

Promoting Sustainable Tourist Behavior through Promotional Marketing

Niranjana Devkota

Kathmandu Model College, Tribhuvan University, Bagbazar, Kathmandu, Nepal

Krzysztof Gajdka

Faculty of Entrepreneurship and Law, Pan-European University, Prague, Czech Republic

Roshan Siwakoti

Quest International College, Pokhara University, Gwarko, Lalitpur, Nepal

Monika Klímová

Faculty of Business, Pan-European University, Prague, Czech Republic

Krishna Dhakal

Quest Research Management Cell, Quest International College, Pokhara University, Gwarko, Lalitpur, Nepal

Received: 2 February 2022. **Revision received:** 30 March 2023. **Accepted:** 14 May 2023

Abstract

This study aims to investigate the current state of Bhaktapur, Nepal, as a tourist destination and how promotional marketing strategies can be used to increase the number of tourists visiting the area. The research uses the AIDA model to analyze Bhaktapur's promotional marketing as a tourist destination. 282 tourists were surveyed through the Kobo Toolbox app to gather information about their demographics and travel profiles. The data was analyzed using SPSS and SEM to find variations in groups and predict the impact of promotional marketing on sustainable tourism demand in Bhaktapur. The findings indicate that utilizing a range of promotional marketing strategies, such as social media, and targeting different demographic groups can be effective in attracting tourists and highlight the significance of tourism as a key source of foreign exchange revenue for Nepal and suggests that promoting Bhaktapur as a tourist destination can contribute to the country's economic growth. This study contributes to the rising interest in determining the Internet's significance as a commercial tool in the tourist industry. Internet is currently the primary method for hotels and other service-based enterprises to communicate with their clients. Thus, this study aims to fill a vacuum in the literature by demonstrating how to leverage the Internet and social media as part of a marketing strategy to build a sustained demand among visitors concerned with social concerns and the environment.

Key Words: promotional marketing, AIDA model, SEM, tourist, Bhaktapur

JEL Classification: M37, Z32, C12, C83, C87

Reference: Devkota, N, Gajdka, K., Dhakal, K., Klimova, M. & Siwakoti, R. (2023). Promoting Sustainable Tourist Behavior through Promotional Marketing. *Journal of Tourism and Services*, 26(14), 219-241. doi: 10.29036/jots.v14i26.512

1. Introduction

The travel and tourism industry is one of the world's largest and most diverse industries (Devkota et al., 2022a). Many nations rely on this dynamic industry as a primary source for generating revenues, employment, private sector growth, and infrastructure development (Lichrou et al., 2018). Tourism development is particularly encouraged in developing countries worldwide when other forms of economic development, such as manufacturing or the exportation of natural resources, are not commercially viable (Devkota et al., 2020a; Mbaiwa, 2021). The role of tourism as a major contributor

to the global economy is significant, as reflected in various indicators that show the industry's rapid growth (Kyrylov et al., 2020; Gautam et al., 2022). Other tourism contributions include cultural exchange, preservation of heritage, and community development (Devkota et al., 2021a; Skare et al. 2023a). The concept of sustainable tourism is also important in ensuring that the industry is responsible and sustainable in the long run (BK et al., 2019; Streimikiene et al., 2021).

Promotional marketing in South Asian countries is currently experiencing a shift towards digital channels, with a growing focus on utilizing social media and e-commerce platforms to reach a larger and more targeted audience (Devasia & PV, 2022). Traditional marketing methods such as billboards, newspapers, and television advertisements are still widely used, particularly in urban areas (Winter et al., 2021). However, digital marketing is becoming increasingly popular as it allows businesses to target specific demographics, track engagement, and measure the effectiveness of their campaigns. In the tourism industry, South Asian countries are heavily promoting their destinations through digital marketing, highlighting the region's unique culture, heritage, and natural beauty to attract more tourists. This can be seen through the use of social media platforms, digital travel guides, and influencer marketing (Amin, 2021). While the shift towards digital channels is a positive trend in promotional marketing in South Asian countries, there are still challenges that need to be addressed in order to fully capitalize on the potential of digital marketing.

Nepal is a country of diversity, beauty, and tranquility (Khanal & Shrestha, 2019; Devkota et al., 2020a). The Hindu, Buddhist and other cultural heritage sites of Nepal and around the year fair weather are also strong attractions. It is considered as one of the topmost destinations to visit by many travel agencies and travel planners. The traditions and famous hospitality of its many different groups are indeed a major part of what makes Nepal so special (Gawlik et al., 2022). Nepalese people are warm and kind no matter where you go in the country, from medieval hill settlements to the historic metropolis of the Kathmandu Valley (Koirala, 2020). With more festivals than days of the year, there is nowhere else in the world that can offer as many festivities as Nepal.

In the context of Nepal, tourism promotion plays a key role in highlighting the tourism image of Nepal all over the world. Nepal has been organizing different tourism promotional programs and activities with the view to identify and increase tourism market all over the world (Badal, 2019; Devkota et al., 2021b). However, tourism in Nepal still faces several challenges, such as a lack of skilled labor and poor working conditions (Hillman & Radel, 2022). Despite these challenges, Nepal's unique culture and heritage, along with its natural beauty, make it a popular destination among tourists. With the right strategies and policies in place, Nepal can continue to grow and develop its tourism industry, while also ensuring sustainable and responsible tourism practices (Bk et al., 2019; Pradhan et al., 2022).

Promoting tourism marketing in Nepal is not an old concept. It began as the "word of mouth" marketing of Nepalese tourism aftermath of successful peak-kissing of Mount Everest in 1950s. However, despite the efforts, the tourism industry in Nepal still faces several challenges, such as a lack of skilled labor and poor working conditions (Wilson & Dashper, 2022; Devkota et al., 2022a). These issues are commonly found in emerging nations like Pakistan, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, and Thailand where the tourism industry has had a difficult time finding and keeping qualified workers (Khan et al., 2020). Some of the factors that contribute to this include poor working conditions, lower pay scales, irregular work schedules, a lack of promotional and motivating factors, high employee turnover, and a negative perception of the tourism industry (Maharjan et al., 2022).

Promotional marketing in the tourism industry in Nepal has been the subject of research in recent years, with studies focusing on the use of digital channels, sustainable tourism, and the role of the government and private sector in promoting Nepal as a tourist destination. Even though sustainable tourism is becoming more important (BK et al., 2019; Paudel et al., 2021; Devkota et al., 2022b), and marketing can be used to encourage tourists to act in a sustainable way, there is still a lot we don't know about Bhaktapur, Nepal. In particular, there isn't a lot of empirical research on how well marketing campaigns that focus on sustainability can get tourists to behave in a sustainable way when

they visit Bhaktapur. Also, the role of stakeholders in a destination, like the local government and tourism operators, in promoting sustainable tourism through marketing strategies needs to be investigated more. There is also a research gap in understanding the perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors of tourists towards sustainability in Bhaktapur and how these can be influenced by promotional marketing campaigns. Finally, there is a need for research that develops clear and measurable indicators to evaluate the success of sustainability-oriented promotional marketing campaigns in Bhaktapur. Addressing these research gaps is crucial to developing effective marketing strategies that promote sustainable tourism and enhance the sustainability of tourism in Bhaktapur. However, there are still gaps in research in this area that need to be addressed. There are few studies on the effectiveness of different promotional marketing strategies in Nepal. While there have been studies on the use of digital channels and sustainable tourism, there is limited research on the effectiveness of these strategies in terms of attracting tourists and increasing revenue for the country's tourism industry. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the prospects of promoting sustainable tourist behavior through promotional marketing in Bhaktapur, Nepal.

There are six parts to this paper. The introduction is covered in the first part, followed by a review of the relevant literature in the second. Similarly, this study discusses the research methods in the third portion, followed by the findings in the fourth section. Last but not least, part five contains the discussion, while section six has the conclusions.

2. Literature review

2.1 Promotional marketing in Nepalese context

The history of Nepalese tourism dates back to antiquity. It was common for people from other nations to go to Nepal for cultural exchange and pilgrimage (Tfaily, 2018). After centuries, the democratic tourism revolution has ushered in a new age for all international tourists in Nepal (Devkota et al., 2020a). Following the advent of democracy, Nepal opens its doors to foreign tourism (Pasquinelli & Bellini, 2016; Devkota et al., 2020b). In the last two and a half decades, the advertising scene has altered drastically. Prior to 20 to 25 years ago, print media, radio, and outdoor campaigns such as wall murals dominated the commercial landscape, with just a tiny share of advertising airing on television (Shakya, 2018). Presently, advertisements are popular in print, broadcast (TV and radio), online portals, and social media platforms. The rising number of advertisements is mostly due to consumer behavior. Additionally, technology has a big impact. Historically, television advertisements (TVCs) were devoid of images and special effects. TV ads with a greater degree of animation, graphics, and special effects are given in order to catch the attention of and pique the interest of consumers. As marketing and promotional operations grow more complex, advertising firms are innovating new marketing and promotional tactics (Geissler et al., 2006).

