

# Digital Marketing Approaches of Nepal

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Bachelor's Thesis  
Degree Programme in Tourism  
2018



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| <b>Report/thesis title</b><br>Digital Marketing Approaches of Nepal  | <b>Number of pages and appendix pages</b><br><b>59+ 5</b> |
| <p>Since, a Nepal country with a different cultures and ethnic groups has some prospective in the terms of future tourism so the main aim for choosing this topic is to make the concept of the cultural diversity more broad. Nepal is a country that is culturally highly diverse. From the Terai (Southern parts) to the world's highest peaks in the North, Nepal is home to a wide variety of ethnic groups, all speaking their own language and possessing their own cultural traditions.</p> <p>Nepal is popularly known to outside world in different aspects; home of gods and goddesses, the home of living goddesses, snowy peaks Himalayas, Yaks and yetis , Brave Ghurkhas, the birthplace of Gautam Buddha. The country has remained independent during its whole history and civilisation and also is being able to preserve its culture. A case study and content analysis was used as a research method to figure out how the culture of Nepal has been presented by the tourism companies on their web portal and to find out the growing trends in the cultural tourism and its preservation. The overall thesis reflects that how the culture can be taken as tourism product and overall the potentiality of tourism growth in Nepal with the preservation and promotion of culture.</p> <p>The main objective of the research was to analysis the roles of Nepal travel agencies in the promotion of culture and also to analyze the impact of e-tourism on travel agency operation for how they reflect the culture of the Nepal on their web-portal.</p> |   |
| <b>Keywords</b><br>Culture, Ethnicity Tourism, Prospect, Diversity   |   |

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# 1 Introduction

Nepal is a landlocked country that entered the modern era only after it was declared a democratic country in 1951 by His Late Majesty King Tribhuvan Bir Bikram Saha Dev .Nepal is a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-cultural nation. Different languages and cultures exist in Nepal, which have created a rich and unique national culture. Nepali national identity also depends upon this cultural and ethnic diversity. This diversity also known as unity in diversity need to further more strengthened for the aspect of tourism development through different awareness programs and the social medias like newspapers, social sites and many more others. More attention and efforts are needed to promote and develop the tourism taking all these languages and ethnic groups on the equal basis without violence. The laws of the land have clearly prohibited discrimination on the ground of language and ethnicity and guaranteed equal treatment to all languages and cultures. The government has shown its seriousness in ensuring that there is no discrimination on the ground of caste, color and cultures. The government has already announced a policy of providing primary education in the mother tongue of the different ethnic communities to promote and develop all national languages. For this, textbooks on different ethnic language are being written. (Endangered-languages 2018)

The government has been sensitive to ensure ethnic and gender balance in all sectors. Similarly, efforts are equally underway to preserve and promote all languages and cultures so that Nepal could be developed as a genuine nation of all cultures and languages. These are positive efforts that would certainly have a far-reaching impact for the equal development of all ethnic, lingual and cultural communities that exist in the country. Although the government is effortful, its efforts alone may not be sufficient. There should be equal efforts and contribution from all sectors for the preservation and promotion of this ethnic and cultural diversity so that the nation could make tourism as the main source of income like other countries in the world.

## 1.1 The aim of the study

The main aim of the study was to describe the diversity of the country and its aspects seen in the tourism marketing. The main motivation for writing the thesis is to find out the relation between the tourism and culture. The aim of the research is to explore how the tourism companies of Nepal have presented the culture in their web-portal. Nepal

has a very growing trend of tourism these days and among the forms of tourism cultural tourism is considered as one of the main aspects. The tourism industry is a very large industry and it tends to be growing every year. This industry includes many bodies which are involved directly and indirectly Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation, Nepal Tourism Board, Travel and Trekking Agencies , Hotels and Resorts are the main bodies involved in the tourism industry in Nepal. Among them hotels and travel agencies are the most active parts of the tourism bodies which plays an vital role in the preservation and marketing of the culture.

Since, Nepal is a country with 36 different castes and 4 ethnic groups and it could be one of the interesting topics for the tourist and the researches as well. On the other point it could be one of the plus point for the tourism industry and also the leading example for the tourism industry if the country could attract tourist maintaining all the norms and values of different cultures followed in the country.

## 2. CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

Globalization is only the word that allows people living together from different society and culture. Today many countries in the world are having mixtures of cultures, traditions, religions, ethnic groups, and many other identities by refugees, immigrants and other people who have moved from one country to other for various purposes like work , school etc. Therefore all this mixtures can be benefit to the countries and could affect along with the advantages.(McGuire 2002)

Globalization is the process by which businesses or any other organizations develop internationally or start operating on an international scale. The evolving globalization requires and enables that people having diverse cultures, beliefs and backgrounds interact each other more than before. These days, organizations need people from diverse backgrounds as their employees (or labors) in order to have their presence and influence on international market, and in order to have more creative ideas. (Mazur,2010).Globalization is the process of international integration arising from the different world views. Advance in transportation, technology, internet and telecommunications are some of the major sources for the reason of the globalization. The term globalization has been increasing since mid-1980's and especially more after 1990's.Along with the term globalization culture globalization has been increased in recent decades.(Mazur 2010)

Cultural globalization is manifested in sports, business, cuisine, religions and languages. For example, soccer, which is mainly on Britain from 19<sup>th</sup> century has now its roots to various countries of the world and has become the world's favorite game on big screens and local soccer fields which consequently denotes the understanding of rules for the game and cultural interconnections that the players, organizers and fan form with their common interest and values where everybody is respected in their own way and which directly or indirectly attracts the tourist flow. Such consciousness are heightened by events such as the World Cup and estimated 909.6 million viewers watched the final of the 2010 tournament, cheering for the players from Spain and the Netherlands in their own languages (Roland 2007, 258-259)

Another visible aspect of cultural globalization is the diffusion of certain cuisines such as American fast food chains. McDonald's is the world's largest global fast food service corporation with more than 34,000 chains serving approximately 69 million people in 119 countries each day. Big Macs are uniform in size and content in all countries,

and consumers are able to enjoy the same burgers and nuggets regardless of their locations. Consumers regardless of their nation or origin have developed a spreading taste for hamburgers through the different networks where they are constantly in contact with.(Mc Donald Corporation 2018)

## 2.1 Dimensions of diversity

All the people in the world are shaped by their own life experiences. Some could be influenced strongly by the community in which they grew up. And some could have some other motivational factors like education system, transportation, growing technology. The diverse world in which we live is a composed of many cultures, values and ways of interacting with one another.

Diversity simply means difference. Diversity can be defined as the uniqueness of all the individuals which includes different personal attributes and values. Diversity is a phenomenon create by a group member of people who's different social identities and characteristic living in the same society (Mazur 2006)

Loden and Rosener (1991) define two dimensions of diversity. The primary dimension of diversity has primary effect for the reflection of the people for e.g. Gender, ethnicity, race, sexual behavior, age and mental or physical abilities. The secondary dimension of diversity is less visible and has variable influences on personal identities for example educational background, geographic location, religion, mother language, family status, work style and experience, military experience, organization role and level, income and communication style And he said Primary dimensions are more visible than the secondary dimensions. According to Hillman (2004), for many years Christians have tried to deal and compromise with their faith at work. And now days there are many companies or organizations that deal with religion in their workplaces than ever before (Rollins 2007,3).

Table 1: Dimensions of diversity(Mazur 2006)

| Primary dimensions | Secondary dimensions | Tertiary dimensions |
|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------|



|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Race</li> <li>• Ethnicity</li> <li>• Gender</li> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Disability</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Religion</li> <li>• Culture</li> <li>• Sexual orientation</li> <li>• Thinking style</li> <li>• Geographic origin</li> <li>• Lifestyle</li> <li>• Family status</li> <li>• Economic status</li> <li>• Political influence</li> <li>• Work experience</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Language</li> <li>• Nationality</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beliefs</li> <li>• Assumptions</li> <li>• Perceptions</li> <li>• Attitudes</li> <li>• Feelings</li> <li>• Values</li> <li>• Norms</li> </ul> |
|--|---|---|

## 2.2 Defining culture

Many scholars have defined culture in various perspectives. Since culture can be seen from different views there are many definitions of cultures Oxford dictionary defines culture as the arts , ideas, customs and social behaviour of a particular people or society (Oxford Dictionary,2018) whereas, Cambridge English Dictionary defines culture as the way of life of people including the general customs and beliefs.(Cambridge English Dictionary 2018).

Richards( 1966,22) defines culture as the process which is “mainly the codes of conduct attached in a certain specific group”.So culture can be taken as the learning of life in terms of language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts from generation to generation. (Livescience,2012).In broader sense the culture can be defined as the cultural properties created and influenced by the social and historical features. So, from the definition it can be concluded that each nation or ethnic group creates its own cultural properties and values. Therefore, culture can be considered as the element that differentiates the people of the world from each other.(Livescience 2012)

Geert Hofstede, a Dutch researcher of culture, has defined culture as "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another". He also states that culture refers to the collective deposit of knowledge, values, beliefs, experiences, hierarchies, religions, roles, spiritual relations, and material objects and possessions obtained by the creation group of people which is transferred from generations to generations. (Hofstede 1997)

Hofstede conducted various detail interviews with many of the IBM Employees in 53 countries where he was able to determine the patterns of similarities and differences among the replies through the help of standard statistical analysis of large data sets. And from this data analysis he had figured out five dimensions of culture Hofstede published his research in 1990s, in publication Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind. Where he had initially developed only 4 dimensions of culture but later in 1991 he added the fifth dimension of culture.

His five dimensions of culture are the following

- Power-distance
- Collectivism vs. individualism
- Femininity vs. masculinity
- Uncertainty avoidance
- Long- vs. short-term orientation

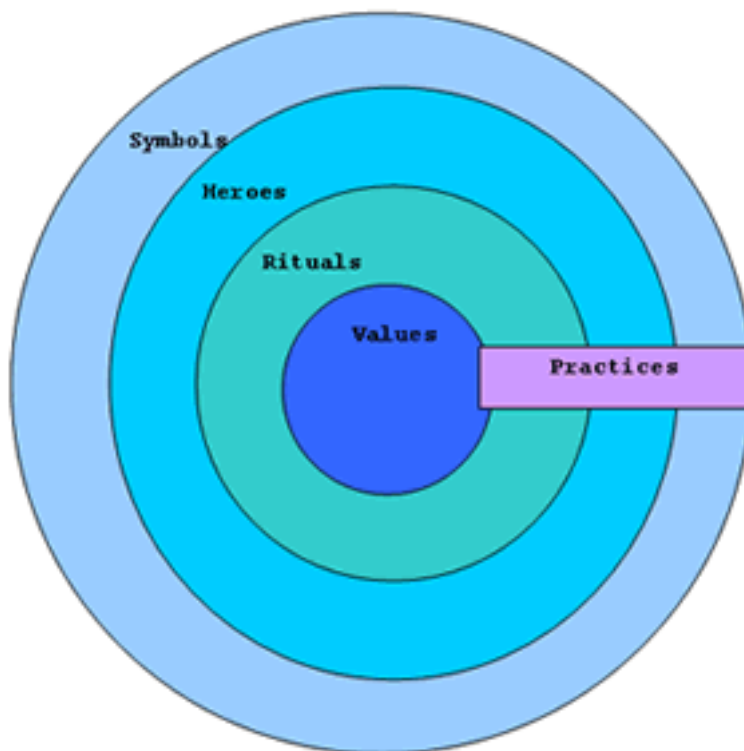


Figure 1: Manifestation of Culture at Different Levels of Depth (Hofstede 1997)

The different way to see culture is to take it as a product . According to Richards, If culture is taken as a product it is "regarded as the product of individual or group activities to which certain meanings are attached."(Richards 1966,22)

### **2.3 Culture as a tourism product**

In terms of marketing theory the term product is defined as something that can be offered to customers or in a market either for its use, for attention or other purposes that satisfies the needs or wants of the consumers. (Mckercher & Cros, 2002). Tourists have their own needs and demands to learn others culture and experience a unique form of tourism and cultural tourism can be taken as one of the products of tourism. Products involving knowledge, religion, art, custom, living habit, history, ledge and other cultural things can include in cultural tourism products. (Richards & Munsters 2010 )

Being able to provide a unique and memorable experience for travellers is very vital in the field of tourism industry. Tourists needs more choices of entertainment factors in tourism industry and cultural factors are consider as important factors that motivates the tourist. Travellers nowadays are more interested to be a part of the cultural tourism like visiting pilgrimages sites, monasteries, museums, also learning history of the culture.

There is a high degree of industrialization in the field of tourism but the arts and cultures do not have. There are increasingly more people who are dedicated to the career of culture and arts which in result will help to strengthened the impact of a local culture in a greater extent. Along with this the traditional arts and culture have a high demand in the tourism industry which is helping in improving the local economy. (Shepherd 2002, 185). However the influence on culture form tourism industry is not always positive. The growth of tourism industry can also lead to the negative effects in the cultural heritages if not regulated properly. Marketing of the cultural products in the tourism destination might have negative effects like destroying the uniqueness of the local life-style & residents lives and also makes an local culture more commercialized. People engaged in traditional and local jobs might gave up their former jobs and get involved in the tourism industry which results in the extinction of the local lifestyle and livelihood (Shepherd 2002, 190).

