

## Cultural Tourism in the Tourism Industry in Patan Area, Nepal

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### ABSTRACT

*The objectives of the study are to determine the benefit of cultural tourism for local people around Patan Darbar Square and assess the association between external tourist arrival for cultural tourism and income earning of Patan Darbar Square. This study was also based on both primary and secondary data. The study used a descriptive research design and a case study method. This study adopted a qualitative method for the first objective of the study and a quantitative method for the second objective. Interviews were used for primary data. Interviews were conducted with culturalists, employees of Lalitpur Metropolitan City, and social workers within Patan Darbar Square in Nepal. Judgmental sampling techniques were adopted to collect primary data. Secondary data was collected from Lalitpur Metropolitan City of Lalitpur district. The simple correlation was used for quantitative data analysis whereas thematic analysis was used for qualitative data. According to the interview of research participants, cultural tourism provides benefits for local people around Patan Darbar Square in varied ways. There is a low positive correlation between external tourist arrival for cultural tourism and the income earning of Patan Darbar Square in Nepal. Practical implication of this study is that the metropolitan city should preserve and mobilize several tangible and intangible cultural heritages to earn much more foreign exchange.*

**Keywords:** Cultural tourism, Economic development, Employment, Patan area, Tourism industry

### Introduction

Tourism is the happening of people visiting

and sitting in unusual destinations. Internal travelers may be internal tourists if they travel to unfamiliar and unusual circumstances and places and outside the country without the intention of employment. Tourism is the industry that needs to address the desires of customers because the satisfaction of customers is a significant aspect of the tourism business (Sengum, 2011). Richards (2011) defines cultural tourism in its broader sense that it is travel to cultural attractions and involvement in cultural events.

The tourism industry is a subset of the industries like entertainment, health, transportation, food industry, etc. It has forward and backward linkages (Dhital, 2009). Businesses such as hotels, travel agencies, trekking agencies, etc. are directly and indirectly associated with tourism or tourism. Zadel & Bogdan (2013) express that assessing the effects of cultural tourism on economic contribution is a very difficult and challenging task due to the lack of sufficient data and systematic measures. Panta & Bisht (2018) say that the study of tourism or cultural tourism is of growing academic and practical phenomenon as well. Even though Nepal has enormous tourism potential, the country cannot manage appropriate infrastructures such as hotels, air transportation, and proper marketing management, hence tourist arrival is decreasing in Nepal (Bhatia, 1997). In Nepal, it is regarded as one of the crucial industries and business activities. Thus, this study intends to determine the benefit of cultural tourism for local people in Patan and assess the relationship between cultural tourism and economic development in Patan Darbar Square.

## **Problem Statement**

Tourism or cultural tourism can be considered the foundation of the generation of employment and poverty reduction and hence the major cause of the economic development of a nation (Shrestha, 1978). Despite this the significance of cultural tourism has not been evaluated and exhibited separately in national economic prosperity in many previous studies; it is one of the main issues (Min & Roh, 2013). Alteration of local cultural patterns for abiding by tourists' culture, changes in lifestyles, polluted environment, etc. are other tough challenges to the cultural tourism industry (Egbali, 2011).

As far as cultural tourism in Nepal is concerned, there is a lack of proper statistics, accounting, and record-keeping systems in Nepal on income generated from tourism-related agencies which adversely affects the national planning process. Thus, Nepal is unable to gain an adequate advantage in this respect (Dhital, 2009). Nepal has no strategic execution of research-based marketing initiatives and communication in the international market, it is also a remarkable problem to reach the expected outcome (Pradhan, 1978). Nepal's marketing activities either in cultural or other tourism are poor while other countries are undertaking aggressive marketing through effective advertisement (Pokhrel, 1995). Due to Western influence and urbanization, cultural tourism is in a gradually declining state (Dangol, 2019).

There have been conducted many research studies by many researchers and research agencies on various aspects of tourism but to the best of the researcher's knowledge, there has not been any specific study on the relationship between external tourist arrival for cultural tourism and income earning of Patan Darbar Square in Nepal. Thus, the present study has been carried out and the following research question has been raised:

1. What is the benefit of cultural tourism for local people around Patan Darbar Square?
2. What is the association between external tourist arrival for cultural tourism and the income earning of Patan Darbar Square?

