

General Article

# Role of Human Resource in Quality Enhancement of Tourism Service in Pokhara

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## ABSTRACT

*The Nepal Tourism Policy 2009 recognizes tourism as a key driver for the country and economic growth by creating job opportunities and producing foreign reserves. Tourism policy has been developed to promote the growth and extension of tourism activities, the quality improvement of tourism services, the increase of income, and the expansion of job possibilities in order to enhance Nepalese people living standards. Quality reflects several elements of tourism, such as physical, natural, and environmental. It also focuses on quality tourism; however, officials and tourist operators are divided on the subject. Tourism in Pokhara is increasingly transitioning to mass tourism. As a result, it appears that the moment has come to incorporate quality tourism concepts in the sector. The ecological, economic, and socio-cultural components of tourist development, as well as an appropriate balance between these three dimensions, are referred to as sustainability principles. It also aims to increase the quality of infrastructure and human resources. Role of human resources are always vital ensuring quality assurance. Hence it is the time to address the importance of human resource enhancing quality in the industry. This is a historical study based on qualitative research method. In this study, descriptive and analytical methods were used to investigate the importance of examining and analyzing the challenges faced by the tourism industry in terms of quality, human resources in order to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Nepalese tourism industry. This article focuses mostly on the quality of tourism through human resources. Tourist satisfaction is determined by their actions and attitudes, which is a source of worry in the Nepalese tourism business, particularly in Pokhara.*

**Keywords:** Human resource; policy; satisfaction; sustainability; trekking policy

## INTRODUCTION

Nepal, a tiny sovereign independent nation of 147,181 square kilometers, is referred to as a Shangri-La for its rapid growth in tourism. Pokhara is the provincial capital of the Gandaki Province and second largest city. In the globe, a tiny valley is noteworthy for its topography. Within a few kilometers, the landscape changes from north to south. The elevation ranges from 780 m to 1350 m towards the south (CBS,2011). Pokhara Valley and natural beauty, famed lakes, trekking and hiking range, and adventurous leisure activities are its main draws. Pokhara is a popular destination for nature enthusiasts both at home and abroad. It is now a hotspot and a popular travel destination. In a nation like Nepal, where economic prospects are limited, tourism is one of the most potent drivers of economic growth and development. Because of unemployment, many Nepalese are looking for work in Malaysia, the Gulf, and other countries. It is estimated that around 4 million Nepalese live in the Gulf or Malaysia. Another concern in Nepal is migration prompted by unemployment (Ojha, 2009). The majority of educated individuals are relocating abroad or to big centers such as Kathmandu. Only tourism can help to reduce such migration, employ job seekers, and develop areas outside of Kathmandu. Following the sad events of the 2015 earthquake and the Covid- 19 epidemic, Nepal tourist economy was nearly destroyed. In 2019, there were 11,97191 visitors; in 2020, it became 1,50,962. People in the tourist industry are either insolvent or have left the industry. Following the immunization program, overseas tourists to Nepal are now prepared.

Tourism employs 1.50 million people in direct and indirect jobs. It accounts for about 3% of GDP (though unofficial figures put it at around 11.0 percent) (Gautam,2021). Tourism in Nepal is now conducted as pilgrimage tourism, cultural tourism, recreational tourism, and adventure tourism. The majority of international visitors come for adventure activities, while domestic and Indian visitors come for pilgrimage tourism (Ojha,2009). Pokhara tourism is progressively transitioning to mainstream tourist. So now is the time to consider how to increase quality in Pokhara. The tourism sector is identified as an essential avenue for economic and social development in Nepal Tourism Policy 2009. Tourism policy aims include improving the quality of tourism services, raising income, and expanding job opportunities to enhance Nepalese people living standards. Concern stakeholders should focus on boosting quality in terms of human resource and numbers to reach the aim. Pokhara offers both opportunities and challenges in terms of tourism. The Nepal Tourist Board (NTB) announced RS 807 million budgets for fiscal year 2021, with the goal being to restore the tourism business and provide relief to tourism employees affected by the epidemic. NTB has also worked with the worldwide

organization United Development Programme on employment retention strategies. As a result of this agreement, NTB has received RS 14 million for its employee retention initiative.