The tourism industry has considerably contributed to the expansion of Nepal's economy via promotional marketing initiatives. Due to topographical limitations, industrial centers cannot grow, the exploitation of natural resources is expensive, and there are insufficient agriculturally productive regions to fulfill the rising need for food. Tourism is one of the economic streams with a promising future in this circumstance. Currently, it is the economic sector with the greatest dependence ratio and the biggest foreign exchange earner. Promotional marketing plays a vital role in the growth of the Nepalese tourism industry (Amin, 2021). However, it also faces several issues that need to be addressed. One major issue is the lack of understanding of the target audience in the Nepalese tourism industry (Kharel et al., 2022). Many promotional campaigns do not take into account the specific needs and preferences of the tourists, leading to a lack of effectiveness in reaching the desired market. This can result in wasted resources and a poor return on investment for the tourism industry (Ketter et al., 2021). Another issue is the lack of creativity and originality in promotional campaigns for Nepalese tourism.

Many campaigns are generic and uninspired, which makes it difficult for them to stand out in a crowded market. This can lead to a lack of consumer engagement and a lack of interest in the tourism industry (Tomazos, 2022). Likewise, lack of proper measurement and evaluation of promotional campaigns for Nepalese tourism are other issues (Devkota et al., 2022). Many campaigns are not evaluated based on their effectiveness, which makes it difficult to determine whether they are achieving the desired results. This can lead to a lack of accountability and a lack of progress in improving marketing strategies for the tourism industry (Gavurova et al. 2023; Skare et al. 2023b). The lack of technology adoption is also a problem for the Nepalese tourism industry. Many companies in the industry are still not taking advantage of digital marketing strategies (Mura, 2020), and as a result, they are not reaching the target audience. Digital platforms such as social media and online travel agencies offer a vast audience and targeting options, but they are not being utilized effectively in Nepalese tourism (Shrestha, 2019). Furthermore, cultural sensitivity is also a problem in promotional campaigns for Nepalese tourism (Kharel et al., 2022). Many campaigns are not culturally appropriate, which can lead to a negative response from the target audience and damage the reputation of the industry.

In conclusion, promotional marketing in Nepalese tourism is facing several issues, including a lack of understanding of the target audience, lack of creativity and originality, lack of proper measurement and evaluation, lack of technology adoption, and cultural sensitivity. To overcome these issues, companies in the Nepalese tourism industry need to focus on understanding their target audience, creating original and engaging campaigns, evaluating the effectiveness of their campaigns, and incorporating digital marketing strategies into their marketing mix. Additionally, they need to be more culturally sensitive in their advertising campaigns to avoid negative response from the target audience.

3. Methods

3.1 Theoretical Value and Conceptual Framework

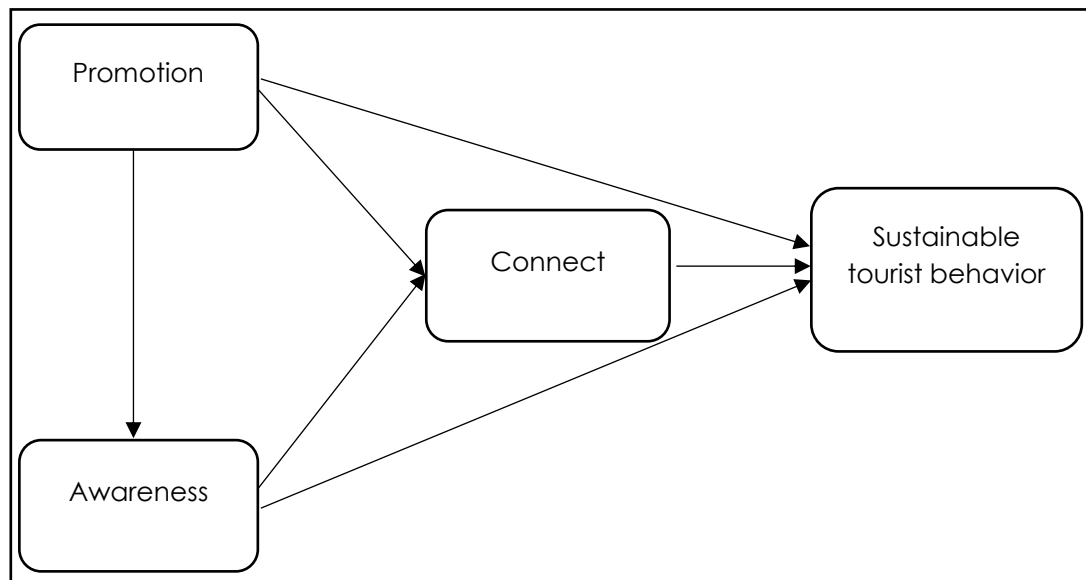
Nepal, a land of breathtaking natural beauty and rich cultural heritage, is a popular destination for tourists from around the world (Maharjan et al., 2022). But as the number of visitors' increases, so do the challenges of preserving the country's precious environment and preserving the traditional way of life of the local people. This is where the AIDA model comes in. Thus, the purpose of this research is to examine sustainable visitor behavior via promotional marketing in accordance with the AIDA model.

Promotional marketing in the context of Nepal's tourism industry can effectively utilize the AIDA model to attract and convert potential customers into actual tourists. Nepal is a country known for its natural beauty and rich cultural heritage. The AIDA model can be used to highlight these unique characteristics of Nepal and create an experiential value for the tourists. To capture the attention of potential tourists, Nepal's tourism industry could use striking imagery of popular tourist destinations such as Mount Everest, Lumbini (the birthplace of Lord Buddha) and Bhaktapur Durbar Square in their advertisements. Headlines that promise an "unforgettable cultural and natural experience" in Nepal could also be used to grab the attention of potential tourists and make them want to learn more. Using the AIDA model in the tourism industry can first capture the attention of potential customers by using striking imagery and compelling headlines in their advertisements. For example, a company might use a photo of a beautiful beach or a picturesque mountain range as the main image in an advertisement, along with a headline that promises an "unforgettable vacation experience." This helps to grab the attention of potential customers and make them want to learn more about the destination. Once the attention of potential customers has been captured, the next step is to spark their interest. In the tourism industry, this might involve providing more detailed information about the destination, such as describing the local culture, highlighting popular activities, or showcasing the amenities available at the resort. This helps to create a more complete picture of the vacation experience and

makes the destination more appealing to potential customers. As potential customers' interest in a destination grows, the next step is to create a sense of desire. In the tourism industry, this might involve highlighting the exclusive experiences or special promotions that are available. For example, a company might offer a limited-time deal on a luxury spa package or emphasize the unique features of a particular resort, such as a private beach or a world-class golf course. This helps to create a sense of urgency and makes the destination more desirable. Finally, the goal is to inspire potential customers to take action and book their vacation. In the tourism industry, this might involve providing clear call-to-action buttons or links on the advertisement, such as "Book Now" or "Learn More." Additionally, companies might offer special promotions or discounts to encourage customers to book their trip as soon as possible.

Ultimately, the AIDA model helps the tourism industry to create effective promotional marketing campaigns that target potential customers at different stages of the purchasing process. By capturing their attention, sparking their interest, creating a sense of desire, and ultimately inspiring them to take action, the AIDA model helps companies to drive bookings and create a positive, memorable experience for customers. The study includes different models to examine the link between promotional marketing and sustainable tourist behavior. Such as models of: Wijaya (2012); Rehman et al. (2014); Idris et al. (2017); Tobias-Mamina et al. (2020); Ali et al. (2015) and Lundström (2017).

Figure 1. **Conceptual Framework**



Sources: Modified and adapted from Gulati (2022)

In Nepal, promotion is an important tool for making tourists more aware of sustainability and encouraging them to act in a sustainable way. Through promotional campaigns, tourists can be educated about sustainable practices and their impact on the local environment and communities. Awareness can then result in a stronger connection between tourists and the destination as tourists become more invested in preserving the natural and cultural assets of the destination (Zhu et al., 2021). In turn, this connection can encourage sustainable tourist behavior. When tourists understand the importance of sustainable behavior and feel connected to the destination, they are more likely to engage in practices that promote sustainability, such as reducing waste, conserving energy, and supporting local businesses (Rodríguez et al., 2020). Continual promotional efforts can serve to further raise awareness and strengthen the connection between tourists and the destination, thereby reinforcing sustainable tourism practices (Roxas et al., 2020). Thus, effective promotion and awareness efforts coupled with a

strong sense of connection can motivate sustainable behavior among tourists, resulting in more sustainable tourism practices and a brighter future for destinations and communities.