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are given below:

- (a) To determine the benefit of cultural tourism for local people in Patan Darbar Square.
- (b) To assess the association between external tourist arrival for cultural tourism and the income earning of Patan Darbar Square.

### **Significance of the Study**

Cultural tourism is a crucial part of the tourism industry. The study will be greatly helpful to scholars and researchers who can use this study as literature for further research. This study will help Patan as well as other places to understand and manage the cultural heritage of the city. The study will also be helpful for learners and concerned people such as internal and external tourists as well. Moreover, this study supports to fulfill the research gap.

### **Review of Literature**

Literature reviews consist of the following conceptual, theoretical, and empirical reviews:

**Conceptual review:** Cultural tourism means traveling with people to experience the culture of others or cultural attractions of another place (Arts Industry Tourism Council, 1997). Traveling people such as travel to monuments, pilgrimages, cultural tours, performing arts, and visiting festivals is called cultural tourism. Nepal is a multicultural country that is also rich in cultural heritage like religion and language. Economically, Nepal is not a rich country. Most tourists around the globe are attracted to Nepal to observe these heritages and cultural tourism products such as museums, monuments, religious institutions, historical buildings, etc. (Dhital, 2009). According to the author handicrafts, folklore, and customs are Nepalese national festivals. Egbali says, according

to UNESCO, there are ten world heritage sites- eight are related to religious and historical, and the remaining two are concerned with national parks- in Nepal. Patan Krishna Mandir and Mahaboudha temple which was made in shikhara style by Siddhi Narasingh Malla from the Malla period is known as a historical and religious monument.

**Types of Cultural Tourism:** Cultural tourism can be classified as heritage tourism, cultural city tourism, cultural thematic route, ethnic tourism, traditions, event and festival tourism, religious tourism, creative culture, creative tourism, and pilgrimage routes (Caspo, n. d.)

**Theoretical Perspective:** This study is guided by the following theories:

**Plog's Model of Tourist Behavior:** Stanley C. Plog published this theory in 1973. According to Plog, the visiting behavior of tourists absolutely depends on the psychology of tourists. Plog categorized two kinds of tourists i. e. allo-centric and psycho-centric. Allo-centric types of tourists like unfamiliar regions, environments, and cultures whereas psycho-centric visitors like familiar environments (Cruz-Millan, 2017).

**Motivation Theory:** The motivation of individuals is an internal force that is indispensable to travel. Without motivation to visit, it is almost impossible for tourism (as cited in Dangol, 2019 from Holden, 2005).

**Psychology:** Psychology is concerned with a person's mentality that leads to the conduct and behavior of human beings. Psychology encourages people to turn into tourists (as cited in Dangol, 2019 from Holden, 2005)

**Empirical reviews:** Borg & Russo (2005) conducted a study on "The Impacts of Culture on the Economic Development of Cities". The study intends to evaluate the relationship between the culture and economic development of these places. The research methodology depends much on qualitative and descriptive research design. Both primary and secondary data were adopted for the study. The research was performed through many interviews. This research followed case studies in ten cities including Amsterdam, as an initiator. They indicated that Culture-Oriented Economic Development (OECD) has a durable and significant economic effect. However, it is necessary to manage cultural production sectors in the sense of enhanced creativity, innovativeness, and flexibility. Because cultural tourists are becoming more careful about originality and quality (p. 53).

A study by Min & Roh (2013) found that cultural tourism positively affects economic prosperity at the initial phase of enhancement, however, the stage of growth cannot be sustained in the future. Cultural tourism is important for both developed and developing countries. However, cultural tourism is more important for developing countries than developed countries (p. 8-9).

A study carried out by Zadel & Bogdan (2013) inferred that cultural tourism has a low impact on economic contribution in Croatia. Consumption declined in cultural tourism, however, the number of tourists increased. This result shows decrement in foreign exchange earnings and reflects insufficient quality and price of the cultural tourism products (p. 365).

Shrestha, RK. (2023).

A study conducted by Gautam (2015) found a positive association between income from tourism and economic development in Nepal. But, a poor association between them in the long term. Also, there is an insignificant association between the GDP and the real exchange rate.

A study carried out by Maharjhan (2012) inferred that cultural tourism has minimum positive influences on the majority of local farmer groups. However, cultural tourism helps local governments significantly in the sense of tax revenue that is earned through a tourist entry fee.

