

Tourist satisfaction towards tourism products and market with special reference to Lumbini

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Abstract: Foreign tourists who visit Lumbini get a glimpse of the ancient art and culture of Nepal as well as acknowledge Buddha. Most of the respondents availed of high class accommodation and were satisfied with the hygienic conditions in these hotels. They travelled by different means of transport to reach the destinations the satisfaction related to the attitude of drivers and they not at all appreciated conductors. Lumbini market as symbol of culture and heritage are satisfactory but proper marketing of tourism product is not satisfactory which need of an hour. The places, the temples, the river, the spots, parks and tranquil environment of Lumbini are highly appreciated by the tourist. But the communication and banking facilities are found to be dissatisfactory in rural areas and tourist spots. There are many PCOs and banks are available in the area. Although they feel quite satisfied with their visit but still a gap exists between their expected and perceived services. One of the reasons for this gap has been identified as non-availability of tourism area packages, improper interpretation facilities, poor conditions of ordinary buses and share taxies plying between interior rural areas, awful maintenance of city roads, traffic congestion, non-availability of adequate information on official web site and non-availability of quality souvenirs at Lumbini. Based on this identification recommendations have been offered for eliminating gap. This may result in tourist delight and an increase in tourist satisfaction at Lumbini and ultimately into socio-economic development of the region.

Key words: Tourist satisfaction, Tourism Products and market, SWOT Analysis, Lumbini

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism destination branding is a general concept; destinations can be branded like products or people. In this case, the power of branding is in making people aware of the location and linking desirable associations. Destinations are a large entity with sets of material and non-material elements (Florek, 2005). The attractiveness of a tourist destination encourages people to visit and spend time at the destination. Therefore the major value of destination attractiveness is the pulling effect it has on tourists. Without the attractiveness, tourism does not exist and there could be little or no need for tourist facilities and services. It is only when people are attracted to a destination that facilities and services follow (Ferrario, 1979). Tourism marketing is an integrated effort to satisfy tourists by making

the best possible services available to them. It is a device to transform the potential tourists into actual tourists. (Musa, Mohammad, 2013). Tourists are the indicators of foreign currency earnings and economic growth in and around the destination. So, the destination development, management and promotion are important marketing functions of tourism marketing.

Tourism is the major economic source of Nepal. Nepal is trying to develop its foreign currencies earning sector's status to compete in regional and global market. Lumbini being the birthplace of Lord Buddha, thousands of national and international Buddhist as well as non-Buddhists come to visit the cultural and religious place every year. It has direct and indirect effect in the socio economic development of this region. Effective and sustainable positioning of the destination in the regional and international level can be the source of increasing tourists flow in the place.

A tourism product can be defined as the sum of the physical and psychological satisfaction it provides to tourists during their travelling en route to the destination. The tourist product focuses on facilities and services designed to meet the needs of the tourist. It can be seen as a composite product, as the sum total of a country's tourist attractions, transport, and accommodation and of entertainment, which result in customer satisfaction. Tourism has certain basic components without which it cannot operate. Although tourism consists of various products, these may, however, be considered to be the basic. These basic products of tourism are accommodation, transportation, locale and security. Accommodation is a base of tourism industry as it is a vital and fundamental part of tourism supply. Tourists in their travel require location where they can rest and revive during their travel. A tourist, in order in order to get to his destination, has to travel and, therefore, some mode of transport is necessary for this. The locale may include a holiday destination and what it offers to the tourist. The holiday destination may offer natural attractions like sunshine, scenic beauty or sporting facilities and so on. Tourism and transportation has long been recognized as an engine of growth for long-term economic growth and development. This industry is considered as a great source of foreign exchange earner for many developing countries, who considered natural resources as their major assets (Thullen, 1996). Today, tourism is the fastest growing industry in the world and also one of the world's most competitive. This competition is constantly growing as more and more destinations seek to attract tourists and more companies and organizations are involved in the

highly-skilled business of destination planning, transportation, accommodation and catering for the tourists.

Tourism being the outcome of combination of the motivations, it depends upon the free consent and curiosity of the visitors. Satisfaction and achievement of goal are the major motivation factors. Leisure, transport facilities, income, accommodation, locale, package tours, climate, business, natural beautification, better education, world exhibition, trade, fairs and cultural heritages are known as motivating factors to visit. Geographical items, historical and archaeological monuments as well as pilgrimage sites are major elements of tourist attraction. In this situation Lumbini and its neighbor sites are related with cultural, archaeological and pilgrimage status. Lumbini, the birthplace of Shakyamuni Buddha, is the symbol of peace, compassion, pity and harmony. In the promotion of tourism transportation, accommodation, attractions (natural as well as cultural heritages), security, proper information and communication are the basic elements.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism is a basic and most desirable human activity deserving the praise and encouragement of all people and all governments. It is an industry concerned with attracting people to a destination transporting them their housing, feeding and entertaining them upon their arrival and returning them to their homes. For many major economics of the world tourism is an integral part and is an important source of foreign exchange. (Sharma, 1988).