The conceptual framework shown in figure 1 has made of four constructs used in this research. They are Promotion, Awareness, building a connection (Connect) and Sustainable tourist behavior. This research has formulated the following hypotheses after examining their connection via a review of the relevant literature.

3.2 Promotion and Awareness

Promotional tools have been studied as an interactive channel of promoting "environmentalist ideology" and social change. Promotional marketing helps in awareness of the tourist destination and their interest of choice. Social media helps being an open platform and having a massive global reach provides the space. Additionally, promotional tools include modern tourism marketing strategies such as use of the internet, websites, online advertising, and social media platform. Thus, these often plays a vital role in creating awareness among tourist about the destinations (Bingham, 2011).

H1: There is significant of Promotion activities to awareness amongst tourists.

3.3 Promotion and Connect

Promotional marketing allows tourists to interact with others who share their interests through online marketing platforms like websites, blogs, and discussion forums. This kind of digitalize connectivity continually effects in individuals developing marketing assets in tourism sectors (Gössling et al, 2018). Online tourism websites have the transformative power to influence tourists' curiosity by providing specific place guidelines to build strong connections with them through the medium of knowledge-sharing interactions (Ahuja & Galvin, 2018). Additionally, these interactions create links between tourists with similar wants, preferences, and backgrounds, which helps to ensure that the correct customers receive the precise information (Pentina & Tarafdar, 2019).

H2: There is significant impact of promotion influences building a connection amongst tourists.

3.4 Awareness and Connect

Sensitizing people to sustainability awareness by being conscious of the issue and the need for change is the first step in implementing change. Websites, online videos, and social media contributes to being an open platform and offers the space thanks to their enormous worldwide reach. Moreover, in tourism environmental awareness has increased over the past few decades, in large part due to awareness and media pressure (Kalafatis et al, 1999). It is used as a tool by stakeholders to raise awareness of the idea of sustainability in the travel and tourism industry, including the government, international organizations, and hospitality industry participants. Promotional marketing tools such as websites and social media have been used to introduce sustainable ideas such as the use of organic food, reusable products, and water conservation. In addition to introducing sustainability, this enables the organizations to demonstrate their responsibility towards tourists through various promotional tools to create awareness (Butler & Szromek, 2019; Mura et al., 2021). Promotional marketing tools includes websites, social media such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram to give a clear image to people freedom to discuss a variety of global issues, including ecological negligence, extinction, endangered species, and so on.

H3: There is significant impact of awareness about sustainability clearly benefits effective in connection in tourism industry.

3.5 Connect and Sustainable Demand

Social media allows likeminded people to connect with each other through social channels such as blogs, discussion forums, etc.; this "social connectedness" often leads to users building a social capital (Kivunja, 2018). Virtual communities have been active in stimulating sustainable behavior some that allows sustainable tourists to connect. Thus, it helps to empower tourists and sustainable communities to become more assertive (Johnston, 2005). Discussions centric to ecology, ecotourism and environment as a whole allow existing and potential tourists to bond (Sarkar et al, 2017). Social media has the transformative power to build connections amongst users with knowledge sharing interactions (Ahuja & Galvin, 2018). Also, these interactions build connections of people with similar needs, tastes and backgrounds which further facilitate the right information reaching the right consumers (Pentina, (2014).

H4: There is significant impact of connecting sustainable tourists on sustainable demand generation.

3.6 Promotional tools (Promotion) and Sustainable tourist demand (G)

Promotional marketing, also known as internet marketing or web advertising in tourism industries is a form of marketing that uses the internet to deliver promotional messages to tourist through digital channels likewise search engines, websites, social media, and email. Social media has been investigated as a dynamic platform for fostering social change; additionally, it has been discovered to favorably encourage sustainable consumption patterns and lifestyles. It has been discovered that it influences travelers' attitudes toward encouraging eco-activities and ethical travel. Additionally, research has shown that online messaging is more convincing than the typical tour operators for travelers. Websites, Instagram, online videos, Facebook, and other platforms, for instance, might provide a creative setting for more pronounced sustainable behavioral intents in the travel industry (Hvass & Munar, 2012).

H5: There is significant impact of social media promotion on sustainable demand generation.

3.7 Create awareness demand of tourism services in sustainable Demand)

Websites and microblogs have enhanced significant marketing strategies for hospitality and travel companies to provide clear information regarding their services towards sustainable tourists based on their welfares and demands. These are the major promotional activities tools to contribute effective guidelines for the tourists as well as companies. The tours and travel companies utilize multimedia like graphics and animation to attract travelers towards sustainable demands endorsements to promote marketing on the basis of nature based products and services policies in terms of creating awareness to protect environment as well (Vargas-Canales et al, 2020). Online users who seek to gather information generated content is a fantastic way for businesses to advertise their ecological tour packages to wider audiences. Thus, it concerned and encouraged both socially and environmentally aware about sustainable demand in tourism services (Boto-García et al., 2021).

H6: Sustainable demand generation is significant impact to promotion.

3.8 Connection as a mediator

Services offered by the hospitality business are purchased by visitors due to the fact that they need a place to rest, somewhere to eat, and a means of transportation to the many activities available in the area (Singh et al., 2022). This link is significant because the more visitors there are the more services that are produced to accommodate the expansion of the hotel business (Leiper, 1979). The development of sustainable tourism is envisioned as leading to management of all resources in such a

way that we can fulfill economic, social, and aesthetic needs while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems. This is the goal of sustainable tourism development. In addition, awareness plays the most important function in establishing connections between sustainable customer demand and the expansion of the tourist industry (Gulati, 2022).

H7: Connect plays mediating role between promotions to sustainable tourist behavior.

H8: Connect plays mediating role between awareness to sustainable tourist behavior.

3.9 Awareness as a mediator

Promotion is a crucial component of tourism, and it has direct impact on connection through creating awareness. Making a big audience of buyers aware of anything is a really challenging procedure so awareness creates major part between tourist's awareness and connection through promotional activities. The tourism industry must take full responsibility for how awareness identifying tourists through promotions (Abbas et al., 2019).

H9: Awareness plays a mediating role between promotions to connect.

3.10 Study Area, Population and Sampling

Foreign tourists were selected as the group to research sustainable tourist behavior through promotional marketing in the context of Nepal because they represent a substantial component of the tourism industry in Nepal. Tourism is an important source of income for the country, and international travelers contribute significantly to the industry's growth. In addition, overseas tourists may have different attitudes and expectations than local tourists, which could affect their sustainable behavior and response to promotional marketing. The study can provide insights on how to attract and retain international tourists through efficient promotional marketing methods by gaining a grasp of their attitudes toward sustainable tourism. In addition, the study can help present Nepal as a sustainable tourism destination, which can attract more foreign tourists, assist the country in diversifying its tourism offers, and eventually contribute to the sustainable development of Nepal's tourism industry.

The study area chosen for the study is Bhaktapur, Nepal. From the 12th through the 15th centuries, it served as the nation's capital. Khwopa is the local Newari name for Bhaktapur, which is shaped like a ying pigeon, covers 6.88 square kilometers and is 1401 meters above sea level. Nearly 100,000 people, most of whom are peasants, are housed in Bhaktapur (Badal, 2020). A survey of 282 visitors was carried out to learn more about the destination of Bhaktapur and its marketing strategies and positioning on an international level. Besides, purposive sampling was employed to gather data for the survey. In this study, a foreign visitor to Bhaktapur served as the sampling unit. The total number of tourists arrived in Bhaktapur is well known. Therefore, the population size is known so the research is based on probability sampling technique and total tourist visited were 53560 until September 2022 from the beginning of the year. A total of 282 foreign visitors from various nations were selected as the sample size which is calculated by following formula:

$$n = N * X / (X + N - 1) \dots \dots \dots (i)$$

Where,

$$X = Z_{\alpha/2}^2 * p * (1-p) / MOE^2 \dots \dots \dots (ii)$$

And $Z_{\alpha/2}$ is the critical value of the traditional distribution at $\alpha/2$ (e.g., for a confidence level of 95%, α is 0.05 and the critical value is 1.96), MOE is the margin of error, p is the sample proportion and N is that the population size. Following the computation, X's value is 267. X's value is swapped for (i). The sample size was therefore 267. With the addition of 5% non-response error by the authors, the total sample size for this research is 282.