### **3. Cultural diversity (NEPAL)**

Nepal a society with a rich cultural diversity has an area of 55,000 square miles in rectangular shape with various ecological variations like Himalayan, Terai (plain area) and hilly area. People living in various ecological variations have their own different culture and traditions even its difference with the people living on the same ecological variation so the country is called as rich country in culture. Most of the Nepalese can be grouped in one ethnic or 2 ethnic group but there are different castes on the ethnic groups which creates variation. One of the social institution in Nepal that influence normal human life is religion too since Buddhism and Hinduism are two prominent religions in Nepal. Nepal is also called as a unique country in that an ideal harmony can be seen between Hinduism and Buddhism. Country with a flat plain land is most suitable to agriculture and mid hills with various forest and water resources and the mountain area with majestic mountains of the world which can attract thousands of tourists and mountaineer each year.(Nepal Tourism Board 2018)

#### **3.1 Culture**

The culture of Nepal is a combination of music, architecture, religion and literature. Mountain kingdom is multi-ethnic and multi-lingual with rich unique cultural groups like Tharu, Yadav, Ahir, Newars and others.(Countries and their cultures, Nepalese 2018)

First of all to know the understanding of national cultural diversity it is important to define culture. As culture cannot be defined in some prescribed words it has thousands of meaning as said by (Guirdham 2005). "Culture as the subjective perception of the human-made part of the environment" (Thomas 2008). Here this refers to the words associated with culture such as beliefs, attitudes, traditions, etc. As talked already above in in the introduction part, culture of Nepal dates back to thousands of years before forming a foundation of country named Nepal in Malla dynasty.

Before Nepal's unification as a nation in the 18th century name Nepal was only applicable to the Kathmandu valley now as the capital city of the country. So, until the unification of the whole nation Nepal's history is largely the history of Kathmandu valley .References to some of the holy books like Mahabarat the rule of several dynasties like Gopalas, Abhiras and Kiratas were ruling on Kathmandu valley but however no

actual historical evidence has been found for this saying. The real history of Nepal has begun with the holy temple of Hindu Changu Narayan temple inscription of King Manadeva I (464-505 A:D) of the Lichavi Dynasty. So, to better understand for the readers author going to generalize some general information on the dynasty of country before unification.

### **3.1.1 Lichhavi dynasty**

They are said to be migrated from northern part of India around 250 A.D. First kind of this history was Manadeva I. One of the king named Narendra Deval initiated friendly relations with China and his successors lead the friendship with the Indian royal families. The Lichhavi rule spanned over a period of about 630 years, the last ruler king was Jayakamadeva. The Lichhavi period is also called as the Golden Age in the history of Nepal because the Lichhavi kings brought art and architecture, culture and language. (Prakash 1997, 91)

### **3.1.2 Malla dynasty**

After dismissal of Lichhavi dynasty the Malla dynasty came into existence which developed the city called Kantipur now as Kathmandu valley. The early Malla started with Ari Malla in 12<sup>th</sup> century. And later after 2 centuries the principle of "Baisi" (22 state) and "Chaubisi" (24 state) came into existence and still the country Nepal is called as 22 and 24 state before unification. Jaysthiti Malla started the "Sanskritization" (Culture) of the valley with new methods of land measurement, allocation etc. Respectively his grandson ruled until almost the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century and after his demise the valley was divided into three independent valley kingdoms Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Patan. The last rulers were Jaya Prakash Malla, Tej Nurshing Malla and Ranjit Malla of Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur respectively. (Prakash 1997, 93)

### **3.1.3 Shah dynasty**

Prithvi Narayan Shah (1723-1775) first king of unified Nepal and ninth generation of Shah Dynasty moved to the modern era of the Nepal's history. Before unification he was the king of the state Gorkha (one of the state of 22 and 24 states). He was quite

aware of the political situation of the Kathmandu valley and thought the need of unification of the states and his first victory began with Nuwakot on 1744 which lies between Kathmandu and Gorkha. Then, he entered to valley and stopped the trade between Tibet and Kathmandu valley also the communication were also cut off. King Jaya Prakash Malla (king of Kathmandu valley ) sought the help for the British force but the British force were also defeated by the king Prithvi Narayan's shah army .And he captured the valley dramatically when the people of the Kathmandu valley were celebrating the national festival of the valley Indraajatra which is still celebrated once a year. The king of Kathmandu and Patan went to surrender in Bhaktapur which was respectively conquered by the respective king. Thus the Kathmandu valley was conquered by king Prithvi Narayan Shah and Kathmandu valley became the capital of modern Nepal since 1760. And this lead to the evolution of multi-dimensional country comprising with 22 and 24 states. from different ethnic, tribal and social groups. And the culture of the country today manifest in music and dance, art and craft, folklore and folktales, languages and literature, philosophy and religions ,festivals and celebrations, food and drinks which are described below.(Prakash 1997,95-97)

### **3.2 Diversity**

Topographically, Nepal is a country with a mixture of hills and geographically into mountains and Terai. Also is known for nature beauty with some of the world's highest majestic snowcapped mountains in the Himalayas.

Rich country in term of cultural heritage which represents a fusion of Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Mongolian influences, the result of long history before unification of the country. People believe unity in diversity and it is the Nepalese speciality.as talked above in chapter culture, there are various diversities of various ethnic, tribal and social groups inhabiting in various altitudes. Important symbol for the nation are the national flower and bird , the Rhododendron and the Danfe (Lophophorous), the flag and the crossed Khukuris ( curved knives). In Nationalistic level various forms of garland with hundreds of flowers are used to symbolize national unity and cultural diversity. There is no doubt that it is a multicultural , multiracial, multi linguistic and multi ethnic country since it has been home to diversified settlements in terms of ethnicity, religion and culture. Difference beliefs are in existence with the difference of the culture and are still living in peace and harmony under the shade of Nepalese sentiment. The concept of unity in diversity raised after the unification of country by king Prithvi Narayan Shah and also was accepted by the state and thus he put forward in his famous "dibya Upadesh" the

divine sermon as “Nepal Charjaat Chattis Barna ko Shajha Fulbari Ho, Sabai Lai Chetana Bhaya,” (Nepal is a home to four castes and 36 sub castes, may all be aware.) (My Holiday Nepal 2018).

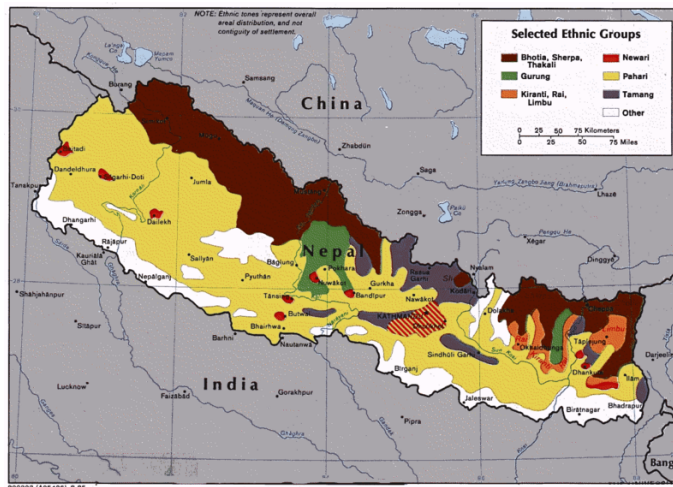


Figure 2: Map of Nepal ( Across Himalaya Tours and Treks, 2018)

Figure 2 above represents the map of Nepal which is divided into three different regions.

### 3.3 Languages (Linguistic Diversity)

The diversity of Nepal is matched by its cultural and linguistic diversity in an area of 147,181 square kilometers with a length of 885 km from east to west and a mean breadth of 193 km from north to south. Inhabiting these different climatic and ecological zones are 100 officially recognized caste and ethnic groups who speak around 92 languages officially recognized by the state( Yadava & Turin 2007,58)

Linguistic diversity is a way of representing the languages operated in the world which can be closely related to cultural diversity. Most of the languages serve as a symbol of their own ethnic identity and each of the community wants to preserve and promote their own languages.(Yadava & Turin 2007,6)

Nepal even being a multilingual nation a single language has been given power and prestige for the recognition of the country but there are numerous languages spoken in the country by the specific ethnic groups. According to the latest census of 2010, 92 spoken languages have been found in the country. Below the table shows the brief information about the first ten languages spoken in Nepal.

Table 2: Languages in Nepal (Endangered languages 2018)

|          |          |       |
|----------|----------|-------|
| Nepali   | 11053255 | 48.61 |
| Maithili | 2797582  | 12.30 |
| Bhojpuri | 1712536  | 7.53  |
| Tharu    | 1331546  | 5.86  |
| Tamang   | 1179145  | 5.19  |
| Newar    | 825458   | 3.63  |
| Magar    | 770116   | 3.39  |
| Awadi    | 560744   | 2.47  |
| Bantawa  | 371056   | 1.63  |
| Gurung   | 338925   | 1.49  |

Most of the indigenous languages spoken in Nepal are still confined to their oral traditions. Each of them has a rich oral heritage of traditional folk stories and songs handed down from various generations. However, these verbal legends are disappearing day by day with the growth of literacy and with increased language shift. It is therefore time to document these spoken forms before they are lost from their original values. Such as the language JHANGAR; A single language of Dravidian language spoken in Nepal is called Jhangar in the region east of Koshi river and Dhangar in the region west of Koshi river. It constitutes the northernmost part of Dravidian family of languages. It is said to be a regional variant of Kurux spoken in Jharkhand State of India though it shows divergence in its vocabulary and grammar (Gordon, 1976, Yadava, 2002). According to the 2001 census, it is spoken by 28,615, i.e. 0.13% of the total population of the country. Its speakers have been reported to be 4832 (1952/54), 9140 (1961), and 15175 (1991). But it was not listed in the 1971 and 1981 censuses posteriorly (Yadava & Turin 2007,9).

Most of the indigenous languages spoken in Nepal are still confined to their oral traditions. Only a few of Nepal's indigenous languages have literate form of traditions some of them include Tibetan, Newar, Limbu and Lepche. These above mentioned languages have long traditions of literature through orally or written & have employed various writing systems or scripts. It is believed that the Tibetan script was developed from Brahmin script which was used for writing Sanskrit in the mid-seventh century. (The Many Languages Of Nepal. 2013)

Newar ( Nepal Bahsa) another Tibetan-Burman language with an ancient tradition. It was used in the most of the documents written in the Kathmandu valley. These scripts were introduced in the 7<sup>th</sup> century and continued to be use until the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Now, with the passage of the time the script underwent changes and written in



the Devangari script for the sake of the convenience in reading, writing, and printing (Turin 2007,5).

However, recently various initiatives have been taken by various languages communities to develop writing systems appropriate to the sound system of their languages which could be practical and acceptable to the Nepalese society. For e.g. Tharu, Tamang, Gurung, Rajbanshi and some communities of Rai people.

## 4 Society and culture

Nepal is well known to the world for its high mountains and brave people, the Gorkhas. A country with the 7 highest mountains in the world among the top ten mountains must be familiar to the whole world along with its cultural diversity and different ethnic groups. Nepal itself is an ancient civilization and so with its society and culture. Though religion has always been a central feature of Nepali life, in fact we never encountered any religious fanaticism in Nepal (Bista 1994). On the other hand, Nepal celebrates colorful festivals, observes various rituals and respect and follow diverse religious traditions. As, author already mentioned a Nepal itself is an ancient civilization and the following are the strong examples for the proof of this ancient civilization. (Endangered languages 2012)

According to geographical settings Nepal is divided into three different layers which are Himalayan region, Mid-hills and Terai region (flat land). The legendary Sherpa's who are renowned for climbing Mt. Everest belong from the Himalayan region. (Naturally Nepal, 2018) One of the first mountaineers among (two) to climb Mt. Everest was from this Himalayan region who is Tenzing Norgay Sherpa. The people from this region follow the Tibetan Buddhism. People in the Himalayan region are mostly Buddhists whose main festivals are Lhosar and Buddha Purnima. (Naturally Nepal 2018)

The mid hills of Nepal is populated by different tribes like Rai, Magar, Limbu, Gurung, Tamang, Chettris, Brahmins, Newars etc. The interesting fact is before the unification of the modern Nepal Magar, Rai, Limbu, Tamang had their own independent countries and their own culture. They still have their own culture, their own way of practicing the religion, language, cuisine, music and dance. The groups of Rai, Gurung, Magar are also very popular in the world as a Gurkha soldier. British government and Indian Government still recruit the Gurkha soldier (Naturally Nepal 2018).

Tharu tribes and Madhesis lives in Terai. They have very different culture and lifestyle even though their social life is influenced by Aryan culture and Hindu religion. Terai region being very hot part of the country people wear thin light cotton clothes but still work hard throughout the whole day.

## 4.1 Nepalese dance and music

Culture a very pride and soul of the nation which sounds just like a mirror and reflects the beauty and life style or pattern of the people. It always plays a crucial role to promote harmonious relationship between various ethnic and social groups in a multicultural country like Nepal but in side also promotes the relationship from country to country .Some of the dances that influences the culture of the country and which attracts thousands of tourist per year are described below shortly.(itouristibet 2018).

- Arati Dance: Dance which is dedicated to Nataraj (a form of Lord Shiva) where the light are put off and dancer comes with candle light in their hand.
- Bajrayogini Dance: Ancient classical dance of Nepal based on the tantric Buddhism in the temple of Goddess Bajrayogoni (Hindu Temple) which is situated about three km far from Kathmandu.
- Bhairabkali Dance: A classical dance of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati (wife of Lord Shiva) which shows the destructive mood of Goddess Kali and lord Shiva who saved the world by lying down on the path of Kali.
- Chanchar Dance: Popular dance in Tharu community (one of the caste) in western region of Nepal.
- Chutka Dance: Performed on the different festivals of eastern region of Nepal in a pair of boys and girls.
- Chyabrung Dance: performed on the different festivals of western part of Nepal in a pair of boys and girls
- Dhimey Dance: Typical dance of Jhyapu community (one of the caste under ethnic group Newar) which is performed after the good harvest of foods once in a year.
- Drum Solo: Here an expert plays ten to twelve drums at a time in a typical manner way.
- Horiya Dance: Popular dance in southern part of Nepal performed in Holy (a festival of colors and joy) observed in Feb\March especially by the Tharu community people.
- Jhankri Dance (witch Doctor): An Ancient form of dance when there were no medical facilities in the country. The sick people used to be taken to the witch doctor to get cured and there he performs his dance to make the sick patients cure. Also can be called as one of the spirituals beliefs from the ancient holy books. Even nowadays especially on the remote part of the country is still in existence.