Tourism recovery and sustainability are prioritized in this budget, as are research and database development, worker job security, domestic tourism promotion, and digital marketing. However, no funds were set aside for quality improvement for human resources. NTB is still unsure about where to direct its attention. The goal of this research is to determine the importance of human resource for quality enhancement to sustain quality tourism in Pokhara. Previous literatures attempted to address many aspects of tourism in the Nepalese tourism business, but they did not address the quality development, human resources development in the industry, nor did the literature cover Pokhara. Tourism is a social, cultural, and economic phenomenon in which people travel to countries or areas outside of their usual surroundings for personal or business/professional purposes.

Nepal has been a perfect trekking country since its inception: regions completely devoid of roads, accessible only by foot, have had over the centuries well-maintained paths all over the countryside and equally important established a system of porters carrying all kinds of loads into the country most remote parts. Thus, it became soon recognized in the western world that one could enjoy trekking in Nepal without the heavy toll of carrying food and equipment. There were soon two types of trekking styles: tea house treks and tent treks. As soon as every visitor arrived in Kathmandu.

Previous research attempted to address many aspects of tourism, but none addressed quality tourism as well as the importance of human resource – the role of human resource as a component for tourism development. Although these texts do not provide solutions to the issue statement or study objectives, they do help to bridge theoretical gaps in tourism. The goal of this study is to address previously unknown problems about the role of human resources for quality tourism in the industry. As a consequence, it is reviewed in order to study the research problem. The purpose of this article is to emphasize the gap left by previous researches on Pokhara tourism challenges with the means of quality enhancement in the tourist sector.

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization, the number of international tourists fell by 65% in the first half of 2020 as compared to the same period in 2019. Between 2008 and 2021, Nepali tourism had ups and downs, including the international economic crisis in 2008, the 2015 earthquake, and the current Covid-19 epidemic. As a result, the Nepalese tourist sector is in shambles. To repair the harm inflicted by the recent Covid pandemic, the federal government, regional governments, and tourist entrepreneurs should focus on quality

tourism. Human resources are the industry frontrunners and face. As a result, their importance in sustaining the sector should be recognized. To maintain such flow, the concern stakeholders should focus on quality improvement. Components of Attraction in the Local Tourism of Pokhara The most significant aspect of tourism is an attraction. Attractions in the inventory can be categorized as either a core attraction or a supporting attraction. The community core assets or traits are represented by its core attractions. They comprise the destination principal motif. Natural or man-made, historical or cultural, recreational or spectator events are all possible. Supporting attractions are facilities and services that cater to tourist's requirements, such as housing, food service, local transportation, shopping, foreign currency exchange, and so on. Pokhara is the only destination which can offer Pilgrimage, recreational, adventurous all types of tourism at a time.

The second type, mountaineers are a distinct type of tourist. The great majority arrives in groups, well-prepared to accomplish a specific goal: to climb one or more mountains. These organizations often work with established local agencies to overcome bureaucratic barriers and manage all other logistics, such as porters, meals, and transportation (Ojha, 2015). Thirdly, the trekkers - Nepal has been a perfect trekking country since its inception: regions completely devoid of roads, accessible only by foot, have had over the centuries well-maintained paths all over the countryside and – equally important – established a system of porters carrying all kinds of loads into the country's most remote parts. Thus, it became soon recognized in the western world that one could enjoy trekking in Pokhara without the heavy toll of carrying food and equipment. There were soon two types of trekking styles: tea house treks and tent treks.