3.11 Research Instrument and Data Collection

This research intends to examine the sustainable tourist behavior via promotional marketing in the Bhaktapur area by identifying the many problems encountered by visitors and giving a management plan to enhance tourism marketing. In order to accomplish the goals of this specific research, interviews and structured questionnaires served as the major means of data collecting. However, questions were developed in English language which were kept uncomplicated and straightforward. After constructing the questionnaire, the researcher next worked on the layout and the sequencing of the questions. The created structured questions were kept into the KOBO toolbox for data collection, which is utilized to gather the data. When the Questionnaire was added to the KOBO toolset, an initial survey consisting of a few sample questions was carried out as a pilot study in order to assess for consistency and accuracy. The survey consisted of a number of components, including a Likert scale with five points, subjective questions, and responses chosen from a list. The gathering of primary data, which occurred between August 15 and September 18, 2021, is the most important component of the study that performed during those dates. Altogether there were 9 socio-demographic questions. Out of them 8 were close-ended and 1 was open-ended. As researcher could not grasp the nationality altogether into the questionnaire. So, author chooses to leave it open for the respondent. All respondents were interviewed in the real time with the help of KOBO collect apps so that in case of confusion researcher were standby to clarify.

This study adopted structural equation modelling (SEM) - is a commonly used statistical approach in marketing research due to its capacity to test and verify complicated theoretical models. SEM's capacity to handle many latent variables and observable variables is one of its primary benefits, allowing researchers to test more complete and comprehensive models of consumer behavior, attitudes, and preferences. By estimating the latent variables underlying the observable variables, SEM additionally compensates for measurement error, leading in more reliable and precise estimations of the associations between variables. In addition, SEM offers goodness-of-fit indices that enable researchers to assess the model's validity and suggest areas for improvement. SEM may also test many hypotheses concurrently, including mediation and moderation effects, so shedding light on the processes via which variables influence one another. SEM is a potent tool for marketing researchers who want to examine the mechanics behind customer behavior and test sophisticated theoretical theories.

3.12 Respondent Profile

The socio-demographic category describes tourists visiting Bhaktapur, a small town near Kathmandu, Nepal. In summary, Bhaktapur is a UNESCO world heritage site; hence travelers seldom miss Nagarkot and Bhaktapur Durbar Square. Therefore, this research study on "Promoting sustainable tourism behavior by promotional marketing in Bhaktapur, Nepal" explores the inquisitiveness attitude about Bhaktapur. The table 1 provides an outline of the socio-demographic characteristics and reasons for which visitors visit Bhaktapur, Nepal. This knowledge is helpful for comprehending how to promote sustainable tourism via promotional marketing. For instance, given that the majority of visitors are young people (21-40 years old) and that employees make up a considerable fraction of visitors, social media, university collaborations, and student discounts might be used to target these groups. Also, this study suggests that the majority of tourists come for recreational purposes including climbing, highlighting the need to encourage sustainable tourism practices that protect the natural environment and cultural heritage places. To attract tourists interested in sustainability, marketing initiatives should stress the necessity of responsible tourism, such as decreasing waste and saving water and energy. In addition, the table reveals that a substantial proportion of tourists are married and gainfully employed, indicating that they may have more discretionary cash to invest in sustainable tourism activities. To attract these people, promotional marketing campaigns should emphasize the

advantages of sustainable tourism, such as helping the local economy and fostering cultural interchange. Ultimately, understanding the socio-demographic features and purpose of tourist visits to Bhaktapur is vital for the development of marketing strategies that encourage sustainable tourism behavior.

Table 1. **Socio-demographic profile of respondents**

Title	Category	Numbers	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	166	58.87%
	Female	116	41.13%
Age	Above 18 years	5	1.77%
	21-30 years	87	30.85%
	31-40 years	107	37%
	41-50 years	56	19.86%
	51-60 years	24	8.51%
	61-70 years	2	0.71%
	Above 70 years	1	0.35%
Marital Status	Married	139	49.29%
	Unmarried	126	44.68%
	Divorced	4	1.42%
	Widow	1	0.35%
	Others	12	4.26%
Education Profile	High School	10	3.55%
	Undergraduate	55	19.5%
	Postgraduate	75	26.6%
	Graduate	100	35.46%
	Above	42	14.89%
Occupation	Student	125	43.74%
	Employee	129	45.74%
	Self-employed	74	26.24%
	Unemployed	14	14.18%
	Business	40	8.87%
Purpose of visit in Bhaktapur	Holiday Pleasure	261	92.55%
	Business Purpose	25	8.87%
	Pilgrimage	28	9.93%
	Official Work	3	1.05%

Title	Category	Numbers	Percentage (%)
	Convention/ Conference	5	1.75%
	Trekking & Mountaineering	19	6.65%
	Part of the Package	30	10.5%
	Others	9	3.15

Source: own survey

4. Results

4.1 Visit Background of Tourist

As part of the visit background study, we asked our respondents a series of questions about their motivations to visit Bhaktapur. These included things like how they learned about the city, how long they planned to stay, how often they visited, and what affect our marketing efforts had on their decision.

Travel inspiration requires access to relevant information. Magazines, newspapers, the Internet, publicity, friends and family, television, social media, agencies, and other sources all played significant roles. Based on the data collected, it was determined that 58.87% of the information comes from friends and relatives, 49.65% comes from websites on the internet, 25.70% comes from social media like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, and the remaining 22.70% comes from travel agencies and other sources. In addition, other media like television, magazines, newspapers, etc., account for a tiny fraction of the total. Below is a chart displaying information about where to look for answers (Thapa, 2018). Since, how much money a tourist site makes is directly related to how long visitors stay. According to the collected data, 64.89 percent of respondents did not plan to stay in Bhaktapur beyond 1 day, 28.72 percent planned to stay at least 2 days, and just 5.67 percent planned to stay for more than five days. In addition, 84.4 percent of respondents were first-time visitors to Bhaktapur, 7.09 percent were repeat visitors, and 8.51 percent were repeat visitors who had been to Bhaktapur three or more times (Pandey, 2011).

Tourists who had come for promotional events were asked about their experiences and aspirations in Bhaktapur. The survey found that 91.49 percent of respondents had witnessed promotional marketing activities, and that their expectations had been met by the places they visited in Bhaktapur, while 8.51 percent of respondents had never witnessed any promotional marketing activities as they had been shown on the internet, and had little appreciation for the places they visited (Adhikari, 2019). This is what they gave as their justification: Not enough maps or posters, according to 43% of respondents. Also, 55% of people say that the cost of food and transportation is too high, and 27% say that the price of tour guides is too high. Furthermore, one-seventh of respondents blamed the lack of attention paid to museums and other cultural institutions (Arai & Goto, 2017).

4.2 Inferential Analysis

4.2.1 Descriptive Summary Analysis

The descriptive summary analysis provides summary statistics such as the total number of observations, average, standard error, variance, skewness, and kurtosis. Here, this study shows how data collection may be utilized to define the parameters of statistical methods. The mean is between 3.93 and 4.30, implying that the vast majority of respondents are in agreement with the statement. Most

answers fall within a narrow range (standard deviation = 0.65164 to 0.87842) that indicates the results are very consistent. Also, a left-skewed distribution has skewness between -1 and +1, and a Kurtosis between +4 and +4 (see table 2). Accordingly, skewness and kurtosis distributions are normal.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

	N	Min	Max	Mean		S. D	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
P_1	282	2.00	5.00	4.2801	.04095	.68764	-.561	.145	-.240	.289
P_3	282	2.00	5.00	4.1631	.04693	.78803	-.429	.145	-.881	.289
P_5	282	2.00	5.00	4.3050	.04405	.73975	-.767	.145	-.052	.289
A_1	282	1.00	5.00	4.1525	.04825	.81017	-.852	.145	.632	.289
A_4	282	1.00	5.00	4.0816	.04781	.80285	-.772	.145	.609	.289
A_6	282	1.00	5.00	4.0745	.04651	.78108	-.673	.145	.503	.289
C_3	282	1.00	5.00	4.1489	.04573	.76801	-.926	.145	1.518	.289
C_4	282	1.00	5.00	4.1986	.04616	.77524	-.914	.145	1.014	.289
C_5	282	1.00	5.00	3.9752	.05231	.87842	-.681	.145	.188	.289
G_1	282	2.00	5.00	3.9787	.04738	.79561	-.432	.145	-.271	.289
G_2	282	2.00	5.00	3.9326	.04461	.74919	-.299	.145	-.248	.289
G_3	282	2.00	5.00	3.9858	.04549	.76382	-.459	.145	-.036	.289
MeanG	282	2.00	5.00	4.0402	.03880	.65164	-1.065	.145	.834	.289
MeanA	282	1.00	5.00	4.1690	.03885	.65242	-1.486	.145	3.081	.289
Valid N (listwise)	282									

Source: Researcher's Calculation

4.2.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis

The objectives of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is a set of statistical approaches based on a correlation or covariance matrix that aims to reduce or simplify data (Koyuncu & Kılıç, 2019). In accordance with the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy for Individual Variance, the components are sufficiently connected. It mainly used in research through various test such as KMO & Bartlett's Test, Communalities, and common method bias. In this study, the KMO test is used to evaluate the strength of the partial correlation (how the components explain one another) between the variables, and the Bartlett's test of sphericity is used to test the null hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix (Shrestha, 2021). The KMO value is 0.841 which is higher than 0.70, hence it fulfills the criteria. There is no concern of reliability and validity in this research. Similarly, the data is

significant for Bartlett's test of sphericity since the value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05, indicating that factor analysis of data is significant. Likewise, Harman's single factor test is used to the un-rotated factor solution to assess how many factors are required to account for the majority of the variation in the data; this number should be less than fifty percent (Aguirre-Urreta & Hu, 2019). The total variance explained by a single factor in this research is 41.573%, which is less than 50%, showing the absence of a common method bias in this data set.