- **Khukuri Dance:** A national weapon (Khukuri) of country is used and showed to common people how to kill the enemies in the battle field. Even the Nepalese people are called as brave Gurkhas when they defeated the British armed force as mentioned above in dynasty chapter and were using the weapons only when the British arm force has modern guns and technology that time. One form of showing bravery through the form of Dance.
- **Lakhe Dance:** Traditional mask dance of Newar community in Kathmandu performed on festival Indraajatra.
- **Manjushree Dance:** Once upon a time Kathmandu valley was supposed to be a big lake and the God Manjushree open up the southern side of the valley so the water could follow up and the habitats can be formed. So, for that this dance is especially dedicated to God Manjushree and performed by Buddhist priests.
- **Peacock Dance:** Peacock one of the holy birds of Nepal gets thrilled with the sound of thunder and it starts to dance. So, in this dance the artist tries to copy the same in her own manner. But if the one is lucky can see her real dance in national parks and conservations areas of Nepal.  
( Bijay Ghimire, august 6 2012).

## 4.2 Food and Drink

The most common food of Nepal is dal bhat tarkari –bhat (rice) with a soup made of dal (lentils) pored over to along with a side of potato or vegetable curry. Optional extras include many varieties like acchar (Pickles), fresh chillies, and on a good day a pappad (A type of Nepali bread) Dal bhat is taken twice a day by every Nepalese but it can be quite boring or a bit monotonous twice a day but in general it's healthy, nutritious, and always slightly different. It may sound quite strange for most of the people while listening most Nepali eat their food with their hands. They use only the right hands for eating and will expect the same for you to do the same if you visit Nepal. If you eat with your hands manner shows like washing the hand before eating and after eating and there is a jug of water available in the restaurants or water taps nearby .However it does not mean that all Nepalese eat the foods with hands but only the Nepali national food as mentioned above is only eaten by the hands since it feels quite comfortable with the hands and also the symbol of the cultural adaption and showing at least some respect to the ancient bravery who discovered Nepal and all these national boutiques including food items.(Culture trip 2018)

## **5 Festivals and celebrations**

Due to the existence of various cultures and ethnic groups several of the festivals last from one day to several days. Here follows a brief description of some of the main Nepalese festivals.

### **5.1 Dashain**

It is the longest and the most important festival of Nepal. Generally Dashain falls in late September to mid October, right after the end of the monsoon season in Nepal. It is "a day of Victory over Demons". Dashain is one of the most important festivals for all the Nepalese and it is celebrated with much joy throughout the country. The first day of Dashain is known as Ghatasthapana. On this day, a holy water vessel representing Durga is established and oat seed is sown for its seedlings to be used as "Jamara" (a type of grass grown without the sunlight on the starting first day of festival) on the 10th day. On the eighth day, known as the Kalratri, animal sacrifices are done at Durga temples. Countless buffalo, sheep and goats are sacrificed, which also represent the demon. In the ninth day people go to worship to the temple of goddess known as kali bhagwati to get blessing from her. And on the tenth day people receive the "tika" (a type of color made from the grains of rice with the mixture of red color) from their seniors especially from the close relatives and get blessing from them and pass the time with the family members and the relatives with different cultural programs. Also the reason for putting the red color in the "tika" represents the victory over the demons in the Nepali society. (Shrestha & Singh 1992,21)

### **5.2 Tihar**

Tihar is another important festival of Nepal. Tihar is specially celebrated for the blessing of brothers by their sisters and in return brothers give gifts to their sisters. Tihar is celebrated for five days. Worship of crows, dogs, oxen, cow, the goddess of wealth and the brothers takes place during this period. The third day is one of the important days. Twinkling oil lamps or diyo (a typical Nepali word) light up every home and fire-works are common all across the country. Sometimes bad accidents happen too due to lots of fire works but since few years fireworks have been almost banned by the government but are nevertheless visible in some places. The goddess Lakshmi (con-

sort of Vishnu), who is the symbol of wealth and prosperity, is worshipped on the third day. Fireworks cover the sky and people pray for prosperity. On this third day, people in the groups visit their neighbors in the evening, sing and give blessings to the visited. The playing of songs is known as Bhailo Khelne. In the evening, the goddess of wealth is worshipped. In every house, usually the woman head of the household puts all ornaments (jewelry) and a new bundle of currency in front of the goddess and all worships together. All the pathways are cleaned and lights and doors are kept open, hoping that the goddess of wealth will visit the home and bless it with lot of wealth. Among the Newer community, (a social ethnic group of the Nepali society) the fourth day of Tihar has a special significance. On this special day, all the family members sit together, wear clean clothes and worship themselves. This is known as Ma Puja, meaning worshipping of oneself. The fifth and last day is known as Bhai Tika. "Bhai" in Nepali stands for "brother." On this day, all sisters worship their brothers and brothers and sisters bless each other. The brothers offer gifts to their sisters. Tihar is also called Panchak Yama. Yama is the god of death. According to one of the Hindu legends, a queen had brought back the life of her king by worshipping Yama. (Shrestha & Singh 1992, 23-24)

Similarly, sisters on that day while worshipping make their brothers sit together and make a boundary line of oil with special small cuts of grass. There is a belief that no one, even death, can cross the boundary line and thus the sisters guard the life of their brothers.

Especially these two festivals have a great social significance, too. Family reunion is an important part of this festival. Children and adults wear new and fancy clothes on this occasion. They enjoy good food, too. Government offices are closed for 10 days and most of the schools and universities are closed for 15 days. Employees get one-month salary as a bonus to celebrate this festival. (Festivals of Nepal 2018)

Other important festivals include Buddha Jayanti (the celebration of the birth of Buddha); Maha Shivaratri, a festival of Lord Shiva, and during Maha Shivaratri festivities, some people consume excessive drinks and smoke chares (a type of product made from weed plant) Sherpa mostly located at higher altitudes and in the Everest region, celebrate Mani Rimdu, for the good of the world. Most festivals include dancing and music and eating all kinds of local delicacies. A variety of foods is consumed during festivals and on special occasions. If one has to taste Nepali food, Newa cuisine is a must have (a festive meal, like one served during a marriage, is a real treat, and include vegetarian as well as non-vegetarian dishes). (Festivals of Nepal 2018).

As, already mentioned Nepal is a country with a different ethnic groups and caste systems and does not celebrates only these two main festival on the side they also celebrate lots of other festivals which will be discussed next.

### **5.3 Teej**

The women's especially celebrate this for the prosperity of their husbands and those not married worship for the lord Shiva to get a better husband. (Festivals of Nepal 2018 )

### **5.4 Maha Shivaratri**

The other festival is celebrated generally in the month of February/March. : Devotees of Shiva fast during the day and maintain a long vigil during the night and also the women specially the devotes of the woman pray for him to get the better husband like him and lord Shiva is specially the god of lord mountains who most of the time used to smoke weed and the main reason they belief on him is he was one of the destroyers of the demons. People specially the boys go to the temples from the early morning and make themselves a enjoyable moment with their friends smoking the weed whole day and the most interesting thing is that it is illegal in the country and even the government can't take any steps to punish the people smoking weed during this day but they should not be involved to the criminal activities nor disturb the society. (Festivals of Nepal 2018)

### **5.5 Holi or Fagu (Festival of Colors)**

Fagu, also known as Holy, is celebrated on the day after the full moon in early March every year. There are different legends for celebrating this festival but the main legend we is that: this festival is derived from the demons Holika who was the sister of the demon called Hiranyakashyap especially a demon king. It is claimed that he have defeated the gods and goddess and tried to spread the monarchy system over the whole universe. But finally he was killed by the demonstration of the lord Vishnu by burning

him into the red hot fire. Thus Holy is celebrated to mark the burning of the evil Holika. and the main way of celebrating this festivals is by putting the various kinds of colors in their body and roaming around the city and in this day all of the governmental offices, schools and universities are closed but these days some of the criminal activities are being progressed by the third party people who are involved in the criminal activities in the name of the festival.(Festivals of Nepal 2018)

### **5.6 Id-UI-Fitr (Ramadan Id)**

This festival is celebrated coming in the new moon day , this festival marks the end of Ramazan, the ninth month of the Muslim year, and is celebrated in April/May. It was during this month that the holy Koran was revealed. Nepali Muslims keep a fast every day during this month and they do not eat anything for the whole day even without drinking water and they go near by the holy river or the mosques and pray for the god of the Muslims and by the appearance of the new full moon they start celebrating it by giving blessing to each other's and eating different delicious foods with the family and friends respectively. (Festivals of Nepal 2018)



## **6 Religions**

In Nepal religion is called as “Dharma” in the Nepali language which has a broad meaning itself for the Nepalese People. It means moral, duty, toward the people and also loyalty. Nepali society consists many religions like Hindu, Buddhism, Muslim, Christians. But among them Hinduism and Buddhism are the main religions followed in Nepal.

### **6.1 Hinduism**

It is a Polytheistic religion with 3500 year old roots reaching back to the Aryan tribes of the Central India. The religion has three basic practices: puja (Worship), the cremation of the dead, and the rules and regulations of the caste system. The cow is, of course, the holy animal of Hinduism and killing a cow in Nepal can bring a jail sentence. There are four main castes: Brahman (priests), chhetris (Soldiers and governors), Vaisyas (trades people and farmers) and Sudras (menial workers and crafts people). These basic castes are then subdivided into occupational cases and the main bad point in this modern century, beneath all of these is untouchables. Hinduism has also incorporated some of the ancient mountain gods; Mt. Annapurna is the Hindu deity of fertility and the harvest, while Mt Kailas and Gaurishanker are believed to be the residence of Hindu gods Shiva and Pārbati. (Lonely planet 2009).

### **6.2 Buddhism**

It is in many ways more a philosophy than a religion. After years as prince Buddha developed this religion. He develops the rule of the middle way (moderation in everything). The Buddha taught that all life is suffering, but that suffering comes from our sensual desires and all the illusion that they are important. Buddhism prohibits any forms of killing, a contrast to Hinduism, which often requires animal sacrifices to appease the bloodthirsty goddess kali. (Lonely Planet 2009).

### **6.3 Differences**

Despite their many differences, Buddhism and Hinduism share a belief in karma (the law of cause and effect) and rebirth and even share some of their religious sites and gods.

Several, ethnic groups , including the Tamangs and Gurungs in the Middle Hills and the Newars in the Kathmandu valley, practice a blend of both Buddhism and Hinduism and in fact, religious tolerance is the defining hallmark of Nepali society.(Lonely planet 2009).

## 7 UNESCO world heritage sites

Nepal is home to 10 UNESCO World Heritage Sites among which 7 of them are in Kathmandu Valley. Seven groups of monuments and buildings illustrates the cultural heritage of Kathmandu Valley. All these monuments of the Kathmandu valley display the historic and artistic achievements. The heritage sites have been nominated by UNESCO according to their natural and cultural value. (Explore Himalaya Travel and Adventure). Besides these 7 monuments Kathmandu valley has several other cultural and heritage sites. And Kathmandu is considered as the city which has more UNESCO World Heritage Sites than any other city on the whole world. Below are the 7 listed monuments by UNESCO based on cultural. (Explore Himalaya Travel and Adventure 2018)

### 7.1. Kathmandu Durbar Square

It is located on the center of the Kathmandu Valley and it consists of Hanuman Dhoka, Hanuman Temple, Degutale Temple, Taleju Mandir, Nasal Chowk, Nine storey Basantapur Tower, Panch Mukhi, Mul Chowk, Tribhuvan Museum, Mohan Chowk, Sundari Chowk, , King Mahendra Memorial Museum and Kal Bhairab temple in its locality. Hanuman Dhoka was the former royal palace of Nepal and it was used till 1886 by the royal family which was later shifted to Narayanhiti palace but this Narayanhiti place has now converted into the National museum of the country after. Even though the royal palace after 1886 was shifted to Narayanhiti palace the new king was always crowned inside the Hanuman Dhoka palace. There is the statue of Hanuman from the 17<sup>th</sup> century in the entrance of the palace. The palace represents the history of royal family, culture and religion of Nepal. (World Heritage convention 1972). The image below shows the various temples located in Kathmandu Durbar Square.



Image 1: Kathmandu Durbar square ( UNESCO 2018)

## 7.2 Bhaktapur Durbar Square

Bhaktapur lies to the Eastern part from Kathmandu Valley which was originally named as Bhadgaon or Khwopa. Almost every of the monuments around Durbar square were built on seventeen century .Ancient Nepali culture, custom and amazing arts pieces of very fine craftsmanship can be displayed in Bhaktapur. The Bhaktapur Durbar Square is also build like the royal Palaces of Kathmandu Valley which consists of royal building, various courtyards, temples dedicated to different Gods and Goddesses. The oldest part of the Durbar Square still surviving is Mul courtyard also can be called as main courtyard which was built in 1324A.D. (Department of Archeology, Nepal 2014)

After King Bhupatindra Malla succeeded King Jitmitra Malla in 1696A.D. he built the big palace with 55 windows and 99 courtyards. We can only see 55 windows palace and only few courtyards among all those 99.The wolrd heritage organisation of UNESCO has listed this into the wolrd heritage site as a part of Kathmandu Valley from the year 1979 and the goverment of Nepal has declared it as a protected monument. (Department of Archeology, Nepal 2014) The image below also shows the various religious sites located in the durbar Square of Bhaktapur.