Role and responsibilities of Human resource in Tourism Role of human resource like Trekking guide is very crucial as well as adventurous in Hiking, Mountaineering and Trekking. The guides are the front liners. They are the first who face tourist at their first sight. Behavior of those guides, their attitudes are always vital. Likewise, front office holder of the Hotels, receptionist, waiters and bar man of the restaurant and officer of the Trekking and Travel agents and their behavior are always vital. Their smiling face encourage the tourists while their small misbehave discourage the visitors. Innocent Nepali people with their smile always encourage foreigners to make Nepal as their destination. A good guide makes for a wonderful journey; a good guide combined with an excellent chef makes everyone happy. On the penultimate evening, the guide is customarily presented an envelope containing cash for the team, along with a brief evaluation from one of the group. This is the only money that will go directly to those who made the journey possible. The agency in Kathmandu receives the

lion share of all trekking revenue, while porters (who also have the worst personal equipment) get the least. Their life is miserable. They are the people who earn for the elites but spend their life with half meal.

The solutions can be discovered in the altered conditions. Nepal has been and continues to be one of the world's poorest countries. Against this backdrop, tourism as a source of revenue has grown in importance - there is more money in trekking than there is in farming. It is no surprise that an increasing number of students aspire to work in the tourist sector, preferably as a guide, waiter or cleaner or perhaps as the owner of their own agency. The government, more than ever before, in need of cash, grants out for hiking guides in ever growing numbers. Crash courses in geography, history, and first aid are highly inspiring. No certification for receptionist, cook or waiters. No, one concerns the quality neither looks for qualified human resource. Tourists have grown pickier. And the reality in Nepal falls short of these expectations. To assure steady revenue from trekking for future generations, certain drastic changes must be implemented as soon as possible. In recent years, the reaction to increasing numbers of trekkers has been more lodges, more agencies, and more guide licenses. The instinct to respond to rising demand by expanding the offer appears sensible, but numerous examples show that it is not. Consider Thailand islands, tourism hotspots in Laos, and beaches in Spain, Italy, and Bali, to mention a few. Over time, a lot of money has been made in all of these sites.

## CONCLUSIONS

Aside from human resources, there are additional challenges in the sector to overcome in order to increase quality assurance. They are - transportation infrastructure, low-cost and easily accessible accommodation, front-line communication ability, health services center on the trekking route, electricity availability on the trekking route, reading material and internet access, interaction among stakeholders, recreational facilities, urban entrepreneur exploitation, well qualified human resources and so on. These are the typical tourist challenges that must be addressed in order to improve the quality of tourism not just in Pokhara but throughout Nepal. Stability always guides a country's development, particularly in the tourist sector. Unfortunately, Nepal has been politically unstable since 1950. Nepal remained politically unsafe with the passage of a new constitution in 2015, despite the 2015 earthquake catastrophe and the COVID-19 epidemic. Tourism requires government involvement in planning, promotion, and infrastructure development, however in Nepal; tourism has been planned,

marketed, and developed by the private sector. Since its inception, the government has had no involvement in this industry. Private stakeholders have the sole authority under this paradigm, and they plan, promote, monitor, and execute themselves. Tourism is Nepal's main source of foreign reserves, accounting for around 3% of GDP and directly or indirectly employing over 1.5 million Nepalese. International tourist losses resulting by the Covid-19 epidemic will be difficult to recover from existing infrastructure.

The majority of workers or human resources in the Nepali tourist business are non-professionals. In sector of tourism industry, the owners are looking for low-cost human resources. Not just in hiking, but also in hotels, restaurants, and recreational facilities. A low-quality and non-professional human resource cannot meet the visitors' expectations. Following the immunization campaign, visitors are now choosing Nepal as a travel destination. In this circumstance, if the concerned stakeholders and government officials do not recognize the value of competent human resources in improving the quality of the tourist sector, the entire business would be jeopardized. Failure to address quality budget tourism cannot meet the expectations of foreign visitors who wish to visit Nepal. As a result, they may end up anywhere other than Nepal.

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