4.2.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

The multivariate statistical procedure of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was utilized to verify and corroborate the numerous variables and scales to which measured variables affect constructs (Bertsch & Esbensen, 1991). According to CFA, the model has to be accurately identified and characterized. The fitness indices CMIN/DF, RMR, GFI, CFI, TLI, and RMSEA results are drawn to determine if the model fit is excellent. The model fit for this study is exceptional since all of the indicators meet the requirement with the result of CMIN/DF ($2.020 < 3$), RMR ($0.030 < 0.08$), GFI ($0.946 > 0.90$), CFI ($0.963 > 0.90$), TLI ($0.949 > 0.90$), and RMSEA ($0.060 < 0.08$).

4.2.4 Measurement Model

The measurement model quantifies the interactions between hypothetical frameworks, which may or may not be quantifiable, and observable factors, which, as a linear combination, produce a certain fictitious structure. For this research study, the measuring model evaluates unidimensionality, reliability, and validity (Marin-Garcia et al., 2018). Model of measurement shows Compositive Reliability¹ (CR), Average Variance Explained² (AVE), and Maximum Shared Variance (MSV). Cronbach's Alpha is greater than 0.8, indicating strong internal construct consistency. CR and AVE values greater than 0.70 and 0.50 satisfy the measuring model's requirement. To satisfy model fit, AVE must be more than its MSV, and its square root must be greater than correlation (Gunduz & Elsherbeny, 2020).

Table 4. Measurement model

Construct	Indicators	Factor loading	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE	MSV
Promotion (P)	Transmit advertisements of tourist destinations	0.670	0.765	.766	.523	.102
	Promotional messages and publications	0.707				
	Keen to establishing long-term relationships	0.662				

¹ Compositive reliability measures the degree to which the items or indicators used to test a certain concept are consistent with one another.

² Average Variance Explained (AVE) is a statistical metric used in Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to quantify the amount of variation explained by a model's components or latent variables.

MSV is a metric used in structural equation modeling (SEM) to evaluate the degree to which two or more latent variables share common variance.

Awareness (A)	Security system is good	0.646	0.822	.830	.622	.558
	Accommodations and Food price for tourists	0.740				
	Tourist activities cause environmental pollution (litter, noise, waste)	0.793				
Connect (C)	Easy to Access	0.758	0.746	.757	.512	.236
	Better customer service influence behavior of tourist	0.602				
	Information about weather should be available	0.693				
Sustainable Tourist Behavior (G)	Knowledge of sustainable tourism destination	0.819	0.821	.831	.622	.558
	Involvement in sustainable tourism activities	0.579				
	Willingness to pay for a more sustainable tourist destination	0.824				

Sources: Author's Calculation

The table 3 displays the dataset's results, and there are two requirements that must be met. The convergent validity, the conditions are $AVE > 0.5$, $CR > AVE$ and for discriminant validity, the conditions are $AVE > MSV$, $AVE > ASV$ and $AVE > r$ correlation. The findings of the study demonstrate both convergence and discriminant validity as it satisfies and fulfill its criteria. Hence, it can be concluding that there were no validity issues, and it also shows that all indicators were successful in identifying the construct. Likewise, to be considered good, the values for the latent correlation construct, calculated based on the AVE and marked in bold inside the table 4, must be larger than the correlation values. It shows the correlation between different variables and square root of AVE which indicates that there are no issues of discriminant validity in dataset.

Table 3. Latent Correlation Construct

	CR	AVE	MSV	Max R(H)	C	P	A	G
C	0.757	0.512	0.236	0.779	0.716			
P	0.766	0.523	0.102	0.772	0.279	0.723		
A	0.830	0.622	0.558	0.850	0.341	0.320	0.789	
G	0.831	0.622	0.558	0.848	0.486	0.269	0.747	0.789

C = Connection, P = Promotion, A = Awareness, G = Sustainable tourist behavior

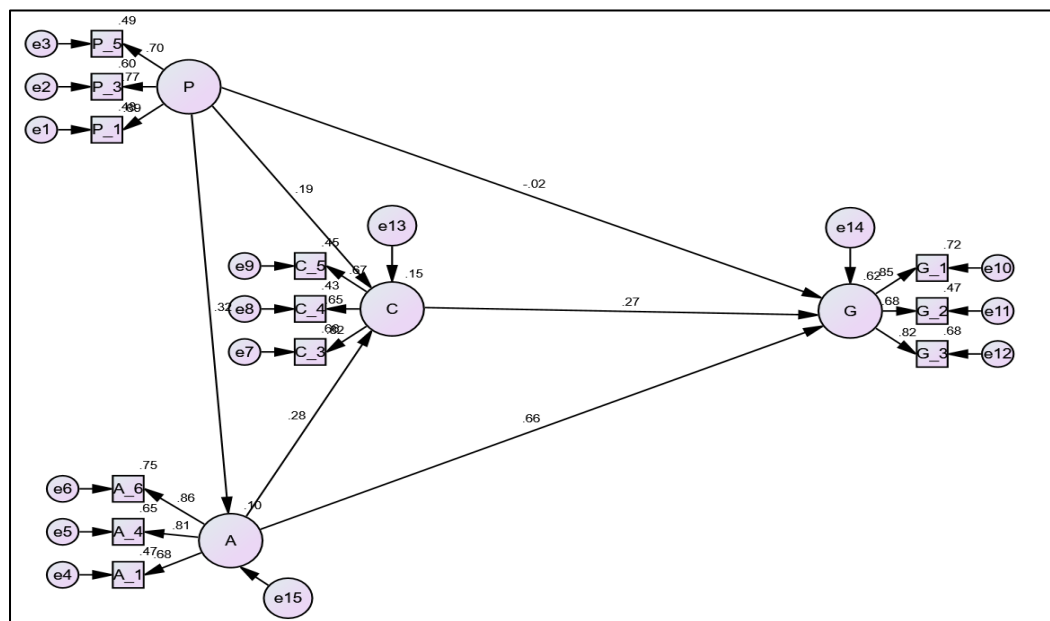
Source: Researcher's Calculation

4.2.5 Path Analysis and Hypotheses Testing

Path analysis, is a technique for tracing and evaluating the interconnections between several factors that influence a single result (Lleras, 2005), purpose is to compare two or more causal hypotheses by determining which one best fits the correlation matrix. This study uses responses from 282 tourists from the Bhaktapur district, including those visiting popular destinations like Bhaktapur Durbar Square and Nagarkot. Researching international tourists' needs necessitates putting together a 4-construct with a total of 12-variables. AMOS is routing software, and the initial stage is to create interconnected path diagrams based on independent variables. Path analysis provides a description of R2 values. In regression models, R-Squared (also known as R2 or the coefficient of determination) is used to determine how much of the variability in the dependent variable can be attributed to the independent variable. Thus, R-squared exemplifies how well the data fit the regression model (the goodness of fit).

Figure 2 demonstrates that promotion (P) accounts for 19% of the variance in the degree to which connection (C) explains variation in the marketing of tourist resources (e.g., search engines). The correlation between promotions (P) and consumer awareness (A) is 32%; awareness (A) and sustainable behavior (G) shows 66%. It still has positive reactions to information from visitors and strong relationships between them, as shown by the fact that 27% of the variance can be accounted for by the hypothesis that C causes sustainable behavior G. To further clarify, sustainable behavior (G) is the dependent variable, whereas promotion, connection, and awareness are the independent factors taken for this study.

Figure 2. Path Analysis



Sources: Researcher's Calculation, AMOS

The hypothesis testing was made on the basis on all the result. This section looks at the hypotheses statements to evaluate if the study's findings are statistically significant. Hypothesis tests are used in both regression and correlation analysis to determine whether the relationship between the correlation coefficient and regression is statistically significant. The p-values for hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H4, and H6 are all more than 0.01, indicating that these hypotheses are significant (see table 5).

