors impacting the growth of Nepal's tourism industry. The tourism industry plays a key role in the economic development of Nepal. Thus, we recommended that Nepal has enormous opportunities in the tourism industry by improving tourism infrastructure and learning from the Finnish tourism sector.

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Questionnaires asked to international tourists in Nepal and Finland

1. Nationality:

2. Where do you currently live (city, country)?

3. What are your main interests in selecting a destination? (select more than one)

A) Adventure

B) Night life

C) Culture

D) Nature

E) History

4. What are the most challenging problems that you face when choosing a destination? (select more than one)

A) Quality of Accommodation

B) Information center

C) Reliability

D) Language difficulties

E) Price

5. What are the most challenging problems that you faced while travelling Nepal? (in comparison to Finland) (select more than one)

A) Quality of Accommodation

B) Security

C) Health

- D) Information Center
 - E) Language
 - F) Price
6. What are the most challenging problems that you faced while traveling Finland? (in comparison to Finland) (select more than one)
- A) Price
 - B) Quality of Accommodation
 - C) Security
 - D) Health
 - E) Language
7. What are the things that attracted you to visit Nepal? (select more than one)
- A) Adventure

 - B) Natural beauty
 - C) Recreation
 - D) Explore
 - E) Tourism infrastructure
8. What are the things that attracted you to visit Finland? (select more than one)
- A) Tourism infrastructure
 - B) Accommodation
 - C) Natural beauty
 - D) Recreation
9. Are you satisfied visiting Nepal?
- A) Yes
 - B) No
10. Are you satisfied with visiting Finland?
- A) Yes
 - B) No

11. How do you rate the overall tourism infrastructure in Nepal?

- A) Very Dissatisfied
- B) Dissatisfied
- C) Neutral
- D) Satisfied
- E) Very satisfied

12. How do you rate the overall tourism infrastructure in Finland?

- A) Very Dissatisfied
- B) Dissatisfied
- C) Neutral
- D) Satisfied
- E) Very satisfied