Image 2: Bhaktapur Durbar Square(UNESCO 2018)

### **7.3. Patan Durbar Square**

Patan also called as Lalitpur is the oldest among the three cities of Kathmandu Valley. The city lies to the 5km south-east from the Kathmandu valley which is connected by Bagmati River. History says that Patan was founded by the Kirat dynasty in the 3rd century. Patan Durbar Square has the most sepctacular architecture from the Malla period . The palace consists of numerous courtyards and architectural monuments and the religious temples in different styles. Patan durbar square is surrounded by Mulchowk, Jagat Narayan Temple, Rato Machhendra Temple, Mahaboudha Temple, Kumbeshwor temple, Krishna Temple, Golden Temple or Hiranya Varna Mahavihar, Mulchowk, Big Bell, Pillar of Yognarendra Malla, Hari Shanker temple, Vishwanath temple, Bhimsen temple, Marga Haiti, Mani Mandap, Café Pagoda.(Explore Himalaya Travel and Adventure 2018). The image below shows the various monuments located in the Durbar Square of Patan.



Image 3: Patan Durbar Square (Lonely Planet 2018)

#### **7.4 Swoyambhunath**

It is situated 3km away from the west of Kathmandu Valley. It is taken as one of the holiest pilgrimage center of Kathmandu Valley not only for the Buddhists but also for the Hindus. Beautiful landscape of Kathmandu valley can be observed from the hill of Swoyambhunath. The hill of Swoyambhunath is equally important as cultural and natural heritage which has been the habitat of monkeys through the ages. The ancient story of Swoyambhunath is closely related to Kathmandu Valley which was considered to be a big and beautiful lake called as “kalidaha”. Later on stupa was built. At present, the stupa is a solid hemisphere of brick and clay, supporting a lofty conical spire capped by a pinnacle of copper gilt and has Lord Buddha’s eyes adorned on all the four sides of the spire base. (Rana 1989,212). As image 4 below shows the conical shape and other monuments situated in Swoyambhunath.



Image 4: Swoyambhunath(Lonely Planet 2018)

## 7.5 Pashupatinath

This is the temple of Lord Shiva and the holiest place for the Hindu pilgrimage. There is actually no dated record of this temple when was it actually first built. Everyone believes that it was just a small structure of stone in the beginning which must have been built numerous times under the phase of its development. The temple was constructed under the Dynasty of Somadeva around 3rd century BC. It was believed to be provided with a golden roof by King Shiva Deva III in 1120. Around 1754 King Bhupatindra Malla renovated the temple and now it is assumed that it has possibly got today's shape by King Jayasthiti Malla in the late 14th century. King Mahanendra in 1959 renovated the temple and took it to the present situation giving it a Newari look. Pashupati Area Development Trust (PADT) was established in 1987 which has prepared the master plan and taking care of the temple and its surrounding. (Rana 1989,215). The temple lies on the banks of the Bagmati River which is 5km east of the Kathmandu Valley. Devotees from various corners of the world come here to pay homage to the Lord Shiva. (Explore Himalaya Travel and Adventure, 2018.) Image 5 below shows the night view of the Pashupatinath Temple.



Image 5: Pashupatinath Temple (UNESCO 2018)

## 7.6 Boudhanath

It Symbolise the Tibetan buddhism. It was built by the Lichhavi King Man Deva in 5th Century A.D. The stupa located there is regarded as world one of the biggest stupa and the stupa has been built on octagonal base and inset with alcoves representing Buddha and his teachings. The Stupa is made up of constructing materials like bricks, mud, metal wood. It consists of an enclosure wall and the wall consists of 735 metal prayers wheels fixed on it. Each metal prayer wheel is written with the Buddhist Man-tar"Om Mani Padhe Humn" on them and the script is in Newari language which was mostly used during the medieval times. ( Department of Archeology,2018).Image 6 below shows the aerial view of the Boudhanath stupa after the reconstruction from 2015 devstating earthquake.



Image 6: Boudhanath (UNESCO 2018)



## 7.7 Changunarayan

Changunarayan temple is situated 15 kilometers away from the Kathmandu valley . The temple is called narayn since it is the temple of Lord Vishnu and it situated near changu from which it is named as Changunarayan temple. It is also taken as one of the oldest pagoda architecture . The historical, religious and archeological importance can be seen with the embellish of stone, metal and woodcrafts This temple has been the religious center since the begining of the countrys history which includes the scul- pures of Lord Vishnus te incarnation which are Vishwaroop, Vishnu Vikranta, Vishnu riding Garuda, Nar-Singha Vishnu etc. Temples of Kileswar Shiva, Chinnamasta Devi. This temple is taken as the sacred pilgrimage site for the followers of Vaisnavait sec- tion of Hinduism and also equally for the followers of Buddhism. This is one of the rare temple found in Nepal where the followers of both Hinduism and Buddhism visits fre- quently from which it comes to prove that this is an example of a unique tradition of religious tolerance and harmony which can rarely be found in any other parts of the world. The world Heritage organization of UNESCO declared it as a world heritage in 1979 recognizing the value of its long historic and cultural importance. (Department of Archeology, Nepal,2018) Image 7 below shows the view of the Changunarayan temple where various wooden crafts are also reflected.



Image 7: Changunayaran (Lonely Planet 2018)

## 7.8. Lumbini

It is about 300 kilometers outside of Kathmandu Valley and lies in the southern Terai belt of the country. It is also the birthplace of Siddhartha Gautam Buddha So, it is taken as the sacred pilgrimage site for Buddhist. Emperor Ashoka has built a large stone pillar which contains an inscription about the birth of Buddha in 250 BC. The major attraction of Lumbini are Lumbini Garden, Maya Devi Temple, Tara Foundation, World Peace Pagoda, China Temple, Thai Monastery, Burmese (Myanmar) Temple, Nepal Buddha Temple and Dharma swami Buddhist monastery. (Explore Himalaya travel and Adventure 2018). Image 8 below shows the picture of the birthplace of Gautam Buddha including the Ashoka pillar.



Image 8: Lumbini ( Lonely Planet 2018)

## 8. Research Background





### 8.1 Tourism In Nepal

Nepal being a small landlocked country it is rich in various diverse characteristics such as ecological and physiographic structure. This different physiographic and ecological characteristics attracts tourist from various parts of the world. Tourism has been one of the activities in Nepal which play the vital role in balancing the economy of the country. The potentiality of tourism in Nepal is supposed to be very high from which it creates the job to the people directly or indirectly and help other forms of business to sustain in the market.

Tourism in Nepal began since 1950 after the establishment of the democracy. After the democracy came to the country Nepal started to develop its social, economic and political situation due to which the tourism has started to flourish more forward. Mountain tourism is considered as the first tourism sector in Nepal in the beginning of the development of the tourism business. Out of the 10 tallest peaks in world 8 of them are in Nepal and they were successfully measured in 1960 only. The mountains were Mt. Annapurna I, Mt. Everest, Mt. Cho Oyu, Mt. Makalu, Mt. Kanchenjunga, Mt. Manaslu, Mt. Lhotse, and Mt. Dhaulagiri. But Maurice Herzog and Louis Lachenal of France in June 3, 1950 conquered Mt. Annapurna I which is over 8000 meters and the highest peak of the world, Mt Everest was conquered by Tenzing Norgay Sherpa of Nepal and Sir Edmund Hillary of New Zealand in 1953 May 29. But the main important fact is, the door for the tourism and tourist was open officially after Thomas Cook brought more than 60 tourists to Nepal for the first time in 1955. (Shrestha & Shrestha, 2012 59-61)

The total number of tourists who visited Nepal in 2012 was 803,092 as per the survey conducted by Ministry of Culture, tourism and Civil Aviation. Out of 803,092 tourists 109,854 were the pilgrimage tourists. This number of pilgrimage tourism confirms that the Hindu and Buddhist heritage of Nepal are the strong attractions.

Following table shows the number of tourists arriving to Nepal on short term basis.

| Rank | Country  | 2017    | 2016    | 2015   | 2014    | 2013    |
|------|--|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|
| 1    |  India          | 160,832 | 118,249 | 75,124 | 135,343 | 180,974 |
| 2    |  China          | 104,664 | 104,005 | 66,984 | 123,805 | 113,173 |
| 3    |  United States  | 79,146  | 53,645  | 42,687 | 49,830  | 47,355  |
| 4    |  United Kingdom | 51,058  | 46,295  | 29,730 | 36,759  | 35,688  |














|    | dom   |         |         |         |         |         |
|----|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 5  |  Sri Lanka   | 45,361  | 57,521  | 44,367  | 37,546  | 32,736  |
| 6  |  Thailand    | 39,154  | 26,722  | 32,338  | 33,422  | 40,969  |
| 7  |  South Korea | 34,301  | 25,171  | 18,112  | 23,205  | 19,714  |
| 8  |  Australia   | 33,371  | 25,507  | 16,619  | 24,516  | 20,469  |
| 9  |  Myanmar     | 30,852  | 25,769  | 21,631  | N/A     | N/A     |
| 10 |  Germany     | 29,918  | 23,812  | 16,405  | 18,028  | 22,263  |
| 11 |  Bangladesh  | 29,060  | 23,440  | 14,831  | 21,851  | 22,410  |
| 12 |  Japan       | 27,326  | 22,979  | 17,613  | 25,892  | 26,694  |
| 13 |  France      | 26,140  | 20,863  | 16,405  | 24,097  | 21,842  |
| 14 |  Malaysia    | 18,284  | 13,669  | 9,855   | 18,915  | 18,842  |
| 15 |  Spain       | 15,953  | 12,255  | 6,741   | 13,110  | 10,412  |
| 16 |  Canada      | 15,105  | 12,491  | 8,398   | 11,610  | 12,132  |
| 17 |  Netherlands | 13,393  | 11,453  | 7,515   | 12,320  | 10,516  |
|    | Total Foreigner   | 940,218 | 753,002 | 538,970 | 790,118 | 797,616 |

Table3: Number of tourist by Nationality ( Nepal Tourism Board 2017)

## 8.2 Religious and Cultural Tourism

Religious tourism is defined as the people travelling for the purpose of religious activity leaving their own country to other religious and holy sites . This is a form of tourism where people can travel in group or individually for reasons related to spirituality.(Jongmeewasin, n.d.) This form of tourism is not only the visit to any specific religious sites but is also taken as the cause for the human development and humanitarian which indicates that anyone can visit despite of their religion background and belief. This form of tourism is taken as the big market for the tourism industry in the world. (Tourism and More 2014)

Like-Nepal-there- are many few countries or places in the world with such a religious tolerance and harmonious blend of cultures. Any tourist can take a cultural tour around Kathmandu Valley to discover the culture of Newari people and also can take a village tour in Terai or hilly parts of the country to discover the truly mixed fascinating blend of cultures. Throughout the episodes of the history various mighty and dynasties ruled the country bringing many cultural and religious perspectives. Religious and Cultural tourism is one of the most popular form of tourism in Nepal where thousands of tourist come to visit Nepal and explore the culture and traditions of the country each year. The trips of religious tourism in Nepal are designed in such a way that they can help to

explore Hindu and Buddhist religious sites for the tourist. Nepal despite of having Hinduism in majority it does not stop other people with different religion to travel the country with the religious purposes. The high number of tourist visiting Nepal are the people who follow buddhism since Nepal is the land where Gautam Buddha was born. There are various forms of religious tourism and among them Pilgrimage tourism and monastery visit & guest staying are the most popular ones in Nepal.( Wiederkehr 2016)

Every year hundreds of thousand of tourist come to Nepal for Pligrimage. The most top destinations for pligrimage in Nepal are the temple complex in Swargadwari which is located in the Pyuthan district, Lake Gosainkunda near Dhunche, the temples at Devghat, Manakamana temple in the Gorkha District, and Pathibhara near Phungling, Mahamrityunjaya Shivasan Nepal in Palpa District where biggest metallic idol of Lord Shiva is located. This form of tourism is not taken as a vacation rather taken as a transformational journey where various significant changes takes place. People believe deeper understanding will be obtained. Blessing are received from the god and goddess and healing takes place from which on the return of the journey pilgrimage see it with a different eyes. (Wiederkehr 2016)

People following Buddhism religions are the ones who falls under monastery visit and guest staying form of tourism in Nepal. Every year there are thousand of oncoming tourist who wish to visit the monasteries in Kathmandu valley. The monasteries in Nepal provide the education about Buddhism and its discovery. But the guests staying in such monasteries are supposed to follow the rules and regulation set by the particular monasteries. Kopan Monastery located in Kathmandu valley is the most famous retreat monastery in Nepal. There are also monasteries like Pharping area, Swyambhu area, Boudhanath area where guests are welcomed hearty.(Subedi 2015)

### **8.3 Economic Impact of Tourism in Nepal**

In international economic trades tourism industry has been a new phenomenon which contributes to the foreign income sources of many nation. The tourism industry also plays a vital role in the development in aspects of socio, economic and cultural development. Tourism industry especially plays a important role in the developing countries where high rate of unemployeemnt , limited foreign exchange resources still exists.

Nepal has the high potential to become one of the best tourist attraction in the whole world since there are many historical, religious and natural attractions.