Accommodation is one of the basic product, which is essential for providing food and rest. Tourism and transportation has long been recognized as an engine of growth for long-term economic growth and development. This industry is considered as a great source of foreign exchange earner for many developing countries, who considered natural resources as their major assets (Thullen, 1996). Today, tourism is the fastest growing industry in the world and also one of the world's most competitive. This competition is constantly growing as more and more destinations seek to attract tourists and more companies and organizations are involved in the highly-skilled business of destination planning, transportation, accommodation and catering for the tourists.

It has been said rightly by (Batra & Chawla, 1995) in their study that travelling stimulates an increased interest in tourism. The decision of a holidaymaker to go for a particular destination is basically influenced by its comparative advantage in terms of attractiveness over the competing destinations. The applications of marketing principles in the tourism industry are meant for the formulation of marketing mix on the basis of the users' behavioral profile. For the successful execution of marketing strategies or for translating the strategies into the meaningful purposes, it is essential to have a detailed knowledge of the changing behavior of users of services in order to satisfy them. In the recent year tourists have become more demanding and discriminating. To keep pace with the changing tourists' needs and wants marketers have to identify ways to improve their products in order to satisfy the customers who are the king of the market.

Mustonen & Honkanen, (2007) examined perceived tourism behavior and desire to travel. The study is based on postmodern theories which state that instead of demographics, social

divisions are based on identity and lifestyle. In their article the effects of these both were also examined. Analysis was based on two nationwide surveys, "Finland 1999 and Finland 2004" the results were somewhat parallel with the hypothesis. Further, the study concludes that the effects have remained quite stable regardless of the finding that "desire to travel more" has increased while "perceived tourism behavior has increased.

Chauhan & Khanna, (2008) attempted to investigate the satisfaction of the tourist's vis-a-vis the tourist infrastructure which includes accommodation, transportation, communication, drinking water, and civic amenities available in the Jammu and Kashmir. The study is based on survey where 100 tourists were considered who visited the various tourist centers of Jammu and Kashmir. The research suggested measures to improvise the available infrastructure to enhance the tourist satisfaction.

3. REVIEW OF RESEARCH WORKS IN LUMBINI:

Kunwar and Ghimire (2012) in their study "Lumbini as International Pilgrimage Destination: Authenticity and Significance" focused for the need of development of Lumbini region as well as for the successful completion of Visit Lumbini year 2012 at that time. They think Tourism is the dynamic industries which contribute significantly in the national economy needs always new things, ideas, activities and attractions. Visit Lumbini 2012 could be the appropriate platform to publicize Lumbini and Nepal in the international market as well as create awareness among the domestic tourists. It is the slogan to develop Lumbini and attract more pilgrims and tourists from the international market and bring the momentum of tourism industry of Nepal.

Neupane (2009), in the study "Heritage Complexity and Tourism: The Case of Lumbini Nepal" provided some recommendations to make the site attractive for both visitors and local communities. One of the ways of getting support for conservation and development of the site from local communities in this case is providing economic benefits through tourism. However, despite the importance of spiritual and academic interests in Lumbini, its potential for attracting international visitors and a growing trend in arrivals, the area has not benefited well from tourism. Through the Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Program (TRPAP), the government is trying to diversify the tourism product so that tourists will spend more money at the site and in surrounding villages. However, the diversification of tourism products by TRPAP without much tourism insight may not be appropriate. Rather, it is recommended to increase the length of stay of tourists through the development and promotion of other Buddhist sites around the area, including Kapilvastu and Devdaha. Certified guided tours and interpretive programs can also help employ locals and increase the length of stay. Lumbini is also suffering from a seasonal pattern of tourists as the site experiences very low visitation rates during summer months of April to July. Although monsoons are a big factor in seasonality shifts, their impact on heritage tourism should be much less than other types of tourism, such as nature-based tourism because it is easier to control the climatic factors in the built environment such as temples and museums. The monsoon can be a real constraint for a small portion of the tourists visiting Lumbini who also visit other mountain destinations. But for Asian

pilgrims, it should not be a significant factor. This warrants awareness and information dissemination, which should be incorporated in the tourism plan for Lumbini

Tourism activities began in time immemorial, early travels were mainly for sustaining livelihood activities but the modern travel and tourism is mainly for pleasure and recreation; this results in exploitation of newer and newer areas without any concern for nature. The over exploitation of the tourism areas can result in pollution and destruction of natural flora and fauna, the natural beauty of the area and adverse social, economic and cultural impacts on local population. Tourism developments based on carrying capacity and sustainable development becomes relevant in this scenario for proper management of natural resources so that the present as well as future generations may enjoy nature's beauty, and thereby enhance tourist flows and revenues.

