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Tourists' Attitude towards the Purchase of Thangka Paintings

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Abstract
Thangka painting is an important handicraft product, which has its importance and features. The root of the painting lies in Buddhism where the painting holds great importance. The current research has explored the factor influencing tourist attitudes towards purchase of thangka paintings. The study used a quantitative research method with a descriptive and explanatory research design. The convenience sampling technique was used where the primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire. The international tourists who purchased thangka paintings in the Thamel and Bouddha area were studied and a total of 156 questionnaires were collected and analysed using a statistical tool such as correlation and regression. The finding revealed that there is a significant and positive relationship between the factors. The result further revealed that product oriented shopping, and process orientation shopping has a significant impact towards the attitude to purchase of thangka.
Keywords: Intention, process-orientated shopping, and product -orientated shopping,

1. Introduction

Handicrafts resemble the distinctive side of a particular culture and their production is a major form of employment in many developing countries. Buying an authentic product of the region that adds value to the travel memory has become a trend in the tourism industry. Tourists are encouraged to purchase locally made products and artifacts as it induces pleasing memories when they take good quality handicrafts home and at the same time it arouses interest for others that see the items and cultivate the desire to visit the destination in question (UNESCO, 2008)**.** One of the popular handicrafts among them is an art handicraft.

Tourists look for opportunities to connect with people in the local shops while shopping as they search for enjoyment and fun. As they view shopping experience as entertainment or leisure without buying a product (Jones, 1999). There might be a different factor that affects tourists in shopping behaviour, shopping can be planned, impulsive, or

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experiential. Westbrook & Black (1985) indicate that human shopping behaviour is the result of both internal desires and external stimuli. Consumers follow a planned behavioural course in the sense of shopping to meet their internal needs. At the same time, they impulsively respond to external stimuli. Consumers shop not only for the items but also for the shopping experience. The motivations of visitors are closely related to their buying behaviours. Swanson & Horridge (2006) revealed travel motives that affect the perceived attributes of visitors, such as aesthetics, uniqueness, pace, advertising, sales associates, and so on. Littrell et al. (1994) described four styles of tourism motivations: ethnic arts, and people; history and parks; urban entertainment; and active outdoor. Each category displays distinctive shopping habits, and for each group, the purchased items and selection criteria may vary.

Due to globalization, handicraft items are competing very intensively with goods from all the parts of the world as they are the distinctive product of specific communities or culture (Dash 2011). The existence of various artistic attractions and handicraft centres adjacent to historical monuments of Nepal is also one of the major factors attracting tourists in Nepal. Shakya (2017) argues that in Nepal's cultural history, handicraft has been a living heritage that serves religious and utilitarian purposes and represents the skilful culture and customary talents of Nepal. Handicrafts as tangible aspects of culture and heritage tourism act as an integral part of the tourist experience, handicraft s represent local traditions and indigenous populations, they also symbolize the places visited by tourists, and represent local traditions, indigenous knowledge as well a part of the experiences for tourists (Akhal et al. 2008).

The Handicraft sector occupies a pivotal role in the country's economy. The multifaceted contribution of handicrafts affects greatly the development of the country, region, or people. Out of many categories of handicraft, Thangka is a unique form of art originating in Tibet and flourished in Nepal as well centuries ago. It is art painted on cotton or silk, which depicts a deity of Buddhism or evokes the principles concerned with Buddhism philosophically. The interest of tourists in this artifact is growing, as many tourists are willing to learn this art form. So, it is regarded as an intellectual gift to take back home. Hence this study aimed to develop the understanding of the tourist shopping experience of thangka painting during their travels and to examine their attitude towards purchasing it.

Introduction and History of Thangka

Thanka is the Tibetan Buddhist art that contains the paintings of Buddhist deities and symbols, but some also contain information related to traditional Tibetan Medicine. There is a belief that deities dwell in beautifully painted thangka during the time of prayer that is why the proportion created by lamas, resulting from visions has a suitable consideration (Wein, 2016). Thangka painters are usually Tibetan Buddhists who spent at least six years studying art, although all the monks receive training. The painter must be Tibetan Buddhist, because "the painter has to have a good motivation" when painting the thangka for it to be considered "good".