The research about economic impact of tourism in Nepal has been conducted by World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). Additionally, it represent on their official websites about the detailed document regarding economic impact of tourism where it shows the employment opportunity, direct impact of tourism as well as indirect impact of tourism in Nepal on its GDP. In the travel and tourism sector, WTTC is the global authority on the social and economic contribution. It promotes sustainable growth of travel and tourism.(WTTC 2017)

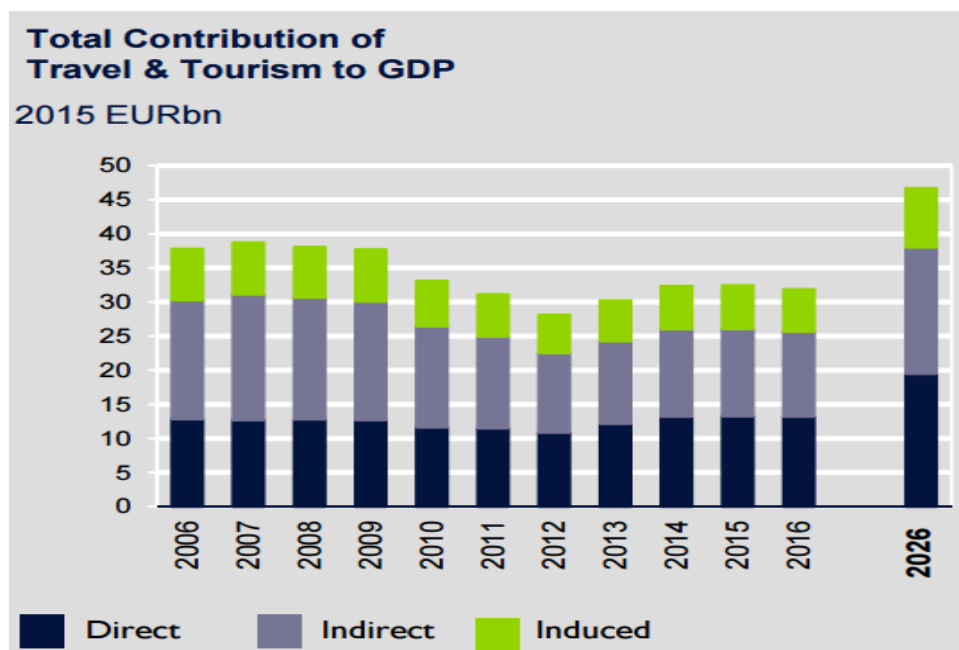


Figure 5: Direct contribution of Travel and Tourism to GDP (WTTC, 2015)

By 2026 It is estimated that the contribution from travel and tourism would grow by 4.4% per annum which would result to around 50 billion euro and also it is estimated that it would cover the 4.8% of the total predicted GDP of the year 2026.(Travel and tourism Economic Impact 2017 Nepal)

AS of March 31, 2017 the article published by the Kathmandu Post analyses the tourism sector as follows.

The travel and tourism sector of Nepal has supported more than 427,000 jobs in the year 2016 according to the World travel and Tourism Council(WTTC). This is also expected to rise in 2027 by 2,9% per annum which could result to 604,000 jobs respectively. In 2016 the direct contribution from travel and tourism industry was Rs85.2 billion to the GDP of the Nepal's economy which equals to 3.6%. Nepal is ranked in the

37<sup>th</sup> position among 185 countries surveyed in terms of travel and tourism direct contribution to the GDP. (Kathmandu Post 2017)

In terms of direct contribution from tourism to the economy of the nation Nepal is ahead of Sri Lanka in South Asia but lacks behind India. This is the result of the activities generated by different actors of tourism industry in Nepal which are travel agencies, hotels, airlines and other passenger transportation services.(Travel and tourism Economic Impact 2017 Nepal)

Business travel spending was expected to increase by 8.2% which could generate Rs20.4 billion and leisure tourism was expected to grow by 6.9% in year 2017 which has generated Rs130.8 billion.(Travel and tourism Economic Impact 2017 Nepal)

The table below shows the income generated by the travel and tourism industry in different activities between the year 2016 and 2017.

Table4: Travel and tourism Economic Impact 2017 (WTTC)

| <b>ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION</b>          | <b>2016</b>     | <b>2017</b>     |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Total contribution of tourism to GDP  | Rs177.9 billion | Rs189 billion   |
| Direct contribution of tourism to GDP | Rs85.2 billion  | Rs91 billion    |
| Capital investment                    | Rs16.5 billion  | Rs16.5 billion  |
| Leisure travel spending               | Rs122.3 billion | Rs130.8 billion |
| Business travel spending              | Rs18.8 billion  | Rs20.4 billion  |
| Direct contribution to employment     | 427,000         | 452,500         |
| Total contribution to employment      | 945,000         | 996,000         |
| Tourist arrivals                      | 753,002         | 801,000         |

## **9. Research methodology**

The aim of this research is to explore how the tourism companies are representing the culture of Nepal. The objective of the study is to find out how these tourism entrepreneurs web portal have influenced in the tourism industry of Nepal. There are no any primary data used on this research so there is no any sets of questionnaires and other tools of collecting primary data. The research is totally based on the secondary data. The author has decided to analyses the web content of the tourism companies of Nepal since Nepal has one of the growing tourism trends in different tourism sectors among which cultural tourism is considered to be one of the main aspects. Tourism companies like travel agencies are profit making business which are set up for the purpose of giving services to the tourists along with promoting the tourism industry of the country. Tourism companies have a huge responsibility on promoting the tourism industry of Nepal and they have always played a creative and vital role in promoting new business ideas and marketing on the new destinations from which we can conclude that they have played a prominent role in the overall development of the tourism industry of Nepal.

Case study research and content analysis are the methodological approach used in this research which are defined as follows. This content analysis methodology was chosen since it helps to gain the most precise and depth information about the tourism destinations, tour packages and the representation of the cultural aspects. Analyzing the tourism companies websites enables to gather information about the roles or actions that they play towards promoting the tourism and being a responsible tourist.

### **9.1. Case study research**

This part describes the case study research about the role of tourism companies in promoting the culture and its impact to the tourism industry in Nepal. This approach of case study was chosen because it helps to find out the role of travel agencies in promoting and protecting the culture and cultural heritages sites of Nepal.

Case study can be defined as an depth study of a particular situation rather than a statistical survey method.(Explorable, Case study research design 2018) It is also a type of method that is used to narrow down a broad field into small researchable topic The advantage of a case study research design is that the researcher can focus on



specific topic to find out the relevant information. In the design of a case study it is always important to plan and design the case of the study and to make sure the data collected are relevant but like a scientific research method case study does not have any strict rules and regulations.

According to Bell(2010) case study approach provides an opportunity to study in one aspect of a situation to be studied in some depth from which the relevant data's can be gathered. This method provides an information to the researcher that happens in a current situation and in the particular environment. This study method can use both research methods quantitative or qualitative methods. But many case studies uses the mixture of these methods and they can be represented through interviews, observation, content analysis or questionnaires (Saunders, Lewis &Thornhill 2012).

#### Research Objective

- To analysis the roles of Nepal travel agencies in the promotion of culture
- To analyze the impact of e-tourism on travel agency operation for how they reflect the culture of the Nepal on their web-portal
- To indicate the most suitable strategies to protect and promote the culture through their web-portal

## **9.2 Data analysis**

The content analysis was chosen as the data analysis method. Content analysis is a research method that is used to analyze the documents objectively and in systematic way. The documents can be of any type for e.g., books, interviews, articles, newspapers or essays. In this type of research method a review obtained from the subject can be modified into the texts, interviews, articles, or any other kind of reports. According to Tuomi & sarajärvi content analysis can be divided into two parts i.e. qualitative and quantitative. The method that describes the content of text quantitatively is called quantitative analysis where as qualitative analysis can be defined as the technique that defines the contents of the text in words. (Tuomi, Sarajärvi 2012, 106.)

The main idea of the content analysis is to get summarized picture of the analyzed documents or texts. Content analysis has been used in large number of fields varying fro marketing & media studies to literature, cultural studies, political sciences and many more due to the fact that it can be used to examine any kind of texts. (Tuomi, Sarajärvi 2012)

It can allow for both quantitative and qualitative methods. It helps to provide valuable information over certain time period through or after the analysis of texts. The method helps to look directly at communication via texts from which it makes easier to get to the central aspect of social interaction. And the end the purpose of this content analysis is to make the valid conclusions. (Tuomi, Sarajärvi 2012)

In this research the author used the content analysis as a research method since the author find it as an appropriate method for this research to analyze the data. The author has chosen this method since the purpose of the research was to explore the web portal of the tourism companies of Nepal and the way they are representing the culture of Nepal.

In total 10 websites of the tourism companies from Nepal were analyzed in the research. The author tries to find out the way that the tourism companies are representing the culture and its impact to tourism. From this research of the thesis the tourism entrepreneurs, students and researchers will get the overview of the importance and roles of tourism companies in the promotion of the culture and cultural heritages of Nepal. Since , there are always a lot of issues in the society when it is a tourism destination and these kinds of issues can be addressed by the tourism companies in some context through the way they represent the norms and values of the society via their social media or web portals. The tourism companies can create an awareness about how the travellers should be when they are travelling to certain destinations like having enough knowledge about the socio-cultural factors of the destination, respecting the culture and tradition of the destination without affecting their culture.

Following are the list of ten tourism companies that the author has analyzed.

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. Trekking Team Group         | <a href="https://trekkingteamgroup.com">https://trekkingteamgroup.com</a>   |
| 2.Nepal Eco Adventure          | <a href="https://nepalecoadventure.com/nepal-tour/kathmandu-heritage-tour/">https://nepalecoadventure.com/nepal-tour/kathmandu-heritage-tour/</a>                 |
| 3.Friends Adventure Team (FAT) | <a href="https://www.friendsadventure.com/content/about-friends-adventure-team.php">https://www.friendsadventure.com/content/about-friends-adventure-team.php</a> |
| 4.Nepal Hiking Team P.Ltd      |   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <a href="https://www.nepalhikingteam.com/top-10-best-things-to-do-in-kathmandu/">https://www.nepalhikingteam.com/top-10-best-things-to-do-in-kathmandu/</a> |
| 5.Dwarikas Hotel                         | <a href="http://www.dwarikas.com/home/heritage">http://www.dwarikas.com/home/heritage</a>   |
| 6. Great Wall Nepal Pvt. Ltd.            | <a href="http://www.greatwallnepal.com">http://www.greatwallnepal.com</a>   |
| 7. The Explore Nepal Pvt. Ltd            | <a href="http://www.theexplorenepal.com">http://www.theexplorenepal.com</a>   |
| 8.Across Himalaya tours and Treks P.LTD  | <a href="https://www.acrosshimalaya.com/about-us/why-travel-with-us.html">https://www.acrosshimalaya.com/about-us/why-travel-with-us.html</a>               |
| 9. Nepal Tours Destination               | <a href="https://www.nepaltoursdestination.com">https://www.nepaltoursdestination.com</a>   |
| 10.Explore Himalaya Travel and Adventure | <a href="https://www.explorehimalaya.com/about-us/">https://www.explorehimalaya.com/about-us/</a>   |

### 9.3 Validity and Reliability

Reliability is defined as the degree to which the results obtained from any assessment tools are consistent and stable. Reliability is also called as the other term for the consistency or stability. The extent to which the results obtained are consistent through any data collection technique despite of the same research being done by several researchers.

Validity refers to how well a research or test measures to what it is suppose to measure. While reliability is important for any kind of research but it is not enough alone. For any research to be reliable it also needs to be valid . Reliability and validity are indirectly proportional to each other which means they are independent of each other.

A test is valid if it measures what it is supposed to measure. If the results of the personality test claimed that a very shy person was in fact outgoing, the test would be invalid.

Reliability and validity are independent of each other. A measurement maybe valid but not reliable, or reliable but not valid. Suppose your bathroom scale was reset to read

10 pound lighter. The weight it reads will be reliable(the same every time you step on it) but will not be valid, since it is not reading your actual weight.

As the entire analyzed organization's , are fully certified by the government of Nepal and have been directly involved in preservation and promotion of the cultural heritages .Various organizations analyzed by the author have been nominated by the government for a prestigious awards like PATA,MOPE and some of the tour operators have also been labeled as the sustainable tour operators in the field of tourism industry . So, the data obtained from their web portal is true and valid to a great extent. Concerning the case study research tourism organizations were chosen carefully and most of these organizations have been engaged in the tourism industry more than a decades. All the data analysis of the web portal was not formulated in a single day rather they were analyzed using more than a month which indicates that the author has strived to find the right and valid information from the web portal.

## 10.Results

This part of the research has focused on the analysis of the tourism companies in Nepal. The main theme of this analysis is ; how do tourism companies represent the culture on their web-portal and what measures can they take to protect and promote the cultural tourism in Nepal. All the results obtained are based on the web portal of the tourism companies mentioned in the above chapter.

### 10.1 Trekking Team Group

According to official webpage of Trekking team group tours they work responsibly in the tourism field. They have a very long experience in the field of travel and tourism and they value efficient and reliable ground logistics. They mainly focus on the local things of the tourism destination like staying in a local hotels rather than staying in a modern cozy hotels. Since local hotels can somehow present the image of the culture of the particular destination through their food and services. This travel company supports THE CODE ( for the protection of children from sexual Exploitation) and also educates the travellers through the travellers Against Plastics mission which is called as TAP.(Trekking Team Group 2018)

The home of the company also provides an offer to the customers to have a cultural tour in Nepal. They have a easy search button and the websites interface is consistent throughout the various pages of the company. Even though they have not reflected the culture of the Nepal directly but they have the cultural tourism packages. Their cultural tourism packages are categorized into four types which can be seen on the webpage of the company. Going further on the cultural content they have tried to explain the natural beauty of the country and the cultural shock that the tourist might have during their trip.

They have always focused their customer to be a responsible traveller throughout any journey. They focus their customers to purchase more local goods rather than nationally owned business. And they have also mentioned few of the reasons for focusing on local goods which are as follows.

Sustainable

Responsible tourism

Support community groups

Reduce Environmental Impact

Get Better Service

Put your taxes to good use

Buy what you want not what someone wants you to buy

Encourage Local Prosperity

Buy local- Support yourself

Image 9 below tries to illustrate the representation of the culture by the Trekking group travel agency on their social media page.