All of the literatures and previous studies such as research activities, survey articles, and related online literatures, studied tourism in Lumbini by its historical perspective, socio-economic impacts, overall Lumbini development perspective and problems point of view in Lumbini. No studies are found to deal with tourists' satisfaction towards tourism products and services available in Lumbini. So, the researcher finds the scope in doing research in that area of tourism in Lumbini. However, this study somehow followed those studies to add value to the gap.

4. OVERVIEW OF TOURISM IN LUMBINI

Lumbini is the birthplace of Lord Buddha and its religious value has been attracting pilgrims since the very early ages. The archaeological remains, which were excavated throughout the last century and which are now conserved at the site, provide testimony of these pilgrimages since the 3rd century BC. It is for these reasons, that Lumbini was inscribed in the World Heritage List in 1997 (Kanno, 2006).

Lumbini has been a pilgrimage destination since the time of Buddha. However, there were no systematic records of tourists before 1984. Since 1984, the LDT has kept visitor records but only for visitors from countries that require a passport to enter Nepal. Tourism growth was disrupted by the Maoist insurgency and political turmoil in Nepal between 1999 and 2002. Tourist arrivals to Nepal and Lumbini show that tourism in Lumbini was more sensitive to political instability than the country's other destinations. However, since 2002, Lumbini has experienced a 684% growth in arrivals. The number of tourists to Lumbini increased by 43% between 2006 and 2007. The credit for this rapid growth goes to the recent peace process, political stability, the implementation of the Lumbini master plan project components and increased promotional activities (Nepal Tourism Board, 2008).

The holy site of Lumbini has ruins of ancient monasteries, a sacred Bodhi tree, an ancient bathing pond, the Asoka pillar and the Mayadevi temple, where the precise place of birth of Buddha is located. A pillar now marks the spot of Asoka's visit to Lumbini. Lumbini, as of 1997, is an UNESCO World Heritage Site specifically nominated for the international World Heritage program. The holy site of Lumbini is bordered by a large monastic zone, in which only monasteries can be built, no shops or hotels or restaurants. It is separated into an eastern and western monasteries zone, the eastern having the Theravada

monasteries, the western having Mahayana and Vajrayana monasteries.

The WTTC forecasts that tourism will grow on an average 4.5% annually between 2005 and 2014 (Choi & Sirakaya, 2005). Tourism is now viewed as one of the key sectors of economic growth and development in the state, both from the point of view income and employment generation as well as source of revenue for the state. No doubt tourism in Uttaranchal is definitely capable of generating more income than it is generating now. Efforts are lacking somewhere perhaps on the part of the stakeholders in the tourism industry, policy makers and developers as well as the travel intermediaries in the state.

5. OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESIS

It is evident from the foregoing enumeration of the gaps in the studies conducted so far that there is still dearth of research studies mainly focusing on the tourist's satisfaction in tourism products and market in Lumbini. The present work is conducted against this backdrop. It includes empirical study on tourist satisfaction on tourism products and market of Lumbini i.e. transports, locals, accommodation and so on. Every tourist has some expectations at the time of visiting any destination, which leads to different levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

The primary purpose of this study is as follows:

- To study the level of satisfaction towards tourism products and services with special reference to Lumbini.
- To study the effectiveness of the tourism market in the area.
- To acquire a knowledge of the GAP (if any) that exists between tourists expected services and perceived services at Lumbini.
- To evaluate the problems faced by the tourist while they visit the spot Lumbini.
- To undertake a resource analysis to identify its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT Analysis) in the context of Lumbini.

6. HYPOTHESIS:

On the bases of the objectives of the study the designed hypothesis are as follows:

H1: It is presumed that tourists are satisfied with the tourism products of the Lumbini.

H2: The gap between the tourists' expected services and perceived services at Lumbini does not exist.

H3: In Lumbini, tourism has been developed.

7. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

This research work is basically exploratory in nature. The aim of this research is to collect detailed information about expectations and related satisfaction of tourists visiting Lumbini. It has been endeavor of the researcher to make an empirical study by analyzing and critically examining the relevant statistical collection from primary and related information from secondary sources. The collection of primary data includes Questionnaire; Discussions; and observations to find out tourist satisfaction level about the various tourism products like accommodation, transportation, communication, banking facilities and so on and the effectiveness of the marketing efforts in the state of Lumbini. Further a SWOT analysis of Lumbini Tourism is also carried out on the basis of the opinion survey and the interviews of the tourist.

7.1 Study Areas and Sample Size:

A sample size of 93 tourists from the study area that is pilgrimage places, stations, sanctuaries, parks, adventure spots of Lumbini is taken on convenient cum judgment basis. These places are chosen because they hold the perennial positions in terms of tourists' arrivals in the state.

7.2 Questionnaire Design

Pilot survey has been undertaken for pre-testing the questionnaire. Questionnaire has been edited in the light of the results of the pilot survey. The questionnaire consists of 20 statements, which are related to accommodation, locale, transportation and so on. Scaling: Five point scaling i.e. Strongly Agree, Agree, Uncertain, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree.

7.3 Non-Parametric Statistical Analysis

For the purpose of analyzing the collection of data, statistical techniques of mean, standard deviation and skewness have been used. In order to study the uniformity in the view of the various respondents. Chi-square test has been applied.

7.4 Limitations

- Some of the conclusions are based on the estimates, assumptions, observations and informal interviews.
- Sample size remains medium and the margin of error associated with it could creep in to influence the inferences drawn in this study.

8. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (%)

Description	Responses
Gender	
Male	65
Female	28
Age of Respondents (Years)	
Under 20	15
20-30	25
30-40	40
40-50	14
Above 50	7
Education	
Secondary	5
Higher Secondary	26
Graduation	42
Post Graduate	17
Other	3
Occupation	
Business	19
House-wife	11
Service	38
Student	25
Marital Status	
Married	41
Unmarried	52
Stay in Lumbini	
1-7	55
7-15	28
15-above	10

A look into demographic profile of the surveyed tourists (which include foreign tourists only) indicate that about 70% are male and 30% female, falling in the age group of 25-50 where as 44% are married and 56% are unmarried. Respondents are 100% educated, 41% of them are service class and remaining is

business class. The sampling method has been devised so as to ensure adequate representation for the entire foreign tourist with regard to tourism products and market.

Table 2: Tourists Satisfaction towards Tourism Products and Market of Lumbini (Accommodation Facility)

Particulars	Mean	S.D.	Skewness	S.E.of Skewness	Chi-square (χ^2)	p
Easy accessibility of hotels and lodges.	3.77	1.205	-0.782	0.241	1.3	0.01
Banking facilities near tourist spots.	3.33	1.393	-0.178	0.241	9.7	0.01
Availability of desired rooms in hotels.	3.42	1.505	-0.405	0.241	6.6	0.01
Hygiene in the rooms of the hotels.	3.56	1.438	-0.664	0.241	3.2	0.01
Maintenance of the tourist attraction.	3.09	1.498	-0.046	0.241	4.8	0.01

*strongly agree-1, ..., strongly disagree-5

Respondents' opinion towards easy accessibility of hotels at rural areas is strongly disagreeing. The mean value is higher at average score. The variation in the opinion and skewness is 1.20483 and -0.782. Calculated χ^2 value is significant at 1 percent equally distributed. This, it is concluded that they are not all satisfied with the accessibility of hotels at Lumbini. The majority of the respondents are distributed towards higher side on the issue of banking facilities near tourist spots. Mean value is higher at five-point scale. The standard deviation and skewness is 1.39302 and -0.178. Calculated χ^2 value is significant at 1 percent level of significant, which shows that opinion is not equally distributed and distributed towards the higher side of the average score. Therefore it is concluded that banking facilities are not satisfactory in Lumbini.

It is observed that foreign tourist is strongly unsatisfied with the availability of desired rooms in hotels. Further their opinion is distributed more towards higher side i.e. disagree to strongly disagree. The mean value is noted higher than the average standard score, while variation in the opinion and skewness is 1.50541 and -0.405 respectively. This supports the above analysis. The χ^2 test is significant at 1 percent level of significance. It reveals that opinion is not equally distributed. It is concluded that tourist satisfaction regarding reasonable rooms depends on the time i.e. at peak tourist time or normal time.