Table 4. Hypothesis Testing Result

Hypothesis	Estimate	S.E	C.R	p-value	Conclusion
H1: Promotion → Awareness	.372	0.090	4.118	0.004	Significant
H2: Promotion → Connection	.249	0.105	2.363	***	Significant
H3: Awareness → Connection	.316	0.088	3.579	***	Significant
H4: Connection → Sustainable Demand (G)	.287	0.069	4.134	***	Significant
H5: Promotion → Sustainable Demand (G)	-.025	0.087	-.285	.776	Insignificant
H6: Awareness → Sustainable Demand (G)	.807	0.094	8.610	***	Significant

Source: Researcher's Calculation

4.2.6 Mediation Analysis

The SOBEL test was used in the mediation analysis to determine if there was any mediation at all, whether there was just partial mediation, or whether there was no mediation at all when the p-value was less than 0.05. The results of the mediation analysis for this research are shown in Table 6. The results demonstrate that connection (C) acts as a mediator between promotions (P) and sustainable demand (G), as well as between awareness (A) and sustainable demand (G). In a similar manner, Awareness (A) acts as a calming influence in between Promotion (P) and Connection (C), respectively.

Table 5. Mediation Analysis

Hypothesis	Mediating effect		Sobel Test	P-value		
	A	S _a			b	S _b
P-C-G	0.250	0.063	0.413	0.055	3.975	0.0001 (Significant)
A-C-G	0.268	0.055	0.413	0.055	4.867	0.000 (Significant)
P-A-C	0.266	0.065	0.268	0.055	4.070	0.000 (Significant)

Source: Researcher's Calculation

5. Discussion

Due to its flexibility to new methods, channels, and services, as well as strong government restrictions, Nepal's tourist sector has the potential to rebound in the post-pandemic age. The

significance of consumer health and safety has grown, which might be advantageous for Nepal as visitors seek immersive, secure, and affordable experiences. Using digital platforms for booking and personalizing services for tourists will be essential for the success of the Nepalese tourism business. It is crucial that the sector continues to create innovative digital marketing techniques that include customization and sustainable tourism practices.

This research reveals the significant relationship between promotion and awareness, indicating that promotional marketing increases tourists' awareness of a tourist destination. This study's findings complement the findings of Yeh et al. (2019) that promotion may increase awareness, which encourages better relationships and more sustainable behavior at tourism destinations. In order to assist visitors, understand the tourist destination and become more environmentally responsible, advertising may be used to educate them about it. According to Azinuddin et al. (2022), this enhanced awareness may lead to more ecologically responsible behavior and pleasant perceptions of the trip destination. This research also highlights the potential for promotional marketing to promote a feeling of community and understanding among tourists, therefore encouraging more environmentally conscious behavior in tourist regions. Nevertheless, socioeconomic factors, such as the degree of education and income of the visitor, may restrict the impact of promotional marketing on sustainable behavior. Wu et al. (2022) suggested that to impact the sustainable behavior of visitors, advertising strategies must be tailored to their socioeconomic characteristics. Our findings suggest that promotional initiatives are helpful at increasing visitor awareness and creating relationships with locations, but that they must be targeted to visitors' socioeconomic features to impact their sustainable behavior.

Promotional marketing helps travelers to engage with others who share their interests using online marketing platforms such as websites, blogs, and discussion forums that have a positive attitude toward visitors (Yetimolu & Uurlu, 2020). Thus, connection promotion has a substantial effect on both awareness and connection. By creating online content and communicating with others who may not share their interests, this kind of promotional marketing strategy encourages individuals to engage actively in the tourism industry. With the aid of this kind of promotion, prospective tourists may develop stronger ties to the region and get a deeper understanding of its attractions, services, and culture. Owing to the ambiance it produces, this form of promotional marketing strategy not only encourages more people to participate in tourism-related activities, but also builds deeper connections between tourists and locals (Kastenholz & Gronau, 2022). Like the importance of connection to awareness, it is essential to comprehend how visitors act and feel while visiting a location. This result is consistent with the findings of Indian researchers Ronald et al (2019). In contrast, social media is one of the most effective channels for promoting projects and raising public awareness of sustainability (Gulati, 2022). When environmental consciousness increases, networks for sustainable tourism arise. Increasing awareness thus has a beneficial effect on the growth of long-term demand. Connects acts as a bridge between promotion and long-term growth, as well as between awareness and long-term development. Similar to how awareness connects connections with marketing.

The AIDA model theory is more appropriate for the study because it claims that the AIDA paradigm for promoting sustainable behavior can help increase sustainable demand among sustainable tourists with the help of social media channels and also reveals that the consumer hierarchy theory helps to determine the tourists' attitudes. It focuses on the four stages of attention, interest, desire, and action to understand the effects of advertising on sustainable tourism, as it reveals that the consumer hierarchy theory helps to determine the tourists' attitudes. Because it considers the psychological and cognitive processes that impact visitors' decisions, including their perception, attention, memory, and motivation, it is particularly useful for promoting sustainable tourism behavior.

6. Conclusion

Tourism is an essential factor in a nation's economy, and international tourism is becoming increasingly significant as a major source of foreign exchange profits for economic development. This study examined the marketing of Bhaktapur, Nepal, as a tourist destination, along with its current state and potential future development. To maximize the marketing potential of Bhaktapur, it is essential to identify the target market, develop promotional strategies based on knowledge of customer preferences, use cost-effective tactics to reach potential tourists, and provide effective communication materials. Effective marketing strategies should be employed to capitalize on the increasing interest in Nepal and its potential as a destination, including promotional activities through digital channels such as online advertising, search engine optimization, and social media marketing to reach a larger and more targeted audience. However, the tourism industry in Nepal still needs to grow and compete in the global tourism market, and the lack of enough finances for efficient marketing and promotion is a key challenge. Therefore, creative strategies must be used to promote Nepal and attract tourists.

One of the limitations of this research is that it focuses only on the Bhaktapur area and does not address the broader influence of sustainable tourist behavior because of promotional marketing. Various cultural, economic, and environmental elements in various areas of Nepal may influence sustainable tourism practices. Thus, the results of this research may not be applicable to other locations in Nepal or other nations with distinct cultural and socioeconomic contexts. Therefore, future studies should consider the regional effect and distinct features of Nepal's many regions to design marketing tactics that support sustainable tourism practices. This will aid in integrating and adopting sustainable tourism practices at the regional level, encouraging sustainable tourist growth throughout the nation. Another limitation is that the sample size used in this research included 286 respondents and four variables. Therefore, future studies can be conducted by taking larger sample sizes and other variables to obtain a clearer picture of the impact of promotional marketing on tourism in Nepal.

References

1. Adhikari, S. (2019). Prospects of tourism in Nepal: A study of Pokhara city.
2. Aguirre-Urreta, M. I., & Hu, J. (2019). Detecting common method bias: Performance of the Harman's single-factor test. *Data Base for Advances in Information Systems*, 50(2), 45–70. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3330472.3330477>
3. Ahuja, M. K., & Galvin, J. E. (2018). Socialization in virtual groups. *Journal of Management*, 29(2), 161–185. <https://doi.org/10.1177/014920630302900203>
4. Ali, Z., Ejaz, S., Aleem, A., Saeed, M. U., Tahir, F. A., & Kashif, M. (2015). Understanding E-Marketing as a Firm's Promotional tool and Its Impact on Consumer Perception. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 5(3), 2222-6990.
5. Amin, S. B. (2021). An Overview of South Asian Tourism Industry and Significance of the Regional Tourism Integration. *The Economy of Tourism in Bangladesh*, 157-178.
6. Arai, T., & Goto, M. (2017). A survey on present tourism in Nepal and its ripple effects on other industries. *Environment and Ecology Research*, 5(7), 467-475.
7. Azinuddin, M., Hanafiah, M. H., Mior Shariffuddin, N. S., Kamarudin, M. K. A., & Mat Som, A. P. (2022). An exploration of perceived ecotourism design affordance and destination social responsibility linkages to tourists' pro-environmental behaviour and destination loyalty. *Journal of Ecotourism*, 1-24.
8. Badal, B. P. (2019). Tourism: Visit Nepal 2020. *Research Nepal Journal of Development Studies*, 2(2), 12-32.
9. Badal, B. P. (2020). Bhaktapur Tourism. *Research Nepal Journal of Development Studies*, 3(1), 29–55. <https://doi.org/10.3126/rnjds.v3i1.29650>