Image 9: Statue of Lord Buddha ( Social media page of Trekking Group )

## 10.2 Nepal Eco Adventure

According to the official webpage of the company they are committed to be sustainable tourism. They have tried to represent the culture by organizing various kinds of cultural trips to the tourist either they are in Kathmandu valley or outside of Kathmandu valley. Through their websites they have tried to present some info about the UNESCO heritages sites of Nepal.(Nepal Eco Adventure ,2018) They argue that they organize the cultural tours to the tourist who have huge interest in Art, culture , Lifestyle and Historical sites. They offer an valuable tour programs to view the historical sites of Kathmandu valley. They claim that their cultural tour around Kathmandu valley which compromises of three big cities would be the best opportunity for researcher,

students, teachers or historian to collect historical and socio-cultural artifacts of the three historic cities.

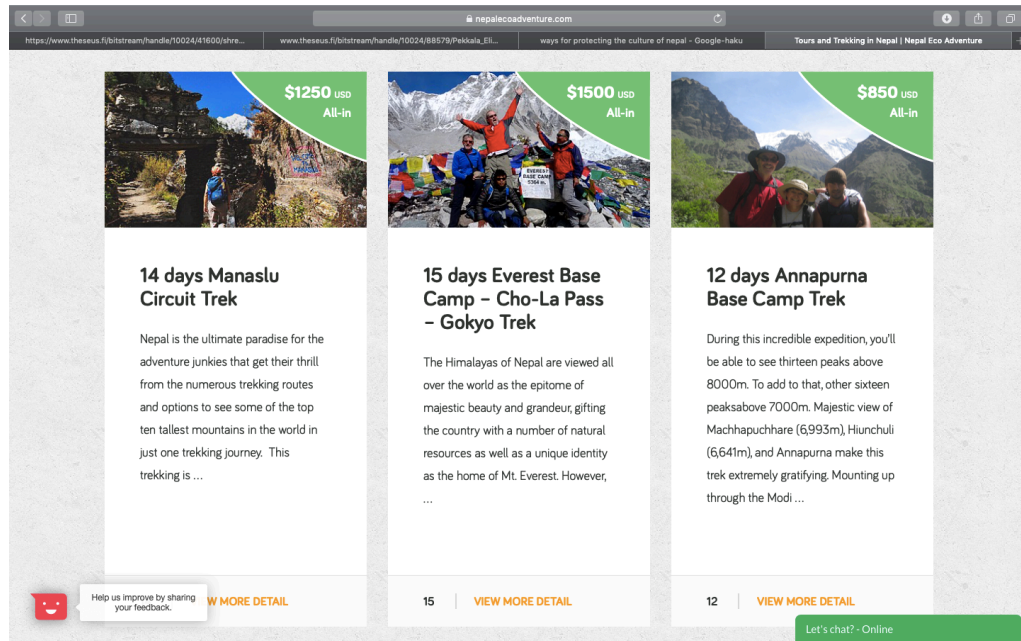


Image10: Tour packages (Nepal Eco tours 2018)

The image above shows different kinds of cultural tours where the travellers get to know the lifestyle and livelihood of the particular destination during their journey.

They have various trekking tour programs to different trekking circuit from which the tourist can get an opportunity to learn about the cultures, religions, lifestyles, food culture of different areas during the whole journey.

The main office of this company is situated in the heart of Kathmandu Valley Thamel and the main objective of the company is to provide best services to its client. Nepal Eco Adventure provides customers different kinds of tour packages especially the trekking packages but still the customers get to know more about the culture and lifestyle of the particular region during the whole journey. This travel company has the tour packages starting from budget to luxury also depending on the no of days and the area of travelling. These tour packages offered by Eco Adventure intends to showcase Nepal with beauty and its culture as experienced professionals staffs select the best services.

### 10.3 Nepal Tours destination

These tour packages offered by Eco Adventure intends to showcase Nepal with beauty and its culture as experienced professionals staffs select the best service. This travel company was established on 2003 and has been emerging as one of the most popular tour operators of Nepal. This organization is managed by professionals people who have huge experience in hospitality sector. In their homepage they have kept some info About Nepal which tries to represent the culture and its location in the world map. They have a various cultural tour programs around Nepal from which the tourist can get more info about the culture of their destination. Each of the cultural tour programs are different to each other since the destination is different. Opening the main cultural tour packages they have given the info about the destination, lifestyle, culture and the people. The figure below illustrates the way they are representing the culture.

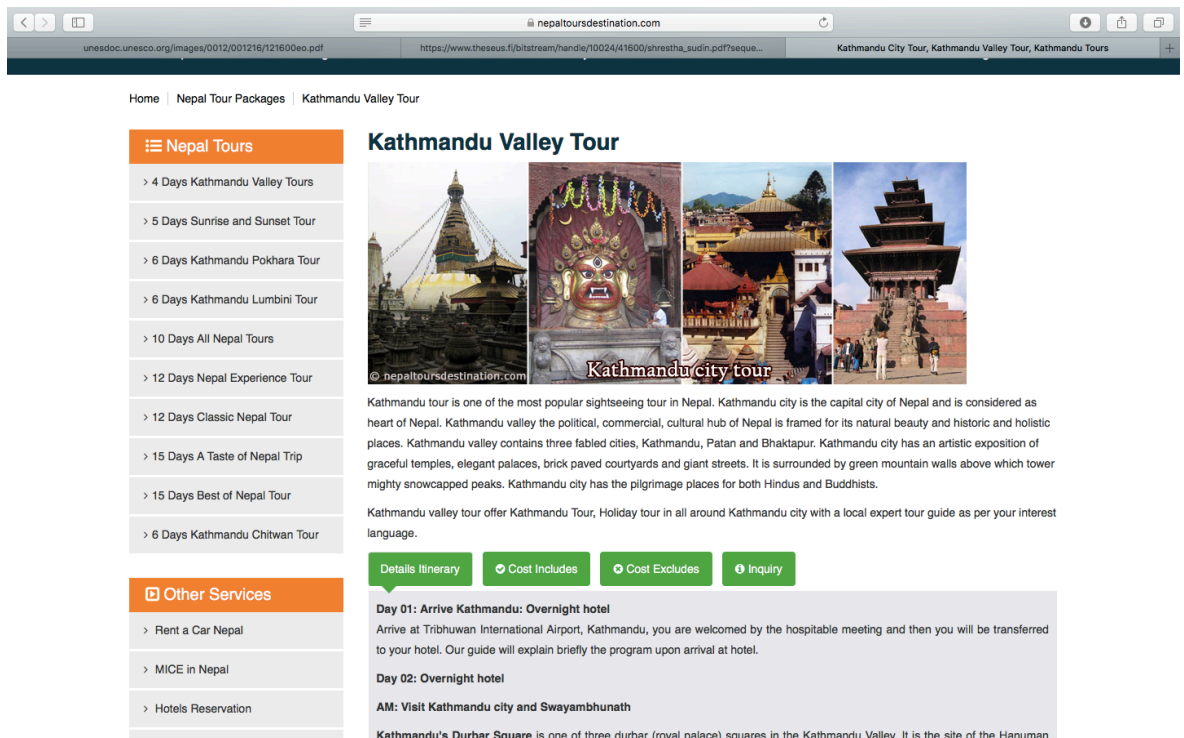


Image 11: Cultural tour Kathmandu Valley (Nepal Tours Destination 2018)

Also in the image below we can see various cultural tours of Nepal and Each cultural tour packages has their own features



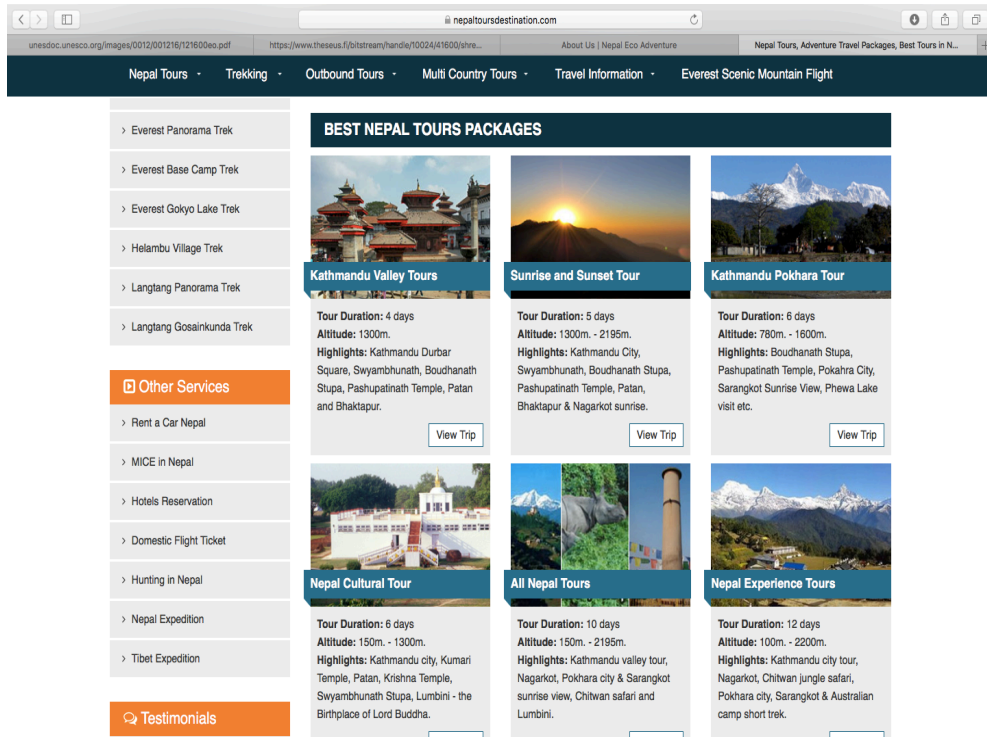


Image 12: Cultural tours Image in Nepal (Nepal Tours Destination 2018)

## 10.4 Nepal Hiking Team P.LTd

Nepal hiking team was established on 2009 and have been providing the services to more than 20,000 customers till the date. According to their web portal they have been awarded the certificate of excellence from 2012 to 2018 consecutively. The image belows shows the various cultural monument's located in Kathmandu valley which is presented by Nepal hiking team on their official website.

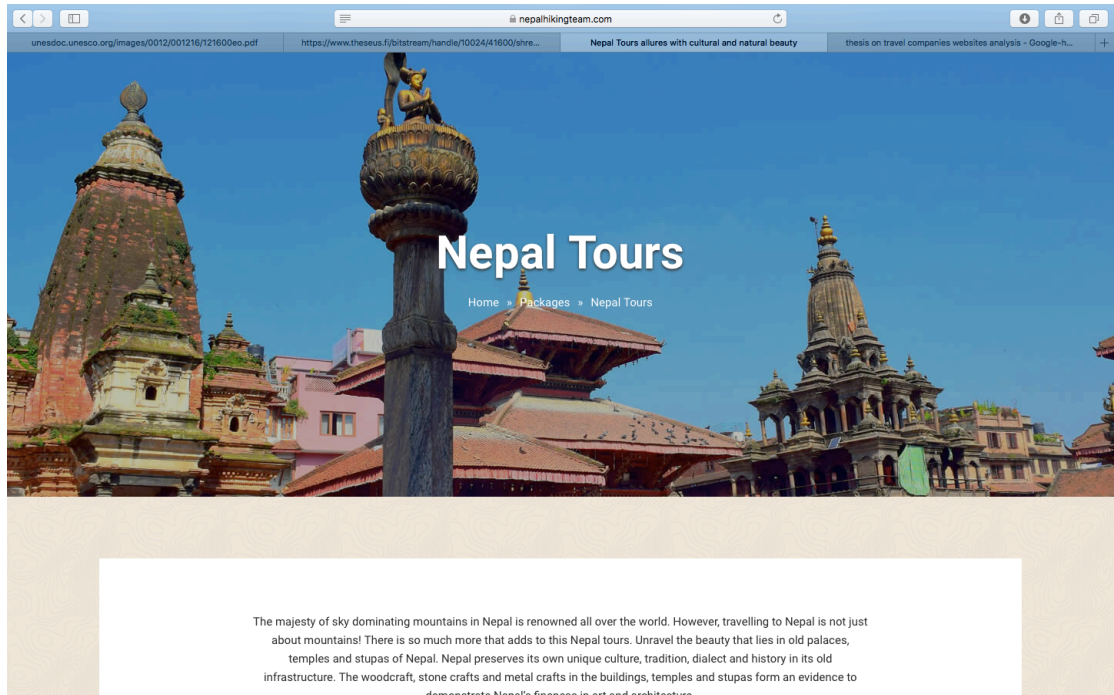


Image13: Representation of Culture through Image (Nepal hiking team 2018)

The website has tried to present the overview of the culture and the majestic mountains through some pictures and texts. Further more they have specific tour programs depending upon the destinations. They have a different cultural tours like Kathmandu and Lumbini tours which is for 5 days with a price of 950 USD, Kathmandu and Pokhara Tours for 5 days, Best of Nepal tour for 13days , Culture Blends Adventure tour for 7 days.

Some of the cultural tours are heavily combination of the culture and lifestyle of the people of the particular destination. The professionals will help the tourist to explore the UNESCO listed heritage sites in Kathmandu . they will also show the artistic beauty demonstrated in the woodcrafts and metal crafts around the Kathmandu Valley. The author figure out that they have tried to promote the culture of Nepal organizing various kinds of cultural related tour packages from this we can also figure out that they help to encourage the locals residents and visitors to be more mindful about the impact on the natural environment.