A majority of the respondents are dissatisfied with the hygiene at restaurants. Mean value is lower at five-point scale. The standard deviation and skewness observed is 1.43773 and -0.664 respectively. The calculated χ^2 value is significant at 1 percent level of significance. Therefore the conclusion drawn is majority of the tourists are not satisfied with the hygiene in the restaurants. A majority if the respondents strongly agree with the maintenance of tourists spots. The mean value is higher at five-point scale. The standard deviation and skewness is

1.49811 and -0.046. Calculated χ^2 value is significant, which shows that opinion is not equally distributed and distributed towards the higher side of the average score. Therefore it is concluded that a majority of the tourist are not satisfied with the maintenance of tourist places but on the other hand a few of them are satisfied also.

Table 3: Tourists Satisfaction towards Tourism Products and Market of Lumbini (Transportation Facility)

Particulars	Mean	S.D.	Skewness	S.E. of Skewness	Chi-square (χ^2)	p
Accessibility of the roads in the city and rural areas.	3.32	1.347	-0.429	0.241	3.7	0.01
Proper interpretation facilities at tourist spots.	3.43	1.34281	-0.371	0.241	10	0.01
Availability of convenience in the city and rural areas.	3.32	1.36241	-0.308	0.241	9.9	0.01
Adequate tourist information facilities in the city.	3.43	1.335	-0.6	0.241	8.9	0.01
Safety at tourist place.	3.39	1.302	-0.454	0.241	1.3	0.01

*strongly agree-1,....strongly disagree-5

It is evident from the table that a majority of the respondents are uncertain and distributed towards higher side regarding the easy accessibility of interior roads in Lumbini. Most of them are dissatisfied with these conditions. The mean value supports the above opinion. The variation in the opinion and skewness are observed 1.34750 and -0.429 respectively. The calculated χ^2 value shows significant at 1 percent level of significance. It is concluded that majority of the respondents do not have the same opinion over the issue of easy accessibility in the interior roads of Lumbini.

A majority of the respondents are disagreeing regarding proper interpretation facilities at tourist spots. The mean value is higher at five-point scale further standard deviation and skewness supports the opinion. Calculated χ^2 value is significant at 1 percent level of significance. This shows that opinion is not equally distributed. Thus, it is concluded that tourists are not satisfied with the interpretation facilities at tourist spots in Lumbini.

It is observed that foreign tourist is strongly unsatisfied with the availability of conveniences in Lumbini. Further their opinions distributed more towards higher side i.e. disagree to strongly disagree. The mean value, standard deviation and skewness support the opinion. The χ^2 calculated value is significant at 1 percent level of significance, which shows that their opinion is not equally distributed. Thus the above analysis leads to the conclusion that those tourists who are interested in rural tourism or others are facing lots of problem in availability of

conveniences therefore proper transportation facilities should be arranged.

It is notable that majority of the respondents do not agree with the availability of tourist information facilities in the city. The mean value of the responses depicts that majority are lying towards higher side of the mean standard score at five-point scale. The standard deviation and skewness is 1.33526 and -0.6 respectively. Further χ^2 value is significant at 1 percent level of significance. It shows that opinion of the respondents is not equally distributed. It is concluded that tourists are not satisfied with the tourist information given on the signboards or offices at Lumbini.

As far as safety at tourist area is concerned, a majority of the responses do not agree with the same and their opinion is further distributed more towards higher side i.e. disagree to uncertain. The noted mean value is higher than the average standard score, while variation in the opinion and skewness is 1.30186 and -0.454 respectively. This supports the above analysis. Further χ^2 test is significant at 1 percent level of significance. It reveals the opinion is not equally distributed. Thus the above analysis concluded that tourist is not satisfied with the safety at tourist spots of Lumbini.

Table 4: Tourists Satisfaction towards Tourism Products and Market of Lumbini (Local Facility)

Particulars	Mean	S.D.	Skewness	S.E. of Skewness	Chi-square (χ^2)	p
Special tourism area packages.	3.4	1.333	-0.485	0.241	7.8	0.01
Availability of tourist guide.	3.37	1.308	-0.415	0.241	9.7	0.01
Quality of food at restaurant.	2.79	1.472	0.178	0.241	5.6	0.01
Hygiene at the restaurants.	2.66	1.379	0.354	0.241	4.8	0.01
Tele-communication.	3.06	1.406	-0.064	0.241	1.4	0.01

*strongly agree-1, strongly disagree-5

As far as special tourism area packages is concerned, a majority of the respondents either disagree or strongly disagree. The mean value is higher at scaling point, whereas standard deviation and skewness is 1.33333 and -0.485, which indicate that their opinion is distributed towards higher side on this issue. The calculated value of χ^2 shows the significant at 1 percent level of significance. The conclusion can be drawn that foreign tourist are satisfied with special tourism packages at Lumbini.