10. Bertsch, G. F., & Esbensen, H. (1991). Pair correlations near the neutron drip line. *Annals of Physics*, 209(2), 327–363. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0003-4916\(91\)90033-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/0003-4916(91)90033-5)
11. Bingham, L. B. (2011). Collaborative governance. *The SAGE handbook of governance*, 386-401.
12. BK, A., Mahato, A., Thapa, S., Rai, A. & Devkota, N. (2019). Achieving Nepal's sustainable development goals 2016 – 2030 by effective corporate governance. *Quest Journal of Management and Social Sciences*, 1(1), 50-72.
13. Boto-García, D., Zapico, E., Escalonilla, M., & Baños Pino, J. F. (2021). Tourists' preferences for hotel booking. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 92, 1–28. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2020.102726>
14. Butler, R. W., & Szromek, A. R. (2019). Incorporating the value proposition for society with business models of health tourism enterprises. *Sustainability*, 11(23), 6711.
15. Devasia, D., & PV, S. K. (2022). Promotion of tourism using digital technology: an analysis of Kerala tourism. In *Handbook of Technology Application in Tourism in Asia* (pp. 403-422). Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore.
16. Devkota, N., Gautam, S., Parajuli, S., Bhandari, U., & Paudel, U. R. (2022). Tourism Entrepreneurial Prospects in Bardiya, Nepal: Challenges and Way-forwards. *The Gaze: Journal of Tourism and Hospitality*, 13(1), 70-92.
17. Devkota, N., Gautam, S., Parajuli, S., Bhandari, U., & Paudel, U. R. (2022a). Tourism entrepreneurial prospects in Bardiya, Nepal: Challenges and way-forwards. *The Gaze: Journal of Tourism and Hospitality*, 13(1), 70-92.
18. Devkota, N., Kmeco, L., Thapa, S., Houška, P., & Poudel, U. R. (2022b). Tourists' Perception of Travel Risk and Management in Destination amid Covid-19 Pandemic: Empirical Evidence from Nepal. *Journal of Tourism and Services*, 13(25), 90-119.
19. Devkota, N., Paudel, U. R., & Bhandari, U. (2020a). Does westernization influence the business culture of a touristic city?. *Economics & Sociology*, 13(4), 154-172.
20. Devkota, N., Paudel, U. R., & Bhandari, U. (2020a). Tourism entrepreneurs' expectation from the provincial government in touristic city–Pokhara, Nepal. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights*, 3(3), 329-351.
21. Devkota, N., Paudel, U. R., & Bhandari, U. (2021b). Conveying impetus for fostering tourism and hospitality entrepreneurship in touristic destination: Lessons learnt from Pokhara, Nepal. *The Gaze: Journal of Tourism and Hospitality*, 12(1), 88-111.
22. Devkota, N., Paudel, UR, Hamarneh, I., Bhandari, U. (2021a). Rethinking Westernization in Destination: Tourists' Perception of a Touristic City. *Journal of Tourism and Services*, 23 (12), 1-25. *Journal of Tourism and Services*, 12(23), 1-25.
23. Gautam, S, KC, A., Devkota, N., Mahato, S., Paudel, U. R., & Parajuli, S. (2022). Locals' perception on tourism in Nepal: Evidence from the community support model. *Journal of Tourism Sciences*, 21(1), 10-24.
24. Gavurova, B., Skare, M., Belas, J., Rigelsky, M., & Ivankova, V. (2023). The relationship between destination image and destination safety during technological and social changes COVID-19 pandemic. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 191, 122488. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2023.122488>
25. Gawlik, A., Apollo, M., Andreychouk, V., & Wengel, Y. (2022). Pilgrimage Tourism and Sacred Places in the Himalaya. In *Tourism and Development in the Himalaya* (pp. 184-207). Routledge.
26. Geissler, G. L., Zinkhan, G. M., & Watson, R. T. (2006). The influence of home page complexity on consumer attention, attitudes, and purchase intent. *Journal of Advertising*, 35(2), 69–80. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2006.10639232>
27. Gössling, S., Cohen, S. A., & Hibbert, J. F. (2018). Tourism as connectedness. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 21(14), 1586–1600. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2016.1157142>

28. Gulati, S. (2022). Social and sustainable: exploring social media use for promoting sustainable behaviour and demand amongst Indian tourists. *International Hospitality Review*, 36(2), 373-393. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ihr-12-2020-0072>
29. Gunduz, M., & Elsherbeny, H. A. (2020). Critical assessment of construction contract administration using fuzzy structural equation modeling. *Engineering, Construction and Architectural Management*, 27(6), 1233-1255. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ECAM-05-2019-0246>
30. Hillman, W., & Radel, K. (2022). The social, cultural, economic and political strategies extending women's territory by encroaching on patriarchal embeddedness in tourism in Nepal. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 30(7), 1754-1775.
31. Hvass, K. A., & Munar, A. M. (2012). The takeoff of social media in tourism. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 18(2), 93-103. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1356766711435978>
32. Kalafatis, S. P., Pollard, M., East, R., & Tsogas, M. H. (1999). Green marketing and Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour: A cross-market examination. In *Journal of Consumer Marketing* (Vol. 16, Issue 5). <https://doi.org/10.1108/07363769910289550>
33. Kastenholz, E., & Gronau, W. (2022). Enhancing competences for co-creating appealing and meaningful cultural heritage experiences in tourism. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 46(8), 1519-1544.
34. Ketter, E., & Avraham, E. (2021). # StayHome today so we can# TravelTomorrow: tourism destinations' digital marketing strategies during the Covid-19 pandemic. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 38(8), 819-832.
35. Khan, N., Hassan, A. U., Fahad, S., & Naushad, M. (2020). Factors affecting tourism industry and its impacts on global economy of the world. *Available at SSRN 3559353*.
36. Khanal, S., & Shrestha, M. (2019). Agro-tourism: Prospects, importance, destinations and challenges in Nepal. *Archives of Agriculture and Environmental Science*, 4(4), 464-471.
37. Kharel, S., KC, A., Devkota, N., & Paudel, U. R. (2022). Entrepreneurs' level of awareness on knowledge management for promoting tourism in Nepal. *Journal of Information & Knowledge Management*, 21(02), 2250023.
38. Kharel, S., KC, A., Devkota, N., & Paudel, U. R. (2022). Entrepreneurs' level of awareness on knowledge management for promoting tourism in Nepal. *Journal of Information & Knowledge Management*, 21(02), 2250023.
39. Kivunja, C. (2018). Distinguishing between theory, theoretical framework, and conceptual framework: A systematic review of lessons from the field. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 7(6), 44-53. <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v7n6p44>
40. Koirala, N. (2020). Residents Perception and Attitude of Tourism Development: A Case Study of Patan Durbar Square the World Heritage Site. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Management and Social Sciences*, 1(1), 89-103.
41. Koyuncu, İ., & Kılıç, A. F. (2019). The use of exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses: A document analysis. *Eğitim ve Bilim*, 44(198), 361-388. <https://doi.org/10.15390/EB.2019.7665>
42. Kyrylov, Y., Hranovska, V., Boiko, V., Kwilinski, A., & Boiko, L. (2020). International tourism development in the context of increasing globalization risks: On the example of Ukraine's integration into the global tourism industry. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*, 13(12), 303.
43. Leiper, N. (1979). The framework of tourism: Towards a definition of tourism, tourist, and the tourist industry. *Annals of tourism research*, 6(4), 390-407.
44. Lichrou, M., O'Malley, L., & Patterson, M. (2018). Place-product or place narrative(s)? Perspectives in the marketing of tourism destinations. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 16(1), 27-39. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09652540701794429>
45. Lleras, C. (2005). Path analysis. *Encyclopedia of social measurement*, 3(1), 25-30.