### 10.5 Great Wall Nepal Pvt.Ltd

According to the content published on the web portal of the Great wall Nepal limited ( Great Wall Nepal, 2018) they claim that they focus on the concept of the sustainable development , draw their attention to the benefits of the local and equally focus on the

nature. They organize different kinds of tour packages for e.g. mountain biking, sight-seeing, city tours, culture tours. Also they are affiliated with different kinds of institution in Nepal in promoting the tourism and other areas like education, health. They have been offering various opportunities to the customer to explore the Nepali culture from very near by offering village home stay program and camping in the remote areas.

The company consists of very experienced guides in the field of tourism and always keeps in the priority for the demands of the customers. The web portal is very flexible to use where customers can make quick changes to the itinerary provided very efficiently. The company have also announced that every 205 earned form the tourism activities will go to the investment in saving and uplifting the social and environmental sectors of the country. Figure below shows the type of culture tour around Kathmandu valley which are offered by Great Wall Nepal Pvt.Ltd.

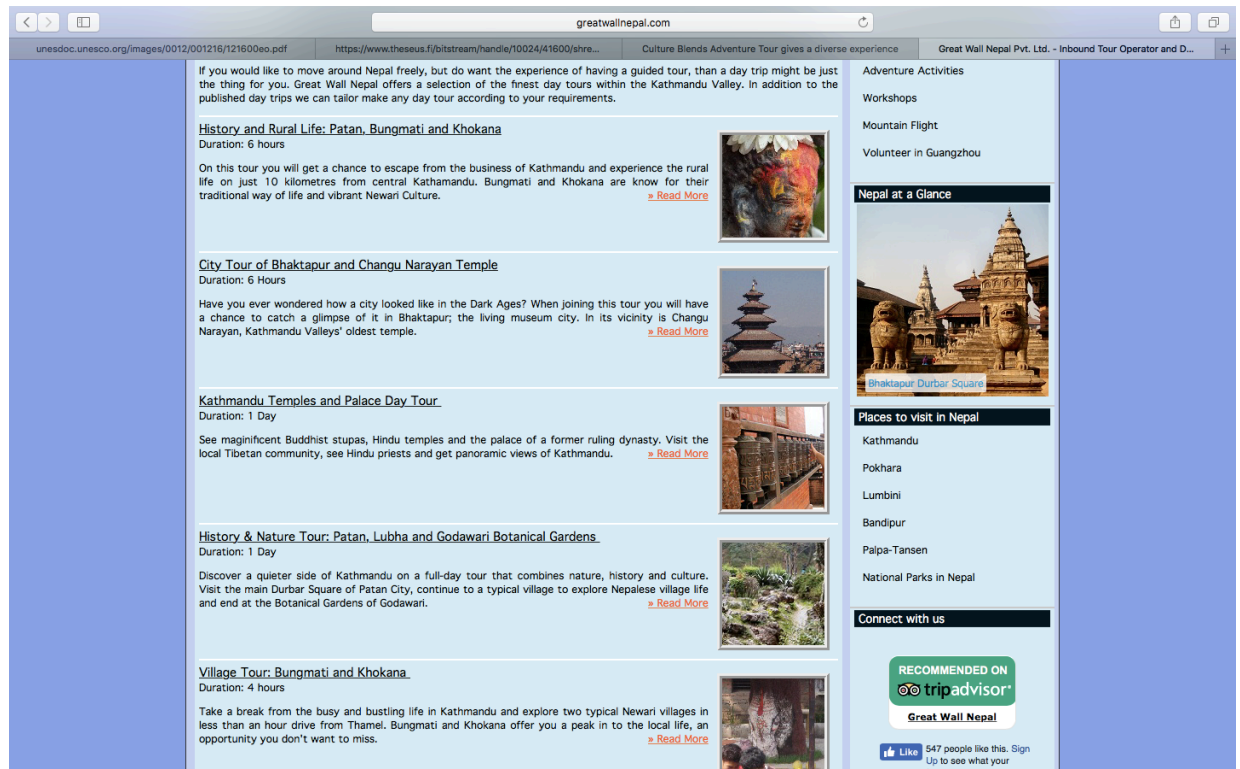


Image 14: 1day culture tour (Great wall Pvt Ltd 2018)

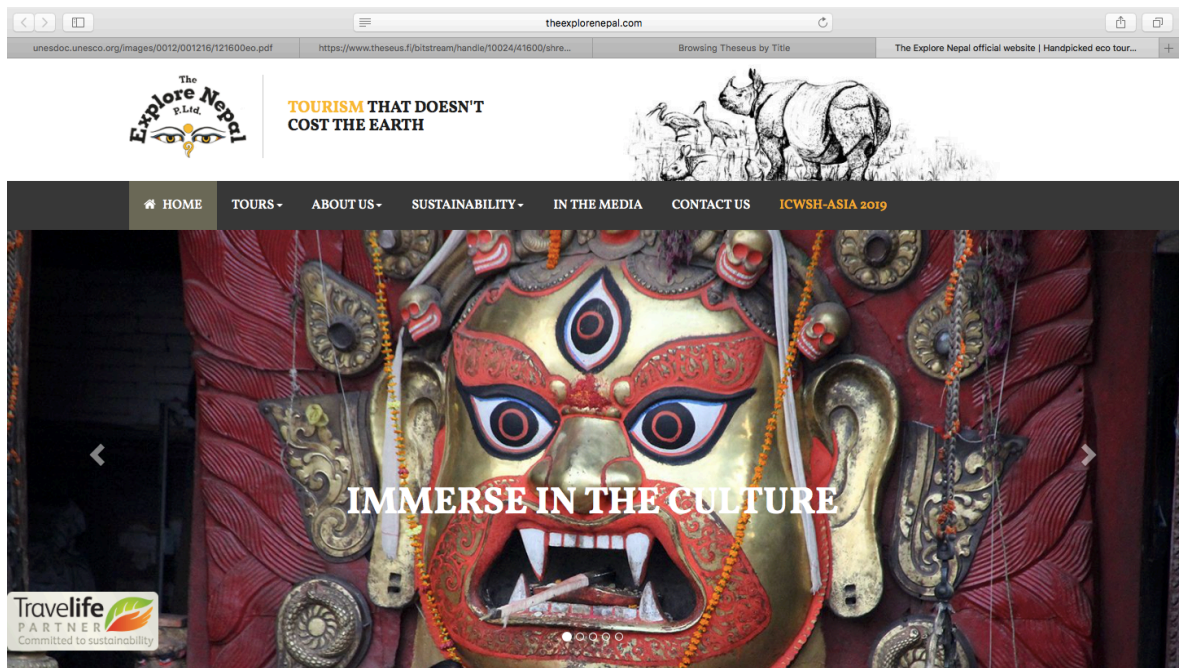
## 10.6.The Explore Nepal PVT LTD

This company was established on 1998 and has been founding sustainable and responsible tourism since that. The main slogan of the company is "Tourism that does not cost the earth". They offer various unique and exciting tours not in only in Nepal

but also in other countries. They offer various kinds of cultural tours which allows the traveller to learn and experience the rich cultural diversity of Nepal.(The Explore Nepal,2018) Some of the tour programs offered takes the traveller back in time to experience world heritage sites like temples, monuments, palaces, also the gardens dating back centuries.

The company tries to engage the travellers locally from which they can practically indulge with the local festivals, local meals and their way of living. The website has adequate information on their destination. It has a lot of information about the local culture, festivals of the particular destination from which the travellers get to know early and these kind of information's can help in being responsible for the travellers.

This company is growing as a leading eco tour operator in Nepal and it is backed up by qualified and experienced professionals. They tried to put a complete ban on the use of plastic bags, bottles and focused on the tree plantation program in the name of each visitor which helps to conserve the environment. They are also maintaining the Himalayan routes by operating the cleaning program. Various campaigns have also been arranged by the company for the preservation of the heritage. The company has been able to won various awards such as Abraham Conservation Award 2002 by World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Kathmandu Environment Award 2001, Association of German Travel and Tour operators (DRV) International Environmental Award 2003, Nepalese Ministry of population and environment (MOPE) and PATA Environmental Award 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2004 (The Explore Nepal P. Ltd. 2018). Image below shows the picture of one of the gods of the Hinduism.



**TOURISM THAT DOESN'T COST THE EARTH**

Image15: Picture of God.( Travel Nepal 2018)

**10.7. Dwarikas Hotel**

Dwarikas hotel was registered in 1977 and founded by the couple Dwarika Das shrestha and Ambica shrestha. The hotel has incorporated the elements that reflects the Nepal’s diverse cultural heritage.(Dwarikas Hotel,2018) All the room and interior design are made in such a ways that they reflect the culture of the Nepal especially the Newar culture with various kinds of wooden art crafts. The furniture in the past were crafted by the families of the traditional carpenters.

The hotel has also its branch in Dulikhel about 32 kms away from the Kathmandu valley. The main slogan of the resort is “we believe in the need for maintaining harmony between body, mind, spirit and earth in order to enjoy a peaceful, healthy and balanced life” This Resort has been built using the natural materials like as stone, wood and also traditional bricks.

In the image below the front view of the hotel can be seen.

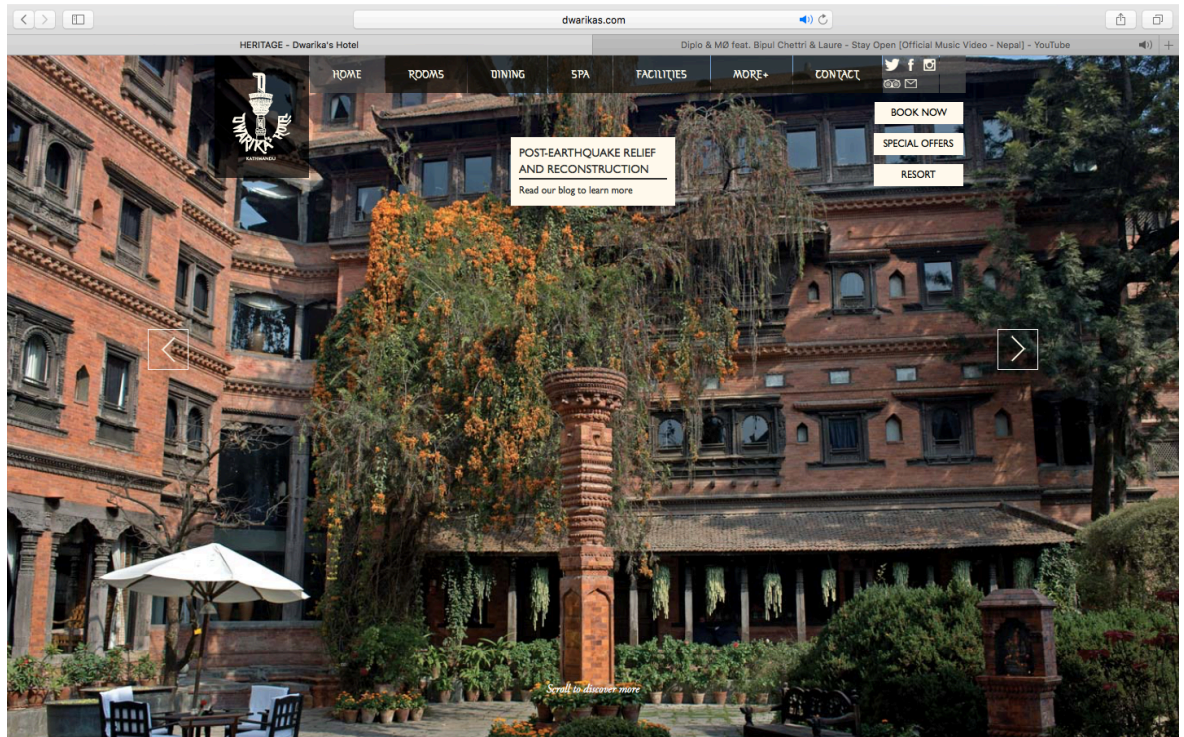


Image 16: Front view of Dwarikas Hotel Kathmandu (Dwarikas hotel 2018)

Today Dwarika's hotel portrays itself as a mansion of artifacts, carved windows and our traditional arts allowing guests to live among the architectural and artistic beauty of the past. Ambica Das shrestha preserved all the carved woods and worked hard towards the fulfillment of her dreams. When people saw her keeping the rotten woods and working too hard, they remarked telling her that she was mad to be doing so. Undeterred Ambica worked even harder, struggled even more and travelled all over the world marketing her hotel. The daughter of Ambica was her companion during the hardship. Inside the hotel anyone can see the architectural splendor of the valley.

The hotel is also incorporated with different elements of Nepal diverse culture heritage while designing the rooms. The real Nepali pattern can be seen on the woodcrafts. In the hotel some of the elements of the finest Nepali crafts can be seen and these elements are presented in a way that has never been done before. As per the owner of the hotel Dwarika Das Shrestha he said the project is to create a 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century environment of hotel from which the tourist and the Nepalese people would have a sensation of the originality.