Respondents' satisfaction levels towards easy availability of tourist guide at destinations are distributed towards higher side of the average score i.e. disagree to strongly disagree. The mean value is higher than the average standard score. The standard deviation and skewness is 1.30775 and -0.415. the χ^2 value is significant at 1 percent level of significance. Further it indicates that their opinion is not equally distributed. It is concluded that tourist guides are not easily available at every locations of Lumbini.

The above table further shows that majority of the respondents either strongly agree or agree with the quality of food at restaurants. The mean value noted lower than the average standard score. The standard deviation and skewness is 1.47227

and 0.178. It shows that opinion is distributed more towards lower side of average score. The χ^2 calculated value is significant at 1 percent level of significance, which indicates opinion is not equally distributed. The above analysis concludes that tourist is satisfied with the quality of food in the restaurants.

The table reveals that a majority of the respondents are strongly satisfied with the hygiene at the restaurants. Their responses are lying towards the lower side of the average score. The mean value is lower at five-point scale. The standard deviation and skewness is 1.37965 and 0.354. The χ^2 calculated value is significant at 1 percent level of significance. It is concluded that most of the tourist are satisfied with the hygiene at the restaurants.

It is evident from the table that a majority of the respondents are uncertain and distributed towards higher side regarding telecommunication facilities in Lumbini. The mean value if the response is on the higher side than the average standard score at five-point scale. The standard deviation and skewness noted are 1.40576 and -0.064 respectively. The χ^2 value at 1 percent level of significance. Thus opinion is not equally distributed. Thus it is concluded that telecommunication facilities near tourist spots are not satisfactory.

Table 5: Satisfaction towards Tourism Products and Market of Lumbini (Security)

Particulars	Mean	S.D.	Skewness	S.E.of Skewness	Chi-square (χ^2)	p
Personal safety and security	3.36	1.35229	-0.259	0.241	8.9	0.01
Discipline in the country and Lumbini.	2.73	1.32463	0.38	0.241	11.3	0.01
Safety of luggage.	3.28	1.457	-0.422	0.241	2.7	0.01
Law and order of the country.	3.14	1.349	-0.084	0.241	5.4	0.01
Safety of families and females.	3.06	1.406	-0.064	0.241	1.4	0.01

*strongly agree-1,....strongly disagree-5

Majority of the respondents are distributed towards the higher side of the average score over the issue of personal safety and security in Lumbini. The mean value is the higher side of the average scale i.e. 4 at 5 point scale. The variation in the opinion and skewness is 1.35229 and -0.259. Calculated χ^2 value is significant at 1 percent level of significance. Thus the conclusion is that tourist is not satisfied with the personal safety and security.

Respondents are agreed that discipline in Lumbini and nation are symbol of culture and heritage. The mean value is lower than the average score. The variation in the opinion is 1.32463 and skewness is 0.380. The χ^2 calculated value is significant at 1 percent level of significance. This shows that opinion is not equally distributed. Thus, it is concluded that tourist are satisfied with the discipline in the country and Lumbini.

It can be seen that a majority of the respondents are dissatisfied with the safety of luggage. The mean value, standard deviation

and skewness indicate that their opinion is distributed towards higher side than the average score. The calculated χ^2 value is significant at 1 percent level of significant. Therefore the conclusion drawn is majority of the tourists are not satisfied with the safety of luggage.

It is shown that respondents either agree or disagree and further distributed towards the lower side of the average standard score. The mean value supports the above opinion. The standard deviation and skewness is 1.34855 and -0.084. The χ^2 calculated value is significant at 1 percent level of significance. Opinion is not equally distributed. It is concluded that tourist are dissatisfied with law and order of the region and country.

It is evident from the table that a majority of the respondents are uncertain and distributed towards the higher side regarding the safety of families and female in Lumbini. The mean value of the responses is on the higher side than the average standard score at five-point scale. The standard deviation and skewness noted are 1.40576 and -0.064 respectively. The χ^2 value at 1 percent level of significance. Thus opinion is not equally distributed. It is concluded that majority of the respondents do not have the same opinion over the issue of safety of families and female.

8.1 Hypothesis Test:

The question asked from the respondent's i.e. foreign tourist related to the tourism products and markets of Lumbini reveal the result that calculated value of chi-square is less than the table value 13.3.

Thus the above analysis rejects the null hypothesis (Ho) that tourist are satisfied with the tourism products and market of Lumbini and accepts alternative hypothesis (H1).

Further it rejects the null hypothesis (Ho) that there is no gap between the tourists expected services and perceived services in Lumbini tourism and accepts alternative hypothesis (H1).