46. Maharjan, S., Devkota, N., Poudel, U. R., & Klímová, M. (2022). Newari Community's Attitude to Promote Cultural Tourism Development: Evidence from Kathmandu Valley, Nepal. *Journal of Tourism and Services*, 24 (13), 164-189. 10.29036/jots.v13i24.349.
47. Marin-Garcia, J. A., Alfalla-Luque, R., & Machuca, J. A. D. (2018). A Triple-A supply chain measurement model: validation and analysis. *International Journal of Physical Distribution and Logistics Management*, 48(10), 976–994. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPDLM-06-2018-0233>
48. Mbaiwa, J. E. (2021). Economic development, tourism and conservation in developing countries. In *Tourism, Change and the Global South* (pp. 187-204). Routledge.
49. Mura, L., (2020). Innovations and Marketing Management of Family Businesses: Results of Empirical Study. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Knowledge*, 8(2), 56-66. doi: 10.37335/ijek.v8i2.118
50. Mura, L., Krchova, H., & Chovanova Supekova, S. (2021). *Managing the development of innovative and start-up forms of businesses and verification of INMARK concept*. 1st Edition. Szczecin: Centre of Sociological Research, 131 p. ISBN 978-83-963452-2-6. <https://doi.org/10.14254/978-83-963452-2-6/2021>
51. Pasquinelli, C., & Bellini, N. (2016). Global context, policies and practices in urban tourism: An introduction. In *Tourism in the City: Towards an Integrative Agenda on Urban Tourism*. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-26877-4_1
52. Paudel, U. R., Puri, S., Parajuli, S., Devkota, N., & Bhandari, U. (2021). Measuring Cultural Diversity Impact in Hospitality Industry Leadership: Managerial Communication Perspective from Five Star Hotels in Kathmandu Valley, Nepal. *Journal of Tourism & Adventure*, 4(1), 75-88.
53. Pentina, I., & Tarafdar, M. (2019). From "information" to "knowing": Exploring the role of social media in contemporary news consumption. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 35(June), 211–223. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2014.02.045>
54. Pradhan, S., Dyson, L. E., & Lama, S. (2022). The nexus between cultural tourism and social entrepreneurship: a pathway to sustainable community development in Nepal. *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, 17(6), 615-630.
55. Rehman, F. U., Nawaz, T., Ilyas, M., & Hyder, S. (2014). A Comparative Analysis of Mobile and Email Marketing Using AIDA Model. *Journal of Basic and Applied Scientific Research*, 4(6), 38–49.
56. Rodríguez, C., Jacob, M., & Florido, C. (2020). Socioeconomic profile of tourists with a greater circular attitude and behaviour in hotels of a sun and beach destination. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(24), 9392.
57. Roxas, F. M. Y., Rivera, J. P. R., & Gutierrez, E. L. M. (2020). Framework for creating sustainable tourism using systems thinking. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 23(3), 280-296.
58. Shakya, S. (2018). E-Governance in Nepal: Progress, Challenges and Possibilities. *Public Affairs And Governance*, 6(1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.5958/2321-2136.2018.00001.2>
59. Shrestha, G. (2019). Factors Affecting Digital Marketing in Tourism: An Empirical Analysis of the Nepal Tourism Sector. *International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development*, 3(6), 169-178.
60. Shrestha, N. (2021). Factor Analysis as a Tool for Survey Analysis. *American Journal of Applied Mathematics and Statistics*, 9(1), 4–11. <https://doi.org/10.12691/ajams-9-1-2>
61. Singh, B. J., Devkota, N., Dhakal, K., Mahato, S., & Paudel, U. R. (2022). People Perception on Business Opportunities of Banana Restaurants of Tikapur: Evidence from Structural Equation Modelling. *Journal of Business and Social Sciences Research*, 7(2), 47-66.
62. Skare, M., Gavurova, B., & Polishchuk, V. (2023a). A Fuzzy Multicriteria Model of Sustainable Tourism: Examples From the V4 Countries. *IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management*, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1109/tem.2023.3239519>

63. Skare, M., Gavurova, B., Polishchuk, V., & Nawazish, M. (2023b). A fuzzy model for evaluating the level of satisfaction of tourists regarding accommodation establishments according to social class on the example of V4 countries. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 193, 122609. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2023.122609>
64. Streimikiene, D., Svagzdiene, B., Jasinskas, E., & Simanavicius, A. (2021). Sustainable tourism development and competitiveness: The systematic literature review. *Sustainable development*, 29(1), 259-271.
65. Tfaily, R. (2018). E-Tourism and the Competitiveness of Tourism Products in the Context of the Global Tourism and Travel Industry Market. *Review of International Comparative Management*, 19(2), 187–195. <https://doi.org/10.24818/rmci.2018.2.187>
66. Thapa, B. (2018). *Tourism in Nepal: Shangri-La's Troubled Times*. November. <https://doi.org/10.1300/J073v15n02>
67. Tobias-Mamina, R. J., Kempen, E., Chinomona, R., & Sly, M. (2020). The influence of instagram advertising on destination visit intention. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, 9(3), 274–287. <https://doi.org/10.46222/ajhtl.19770720-18>
68. Tomazos, K. (2022). Social media influencers and tourism sustainability: the good, the irritating, and the desperate. In *Handbook of Innovation for Sustainable Tourism* (pp. 250-273). Edward Elgar Publishing.
69. Vargas-Canales, J. M., Carbajal-Flores, G., Bustamante-Lara, T. I., Camacho-Vera, J. H., Fresnedo-Ramírez, J., Palacios-Rangel, M. I., & Rodríguez-Haros, B. (2020). Impact of the Market on the Specialization and Competitiveness of Avocado Production in Mexico. *International Journal of Fruit Science*, 20(S3), S1942–S1958. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15538362.2020.1837711>
70. Wijaya, B. S. (2012). The development of hierarchy of effects model in advertising. *International Research Journal of Business Studies*, 5(1), 73–85.
71. Wilson, J., & Dashper, K. (2022). In the shadow of the mountain: the crisis of precarious livelihoods in high altitude mountaineering tourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 1-21.
72. Winter, S., Maslowska, E., & Vos, A. L. (2021). The effects of trait-based personalization in social media advertising. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 114, 106525.
73. Wu, C. K., Ho, M. T., Le, T. K. T., & Nguyen, M. U. (2022). The COVID-19 Pandemic and Factors Influencing the Destination Choice of International Visitors to Vietnam. *Sustainability*, 15(1), 396.
74. Yeh, T. M., Chen, S. H., & Chen, T. F. (2019). The relationships among experiential marketing, service innovation, and customer satisfaction—A case study of tourism factories in Taiwan. *Sustainability*, 11(4), 1041.
75. Yetimoğlu, S., & Uğurlu, K. (2020). Influencer marketing for tourism and hospitality. In *The Emerald handbook of ICT in tourism and hospitality* (pp. 131-148). Emerald Publishing Limited.
76. Zhu, L., Zhan, L., & Li, S. (2021). Is sustainable development reasonable for tourism destinations? An empirical study of the relationship between environmental competitiveness and tourism growth. *Sustainable Development*, 29(1), 66-78.

Brief description of Author/Authors:

Dr. Niranjana Devkota

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9989-0397>

Affiliation: Kathmandu Model College, Tribhuvan University, Nepal

Email: niranjandevkota@gmail.com

Niranjan Devkota is an economist specializing in behavioral economics linking agriculture, climate change, and other contemporary issues over a decade. He is now working as coordinator of the Research Management Cell at Quest International College, affiliated with Pokhara University, Nepal. His research is focused on perception and behavioral studies for people. He has presented his research ideas in different conferences/seminars and workshops. He has published in various journals and performed as a reviewer for several journals.

Doc. Mgr. Krzysztof Gajdka, Ph.D., MBA

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8113-6780>

Affiliation: Faculty of Entrepreneurship and Law, Pan-European University, Prague, Czech Republic

Email: krzysztof.gajdka@peuni.cz

In addition to his academic activities, which focus primarily on marketing communication and the history of advertising, associate professor Krzysztof Gajdka Ph.D. works as an expert in media communication. He is actively involved in advising on external political and electoral media communication for the most important Polish political entities.

Roshan Shivakoti

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-3381-3766>

Affiliation: Quest International College, Pokhara University, Gwarko, Lalitpur, Nepal

Email: siwakoti9777@gmail.com

Roshan Shivakoti is an MBA student at Quest International College, Pokhara University, Nepal. He presented his research ideas at various national conferences, seminars, and workshops. During his MBA academic journey, he completed various reports and analyses regarding the financial status of different companies. He is interested in capital markets, travel and tourism, and behavioral research.

Mgr. Monika Klímová, Ph.D.

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1661-1119>

Affiliation: Faculty of Business, Pan-European University, Prague, Czech Republic

Email: monika.klimova@peuni.cz

Monika Klímová is a doctor of philosophy and applied ethics. In her publications and research activities, she focuses primarily on intercultural communication in tourism, ethical communication, and the specifics of providing tourism services reflecting the cultural differences of specific tourist segments. She publishes in many scientific journals, participates in scientific conferences, works as a reviewer of several scientific journals, and is a member of several professional organizations.

Krishna Dhakal

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6668-9707>

Affiliation: Quest Research Management Cell, Quest International College, Pokhara University, Gwarko, Lalitpur, Nepal

Email: krishnadhakal9841@gmail.com

Krishna Dhakal is an assistant coordinator at Quest Research Management Cell, Quest International College, Pokhara University, Nepal. He has a bachelor's degree in computer science and engineering, which he earned from East Point College of Engineering and Technology, Bangalore University of Technology (VTU), India. In addition to his attendance at several national and international conferences, Mr. Dhakal is also an author who has had his work published in various national and international journals. He has a fundamental understanding of STATA and rudimentary expertise in SmartPLS, SPSS, AMOS, Kobo Toolbox, and Arc GIS.