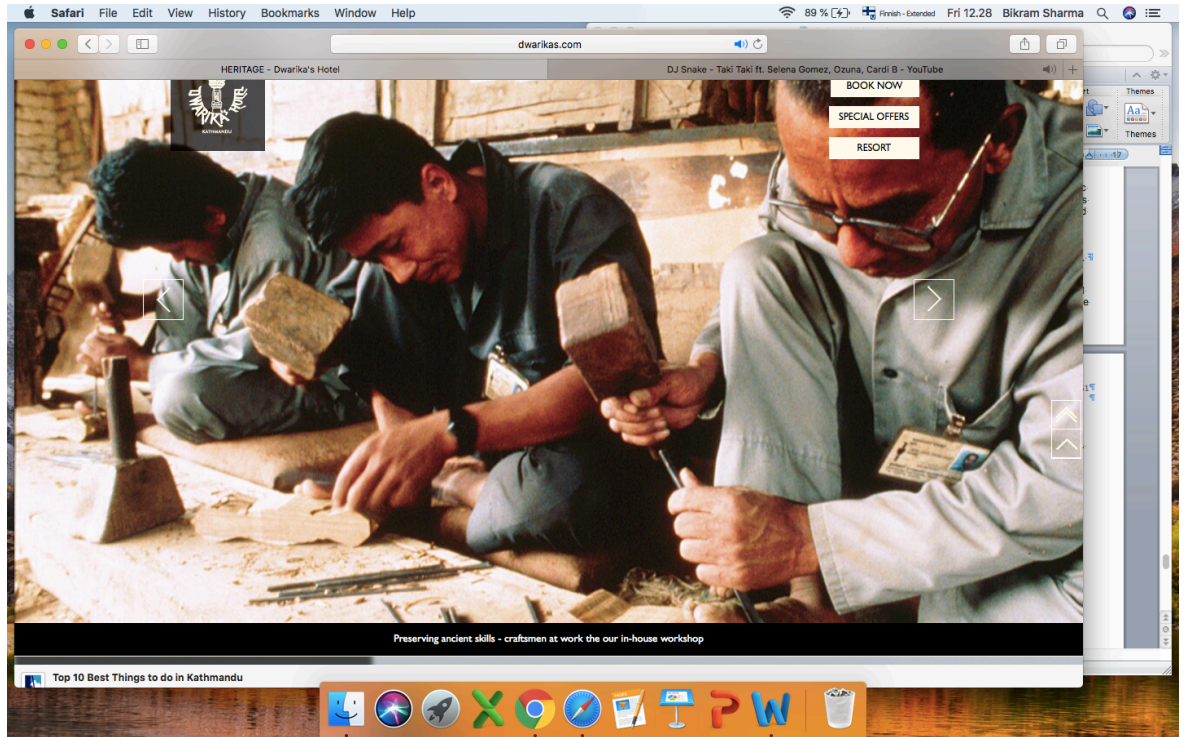


Image 17: Making of wooden artcrafts ( Dwarikas Hotel 2018)

## 10.8 Friends Adventure Team (FAT)

Friends Adventure Team (FAT) is one of the leading organization in tourism business and it was established in 1998 with a slogan “Explore yourself through adventure”. They have been serving the tourist with different kinds of packages and they are committed to highest service standards.(Friends Adventure Team 2018) The company has been succeeded in immersing the travellers to the culture of the destination. They have various destinations in Asia Like India, Nepal and Bhutan also. They have a itineraries that helps the traveller to explore unique attributes of the culture.

They have a cultural tours which are not designed to stay in a very comfort and cozy hotels or pack a lot of activities in the same day rather they want to help the travellers to explore the local culture and get to know with the people.

The company have explained that anyone exploring the culture of Nepal have made a best holiday decision due to which they can get the real Nepalese test of traditions and the hospitality. The company have tried to explain about the religious harmony through its website. They have also gave information about the various UNESCO world heritages sites locate din Kathmandu valley and outside of the valley. The company also

states that different ethnic groups, different religion and culture with different races which are further more divided into caste can be observable while taking the holiday tour in Nepal.

The company also have a sustainable policy in preserving the environment along with the culture and the identity of the Nepalese people. The use of natural resources have been emphasize to use them wisely, respecting and promoting the local culture . From this sustainable policy they can also be able to attract the customers which can create a unique and memorable experience for the tourist and this can be the good message for the rest of the people.i.e mouth to mouth marketing.

### **10.9 Across Himalaya Tours & Treks P.LTD**

Across Himalaya is outdoor adventure travel organizer established by the local Nepalese youths. As per the website of the company they strictly follow the code and conducts of green tourism.(Across Himalaya Tours &treks 2018) It can be seen that the company creates a love and passion for the culture along with the preservation of the environment. They have requested every travellers to be responsible towards the culture of the destination They follow the ethics of the responsible tourism and also has tried to teach the travellers through websites.

The main vision of the company according to the web portal is ;

*“Preserving culture and ecology with the promotion of sustainable development in the tourism industry.”*

They want to make an positive effect in the development of the tourism sector in the country without making any damages to the ecology of the Himalayan and also preserving the local heritages, cultures, traditions for the upcoming generation.

The company offers various kinds of itineraries for the travellers ranging from trekking, rafting, jungle safari, cultural tours etc. The team of the Across Himalaya travel frequently in smaller groups to make sure that every adventure holiday or each travellers has been a beneficial experience with its goal respecting the local culture, flora and fauna of the particular destination. They have also participated on the various research



works supervised by different organization Nepal Tourism Board(NTB), Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Programmed (UNDP/TRPAP) and Tribhuvan University (TU).

The company states that the responsible tourism is not only an environmental issue but also an economic and social one too. As per the web content the management of Across Himalaya are dedicated to the well being of the local communities and they believe due to this commitment they can provide a more rewarding and amazing trip to their clients.(Across Himalaya Tours and treks 2018)



Nepal Buddhist Pilgrimage Tour is one of the best tour packages for those interested in the Buddhist religion. The Himalayas

Image18:Birthplace of Gautam Buddha (Across Himalaya 2018)

## 10.10 Explore Himalaya Travel and Adventure

Explore Himalaya was established in the year 1997 and has been offering its services and products to the Nepal , Tibet and Bhutan . The headquarter of the company is located in Kathmandu Valley. They offer various kinds of services ranging from Heli tours, skydive, photography, cultural and wildlife tours, trekking, motorbikes rides and more.

The main motto of the company is the “tourism for development”.( Explore Himalaya Travel &Adventure 2018). The founder of the organization is an one of the activist of sustainable tourism and also one of the promoters of Eco trekking activities. As per their web portal they are the first company in Nepal to supply the porters for high alti-

tude with crampons. They do provide life insurance and emergency evacuation for their staffs. Image 18 below shows the picture of Pashupatinath Temple which is also included in the cultural tours of Explore Himalaya Travel and Adventure.



Image 19: Religious site (Explore Himalaya 2018)

The company has tried to present the culture through its web portal by organizing various kinds of cultural tours. The company has more than 10 different types of cultural tours depending upon the interest of the tourist and their length of stay. The cultural tours are organized outside of the Kathmandu valley also. While the company is working the motto tourism for development they have also contributed to the local society. The explore Himalaya community was regarded as one of the one who has been able to empower the underprivileged segments in various parts of the country. From the very beginning of (EHCSP) Explore Himalaya community Service project they have been trying to advocate the local community about the importance of education, health, community development, conservations of the local flora and fauna, forests, and most importantly the preservation of the culture.

On the blog part of the company's website we can see various kinds of information's regarding the cultural heritage of Kathmandu valley and Kathmandu itself. They have detail information about their motor bike tour which includes various sightseeing, adventurous and cultural heritage sites too.

In the image below we can see Shamanism practice by people. This is one of the healing practice started form very ancients. From this the author can figure out that this kinds of tours can attract many visitors since this is not something the western people can experience it they have various more information regarding the Namche bazaar which is one of the trekkers hub of Everest region and its culture too. At the end of the blob they have requested every travellers to be very responsible , to respect the mountains of Nepal, to respect the culture and to leave a positive impact behind. They have also requested to go through the “Dos and Don’ts in Nepal” for each travellers.

on the vertical rock faces. This practice is also found among other communities in lesser known areas like Dhading, Jharkhand across Ganesh Himal and Arun Valley of Makalu Barun area. As this practice is carried out in an insanely extreme working condition by just using some primitive tools, it can be rightly called as a testament of the perseverance and fortitude that equates any death defying endurance feat. Honey hunting tour is all about witnessing this insanely unbelievable act which people are following for centuries.

### 3. Shamanism Tour

NEPALI SHAMANS (PIG CREDIT: PRESSTV.COM)

Nepal's rich cultural heritage also includes Shamanic practices. This ancient healing practice is attracting many western scholars and practitioners nowadays. You can see the shamans in their séances, in their frenzies communicating with the other worlds and curing villagers. Such tours allow you to experience a different world of belief. You will not just see the miraculous performance of the shamans but also witness the unshakable belief of the villagers and their stories. Not something to be missed if you are interested in people and old age tradition.

### 4. Volunteering

Image20: Shamanism practice by people (Explore Himalaya 2018)

## 10.11 Summary of the findings

After the data analysis researcher has found some issues and activities performed by the travel agencies in presenting the culture through their web portal and promotion of the culture and cultural heritages including the local lifestyle and livelihoods. Some of the findings were educating communities by the tourism companies, creating awareness, resources and waste management.

Along with the improvements and efforts of the travel agencies some of them expect to get help from the government level in promoting the traditional and local heritages. Due to the presence of various kinds of organization's it's obvious that government can not be able to support each and every of them individually. But the main important factor is that the tourism bodies should realize the importance and cultural value of the local and natural heritages and start working together for its development and preservation. On the other side the government can set and implement strict rules and regulations regarding the Do's and Don'ts for travellers, waste disposal, respect of the local culture and lifestyle.

Travel agencies have been giving their attention and putting their effort for the protection of natural environment including the local people and rural areas development too. It was also recognized that the tourism companies have highlighted the importance of religious harmonious in their web portal between the different religions. The tourism companies have also tried to give the information that Nepal has a deep cultural roots in Buddhism, Hinduism and a caste system. After the research it came into the knowledge that the tourism companies have tried their best to give information about many existing customs and taboos that being as a guest need to be observed carefully to have the deep meaning and to get to know more about culture.

The tourism companies have tried to give adequate information about the temples and holy places on their web portal such as while entering the temple or any holy places one should remove the shoes and are usually forbidden for taking any kinds of photographs or videos. The tourism companies analyzed in the chapter above had described Nepal predominantly as a Hindu country and there are several festivals going around the whole year. Needless Nepal has a unique culture where there are always a holidays to look forward too because of the different ethnic groups. However Dashain and Tihar are described by the tourism companies as the main festivals of Hindus in Nepal. Despite of this, Buddhists holidays also take places throughout the year as per the information obtained through the web portal of the tourism companies analyzed by

the author. It was recognized that the tourism companies have always tried to give adequate information to the travellers about the UNESCO heritages sites They describe that the sites are selected depending on their cultural, natural and historical significance They also states that the UNESCO world heritage sites are making the tourism industry locally and internationally important which in a result creates a lots of revenues.

After analyzing the web content of a tourism companies. It came into knowledge that the cuisines are influenced by Tibet and India however Nepal has its own simply delicious foods and variety of foods. Tourism companies have described Dal Bhat ( Lentils and Rice) as a main food in Nepal where the lentil soup is cooked with various flavor's and the dish is served with various kinds of mixed vegetables. The tourism companies have also recommended the visitors to try the Newari food which are found in complex spicy dishes. They are well worth a taste according to the companies analyzed by the author.

It was also realized that various organization's feel that the attempts should be made by every individual to support the government for the preservation of cultural heritages and eco tourism. All of the organizations analyzed above have been giving their best efforts to minimize the waste . They have also tried to minimize the activities that influences the nature in negative way.

## 11. Conclusions

Nepal is very small and a beautiful country located in between two big countries in terms of both economic and population China to the north and India to the south. Providing the best hospitality has been its main attraction to the visitors from all over the world along with its fascinating culture and its diversity in different ethnic groups despite of being a very tiny country in the world map. As mentioned above in the earlier chapters Nepal is very famous for its culture and ethnic diversity. There are various kinds of heritage sites which are listed in UNESCO heritage.

The purpose of this research was to figure out how the travel and tourism companies have presented the culture of Nepal in the digital marketing. It was important to explore the importance and roles of travel agencies by analyzing the content of various travel agencies web portals. From the results obtained after doing an research it has seen that the tourism companies have played an important role for saving the culture and which has made a huge difference in the tourism industry. Despite of that it was also figure out that there are some issues that might affect the environment and nature. And also in some cases due to the overflow of the tourist it might affect to the culture of the particular place also if not managed properly. From the research we can see that most of the travel agencies have given an importance to the environment also along with the culture. They have given priority to the local people and the development of the rural area.

The travel agencies have arranged various cultural and sightseeing tours in various cultural and religious sites giving the detail information to the tourist and in return they are being able to support the concerned authorities to gather some money which can be used for the purpose of preserving the heritage sites and its daily maintenance along with the proper sanitation. In result all of these tourism companies were trying to put the positive effect by educating the local people and their customers.

After doing the research it has been figured out from the websites of the organizations that there are some issues in the society due to the growing number of tourist which can directly or indirectly make an negative effect in the culture of the respective society. The local people and the society have an impact of western culture which can be mainly seen on the youngsters. Travellers during their period of travelling consume

huge amount of waste like cans, plastic bags and other garbage which are not taken proper care of by themselves. Also dancing during the night time with drinks and music creates some disturbance to the local people who have been following early to bed and early to rise tradition from very long period of time. The villages home stay are also in the state of extinct due to the larger number of growing modern hotels and lodges even in the remote parts of the country. So, the travel agencies in this case can play an role of educating the travellers with the socio-cultural factors of the destination. The tourism affiliated organizations can encourage the tourist to use the traditional home stay in villages rather than the modern lodges or hotels.

After the analysis of the web portal of the tourism companies it can be seen that they have tried to create awareness in travellers and local about the importance of nature and culture. Environmental and cultural preservation has been carried with the affiliation in the government of Nepal by most of the companies.

The case studies also underline the importance of co-operation between the tourism and cultural sectors, as well as between different levels of government and the private sector. The research concludes that tourism and culture are related directly to each other with a mutual beneficial relationship. This relationship between the culture and tourism can attract the destinations, regions or countries. Culture can be taken as an important product of tourism and tourism provides an different ways of enhancing the culture and its preservation.

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