The analysis also leads to rejects null hypothesis (Ho) that tourism is developed in Lumbini area and accepts alternative hypothesis (H1).

8.2 SWOT Analysis:

Based on the opinion survey/interviews and conversation of the foreign tourists a SWOT analysis has been carried out to find out more about strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the Lumbini.

8.2.1 Strengths:

- As the birthplace of the Lord Buddha, testified by the inscription on the Asoka pillar, the sacred area in Lumbini is one of the most holy and significant places for one of the world's great religions.
- Lumbini, as of 1997, is an UNESCO World Heritage Site specifically nominated for the international World Heritage program.
- Lumbini-a place evokes a kind of holy sentiment to the millions of Buddhists all over the world-as do the Jerusalem to Christians and Mecca to Muslims. Lumbini is the place Lord Buddha -the apostle of peace and the light of Asia was born.
- Lumbini is blessed with immense beautiful temples and stupas. The Maya Devi temple is one of the major attractions of Lumbini.
- Lumbini holds almost similar position with Mecca. Millions of pilgrims and tourists visit Mecca; however, less than 100

thousands international tourists/pilgrims visit Lumbini every year.

- Lumbini is famous and very popular among the tourist who comes for holy places and experience fascinating culture and environment.
- Lumbini is a holy place, which is very rich and varied in terms of its tourist attractions.
- Lumbini has facilities for yoga and meditation fast becoming an added attraction for tourist.
- Many monuments, monasteries and a museum, and the Lumbini International Research Institute are also within the holy site. Also, there is the Puskarini, or Holy Pond, where the Buddha's mother took the ritual dip prior to his birth and where he had his first bath.

8.2.2 Weaknesses:

- There is less marketing in Nepal as well as abroad, this is cited as the major weakness prevailing in Lumbini tourism industry.
- Lumbini is not being projected as a land of all seasons.
- The quality of facilities and services at the areas are not up to the mark.
- Parking problem is seen at its worst during the peak tourist season.
- Condition of roads in the rural areas of Lumbini is bad.
- Limited availability of tourist information offices, and premises, poses a problem, create dissatisfaction among the tourists.
- Lack of trained, professional guides.
- In addition to the cement factory which was established despite the Industrial Promotion Board's 2009 decision not to allow any carbon emitting factories within a 15-km radius of the sacred site, there are 57 manufacturing plants producing bricks, cement, clinker, steel, noodles, paper and flour registered in the Lumbini Protected Zone.

8.2.3 Opportunities:

- The trend of building hotels with modern facilities has intensified in Lumbini following an increase in the influx of tourists.
- Tourism has provided an opportunity for the local citizens and craftsmen to make handicrafts materials. This has ensured a steady flow of income for them as well as a mean of preserving our heritage.
- Lumbini, which attracts international pilgrims as the birthplace of the Buddha, has observed the construction of large-scale infrastructure from an international airport, industrial corridor, trade highways to a bevy of luxury hotels.
- The campaign i.e. Visit Lumbini 2019/2020 has been aimed at attracting domestic visitors this year with Province 5 government starting promotional campaign drive in all seven provinces.
- Special events like handicrafts fair, exhibition and sports events can be organized in Lumbini.
- The new breed of tourists likes alternate form of accommodation like staying as a paying guest with the local people. On the one hand it provides them with an opportunity to have firsthand experience of the native culture and customs and on the other hand it does not

pressurize the natural and the government resources. This also ensures community approach towards tourism.

- It is a holy site for more than 535 million Buddhists and a centre of spiritual belief for many. If we could attract just one percent of this population to Nepal, it will generate a massive amount of direct and indirect employment in the country.
- The demand for Nepali sculptures is also quiet high in the international market. Promoting Buddhist thangkhas and sculptures is clearly beneficial for the country, but for that the younger generation of Nepal should be encouraged to take up the traditional occupations.
- Nepal needs to initiate the process of uplifting the international status of Lumbini and to explore many Buddha-related religious places like Tilaurakot, Debdaha, Ramgram and others.
- The government should therefore accord due importance to developing Buddhist culture and heritage, and allocate necessary funds for this purpose. Strong political commitment and consensus are necessary for this.