A study by Gautam (1012) resulted in a significant relationship between tourism earnings and economic development.

A study by Nepal & Baral (2015) inferred that cultural tourism influenced Nepalese people positively. The Nepalese tourism industry receives foreign exchange and tourists consume many other goods and services.

## Research Gap

Various researchers have performed studies on various sectors of tourism in Nepal, however, a comprehensive and in-depth study on cultural tourism has yet to be carried out. Most of the research has principally focused on a few special phenomena and is concerned with policy issues only. The researcher did not find any study on the association between cultural tourism and economic development and the perception of people on cultural tourism at any local government in Nepal. This study fulfills this gap.

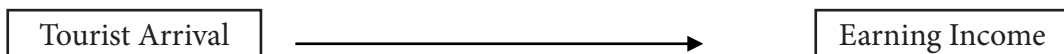
## Conceptual Framework

Based on past research and literature on external tourist arrival for cultural tourism and the income earning of Patan Darbar Square are regarded as the independent and dependent variables respectively.

Conceptual Framework: Based on previous research study the following conceptual framework has been drawn:

Independent variable

Dependent Variable



## Research Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive research design and case study method. This study applied both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Both primary and secondary data were utilized. Primary data as an interview was adopted to determine the benefit of cultural tourism for local people around Patan Darbar Square. The interviews were semi-structured and non-recorded. Interviews were conducted with employees of culturalists, and social workers within Lalitpur Metropolitan City in Nepal. Secondary data was collected from Lalitpur Metropolitan City. Interviews were conducted in the Chaitra month of 2079 BC. Data for 2079/080 BC was estimated due to the incomplete

Fiscal Year and hence lack of a clear accounting system while collecting the same. A judgmental sampling technique was used to gather primary data and information. The simple correlation was used for the analysis of quantitative data whereas qualitative data was analyzed by using thematic analysis. Since this study is limited to the Patan area, it cannot be generalized.

## Results and Discussion

This part of the study includes interviews, tabulation and analysis of data, meaning of findings, comparison of findings with previous studies, conclusion, and practical implication of the study.

A few interviews on the benefits of cultural tourism for local people around Patan Darbar Square which is related to the first objective of this study were conducted. They were:

In a face-to-face interview concerning the benefits of cultural tourism for the local people of Lalitpur Metropolitan City, a tourist guide viewed:

*“Cultural tourism has played a significant role as a source of earning for the local people in this city. Cultural tourism has been positively affecting income earning in many ways such as through creating employment and guiding visitors locally. (Field Survey, 2023).”*

Asking a similar question with a social worker remarked a similar type of response:

*“Handicraft business has become an important source of employment generation for people living in Lalitpur City. Cultural tourism causes various occupations such as gaining foreign exchange, producing and selling handicrafts” (Field Survey, 2023).*

Similarly, in an interview, a social worker remarked:

*“Income collected by the Lalitpur Metropolitan City is invested to renovate and maintain tourism products. Employment creation, selling handicraft products, and improvement of living standards are the main benefits of cultural tourism for local people in the city” (Field Survey, 2023).*

Likewise, in a face-to-face interview, a culturalist as a research participant viewed:

*“The agricultural sector is also somewhat affected because of supplying rice and vegetables that link to employment too. This encourages running hotels and homestays, and selling handicraft products. Furthermore, employment for local people is a major benefit of the tourism industry” (Field Survey, 2023).*

In a one-on-one interview, a culturalist at Patan Durbar Square shared his experience,

*“There seems to be a lack of proper management of infrastructures like standardized hotels, hospitality, accommodation, and proper marketing management in the Patan. However, this industry has been supporting the creation of employ-*



Shrestha, RK. (2023).