8.2.4 Threats:

- Lumbini, the birthplace of Lord Buddha, a pilgrimage site for all the people of the world, the fountain of peace and a Unesco World Heritage Site, is facing a serious environmental threat due to the proliferation of factories all around it.
- A study conducted by the World Health Organisation (WHO) showed that the air at the Lumbini World Heritage Site contained particulate matter amounting to 270 micrograms per cubic metre ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) which is 11 times higher than WHO's permissible limit.
- Even though numerous such legislative and institutional frameworks and policies, plans, decisions and standards are in place, environmental pollution in Lumbini is continuing and increasing, putting public health, flora, fauna, the environment and culturally important temples, stupas and monasteries including the Mayadevi Temple and the 2,000-year-old Ashoka Pillar under severe threat of degradation.
- Despite the richness of Buddhist heritage, Lumbini is located in one of the country's poorest regions.
- Adverse socio-cultural and environmental impacts.
- Growing population and construction of international airport is posing a threat to the area. To accommodate this growing population more and more trees are being cut. The main tourist areas are turning into concrete jungle.
- Adverse publicity in the media regarding scarcity of water and lack of parking space also pose a threat.

9. Conclusion and Recommendations:

In more than 70 years of tourism development, we are still struggling to bring one million tourists despite the fact that we have numerous unparalleled tourism products and destinations. Why have we failed? What has paralyzed our tourism sector? What are the impediments to development of tourism? Compare this with our tourism products and activities. Except for some adventurous activities like trekking and sightseeing, our tourism products largely fail to captivate the imagination of tourists. This is the main drawback of Nepali tourism sector. We are largely confined to nature-based tourism and have put other potential sectors – culture, heritages and leisure activities

– on the back burner. We have failed to develop new destinations and products in the last many years. Most of the organizations responsible for tourism development have been focusing mainly on mountain trekking and sightseeing. Accessibility, accommodation and attraction are the basic components of tourism development. A single international airport, poor state of air network, bad roads and weak road networks are some serious impediments to tourism development. Tourists often face a hard time finding accommodation facilities when they are not in major cities. Trekking routes lack resting places. Good accommodation facility, tea houses (shops) and lookout points can certainly add value to trekking.

Whatever we are doing is a routine affair or to be more precise it is an eye-wash. It would be therefore be our endeavor to develop and implement thoroughly professional market strategies to get better mileage and value for money expended. This would be based on the market analysis and consumer preference. There are many tourism products like fairs and festivals, handicrafts, proper transportation, accommodation that boost tourism of an area, but these are taking a back seat in Lumbini as of now. It should be made an important and integral part of tourism. Foreign tourist visit Lumbini to get a glimpse of the ancient art and cultures of Lumbini. They travel by different modes of transport to reach Lumbini. Some of them stay at Lumbini just for few hours while some stay for few days. The places, the temples, the museum, and the tranquil environment and hygiene appreciated by all foreign tourists. Although they feel quite satisfied with their Lumbini visit but still a gap exist between their expected and perceived services. The reasons for this gap have been identified as poor conditions of ordinary buses and share taxies plying between tourist places, awful maintenance of city road, traffic congestion, unhygienic condition of restaurant, and non-availability of quality souvenir. Based on this identification recommendation have been offered for eliminating the gap. This may result into a tourists' delight and an increase in tourist arrivals in Lumbini. Based on this study the following has been recommended for increasing the satisfaction of foreign tourists visiting Lumbini.

- For overcoming the problem of related to non-availability of good quality souvenirs at Lumbini it is recommended that the LDT may motivate existing souvenir traders by offering them financial and merchandising assistance or may construct outlets at strategic locations in the city and offer them on lease to traders interested in setting up business.
- The dissatisfaction of backpackers with the transport available in Lumbini and back is a matter of grave importance. To eliminate this dissatisfaction it is recommended that provision of comfortable three-wheeler share taxies may be done to transport tourists directly from airport or border to Lumbini and back. In order to distinguish these taxies from the ordinary taxies they may be painted in some different colors. The number of passengers in these taxies may be strictly restricted to six and the budget hoteliers of Lumbini are motivated to operate these taxies on a cooperative basis.
- The non-availability of quality food at budget hotels at Lumbini is a cause of inconvenience to backpacker tourists.

In a view of this situation it is recommended that during off season, training programs may be organized at Lumbini by Lumbini Development Trust to develop culinary skills of budget hoteliers and their employees.

- A tourist place which is not neat and clean creates a bad impression and causes inconvenience to tourists. In order to overcome this problem at Lumbini it is recommended that construction of cemented drains may be done all over the city as well as in rural areas by the administration.
- It is also recommended that medium sized garbage bins must be placed in the main market area and local residents and shopkeepers be motivated to use them. In addition to this special drives may be carried out by the local administration every week to keep the riverside clean.
- Keeping in view the poor condition and congestion on roads it is recommended that cemented roads may be laid in Lumbini and its area and traffic policemen is deputed for controlling traffic on the roads in tourist area.
- A special incentives package will be made available for encouraging new tourism projects as well as expansion of existing tourism units.

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