*ment and reducing poverty in this city area” (Field Survey, 2023).*

An employee of Lalitpur Metropolitan City as a research participant opined:

*“It provides many advantages as compared to other tourism to the local people. It also helps to protect and promote cultural heritage” (Field Survey, 2023).*

Another employee as a research participant responded similarly to the same question:

*“Cultural visitors can pay a lot of money because they have a high level of earnings. Cultural tourism has not only an economic impact but also a social, and regional impact in the country. This ultimately supports the financial support of local people” (Field Survey, 2023).*

In your opinion how do you perceive on benefit for local people of cultural tourism in Patan in Nepal? A culturalist replied to this problem:

*“Patan in Nepal has a cultural heritage. Cultural tourism is in the developing stage. It has multiple advantages. Hence, it could be developed adequately to get benefitted by the people of Lalitpur” (Field Survey, 2023).*

When asked about the benefit of cultural tourism to the local people, a social worker remarked:

*Cultural heritage management is needed by establishing, conserving, and promoting the tourism industry and cultural value and earning income. He further added that tourism means cultural tourism in the city area of Patan in Nepal because there is almost a lack of other kinds of tourism. Merits of it are very high (Field Survey, 2023).*

The following table assesses the association between external tourist arrival for cultural tourism and the income earning of Patan Darbar Square.

**Table 1 :** *Computation of the Correlation Coefficient of the Total Number of External Tourists and Average Income in Cultural Tourism in Patan*

Year in B. S.	External Tourists Arrival (in 000) (X)	Average Income (Y)	XY	X <sup>2</sup>	Y <sup>2</sup>
2073/074	108.83	882.08	95996.76	11843.97	778065.12
2074/075	147.40	863.21	127237.15	21726.76	745131.50
2075/076	163.82	856.07	140241.38	26836.99	732855.85
2076/077	108.56	863.30	93719.85	11785.27	745286.89
2077/078	1.50	635.74	953.61	2.25	404165.35
2078/079	31.40	621.00	19499.40	985.96	385641.00
2079/080	52.40	527.36	27633.67	2745.76	278108.57
Σ	613.91	5831.09	505281.83	75926.96	4069354.28

Source: Lalitpur Metropolitan City

$r = 0.126$

where  $r$  indicates the correlation coefficient.

Table 2 shows that the correlation coefficient between the total number of external tourists and the average income in cultural tourism is 0.126.

## Discussion

This study discovered that Patan in Nepal has many cultural heritages. It could be developed adequately. Cultural tourism is the means of development of places and makes the places much more pleasant. It provides many advantages as compared to other tourism. It also helps to protect and promote cultural heritage. According to research participants, cultural tourism, directly and indirectly, provides benefits for local people around Patan Darbar Square in varied ways like trade, industry, and employment in the city. This has become an important source of income generation and employment for local people around Patan Darbar Square. Cultural tourism has been affecting the economic benefit of local people in a multi-facet manner through guiding visitors locally, running hotels and homestays, and selling handicraft products. Employment for local people is a major benefit of the tourism industry. Table 1 shows that the correlation coefficient is 0.126 which means there is a low positive correlation between external tourist arrival for cultural tourism and the income earned in Patan Darbar Square. It can be interpreted that cultural tourism supports external tourists which leads to an increase in income of Patan Darbar Square. This study is consistent with the studies of Maharjan (2012), Nepal & Baral (2015). This study differs from the study of Zadel & Bogdan (2013). Likewise, this research study is partially in line with the studies of Gautam (2015) and Min & Roh (2013).

## Conclusion

The objectives of the study are to determine the benefits of cultural tourism for local people around Patan Darbar Square and to assess the association between external tourist arrival for cultural tourism and income earning in Patan Darbar Square. The study used a descriptive research design and case study method. Interview findings comprise that cultural tourism, directly and indirectly, provides benefits for local people in varied ways like trade, industry, and employment in the metropolitan. It could be developed adequately. It provides many advantages as compared to other tourism. This has become an important source of income generation and employment for local people. There is a low positive correlation between external tourist arrival for cultural tourism and the income earning of Patan Darbar Square in Nepal. The conclusion can be drawn that cultural tourism can benefit local people around Patan Darbar Square and there is an association between external tourist arrival for cultural tourism and income earning of Patan Darbar Square in Nepal. It can be interpreted that cultural tourism is very beneficial in many ways and an important source of income in Patan Darbar Square.



## Practical Implication

Patan Darbar Square enriches cultural heritage. Lalitpur Metropolitan City as an authorized and responsible local government should take responsibility to preserve and manage these several tangible and intangible cultural heritages. There is an extreme need for night stays especially for external tourists. Standard hotels and infrastructures should be managed to meet these needs in this metropolitan city.

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