Shakyamuni had the painters observe his reflection in water instead, allowing them to paint him, thus this is the beginning of the tradition of Thangka. This story is also the origination of the Buddhist idea that thangkas house the spiritual force of deities; since the painters are blinded by the Buddha's spiritual light and then had to paint his reflection,

they also captured some of his spiritual reflection in doing so (McGuckin, 1996). The scholar further described it is unclear when thangkas arrived, but they became popular between the seventh and twelfth centuries. While thangkas are a distinctly Tibetan art style, they originated in India and have Chinese and Nepali influence.
In ancient times these artifacts were regarded as a portable monastery for Lama, monks and Buddhist people when they were nomad as they could be rolled up and kept in a bag pack and unrolled in the time of praying. The translation of the Tibetan word "Thangka means a recorded message that can be rolled". Traveling monks and Lamas in Tibetan Buddhism used thangkas to spread and teach the stories about the religion of Buddhism (Wein, 2016).

Objectives of the Study

- To identify the impact of p roduct oriented shopping on tourist attitude towards purchase of thangka painting

- To examine the impact of processes oriented shopping on tourist attitude towards purchase of thangka painting.

2. Literature Review

Background and behaviour determine the person's attitude, behaviour can be abstract or adaptive, as it tends to have both features and the intention may overt the behaviour. Schiffman and Kanuk, (1994) defines Attitude refers to the tendency of perception to make the behaviour satisfactory or unsatisfactory for a certain thing. The term attitude is derived from a Latin word that refers to posture or physical position. The general notion was that a body's physical language depicts activity or action in which a person would engage (Wilkie, 1986). In contrast to this, Fishbein and Aizen (1975) claimed it as a learned ability to respond consistently favourably or unfavourably concerning a given object.

Attitude teaches a person to behave consistently but sometimes it can be situational behaviour, and adaptive that determines the people's ability to deal with the situation. Regarding this Schiffman & Kanuk (1994**)** described three components; firstly, the Cognitive component is a perception built through belief and experiences, which directly influence attitude. Secondly, an effective component which reflects through customers' emotions or feelings towards certain things that are valued through the criteria of good or bad, and likes or dislikes . Lastly, behavioural components reveal the probability or tendency that a consumer expresses through certain behaviours that are the outcome of their attitudes towards a certain thing.
Cultural arts include architecture, costumes, music, dance, and handicrafts that comprise artistic attraction (King & Wilder 2003; & Picard 1997). In a tourism industry culture is tangible and it is often sold without affecting its essence, concerning this, Cole (2007) points out when culture is objectified it can be sold. Hence, due to the significant impact of tourism development, nowadays crafts are becoming a tourism product, Mason (2005), said that there were four significant processes and constructs to craftwork. First, the activity of making; second, knowledge of the specific skill; third, craftsmanship, which plays a very important role in judgment of aesthetic; and finally, apprenticeship, which is

a form of gaining knowledge and skills through practicing and modelling. Containing all these processes and constructs, completed crafts can represent a particular area's unique culture, give pride to the local community, and more importantly, attract tourism.

There are different designs of Thangka paintings that are generalized under four main different categories: Mandala, Wheel of Life, Life Story of Buddha, and Individual Iconography. Talking about thangka tourists have an interest in the colour, style, and beauty that can be interpreted as factors of artistic value. Thangka painter Ambar lama in an interview with DeHart (2016) said tourists are the main collectors of thangka today. In particular, for visitors from the United States, Canada, Australia, and Europe, mandalas are very popular. Even if they are not Buddhist, most of them who are attracted to thangka are very open-minded and still do connect with the art in a meaningful way. They tend to have a strong sense of appreciation for the skill involved and the beauty of the work.

Relationship between attitude and shopping behaviour

Tourists when travel to a new country their shopping behaviour will be different because they act and behave in a different context from the environment of their normal life (Oh, Cheng, Letho, & Leary, 2004). In practice, it can be different because of the way the product is introduced to them, the behaviour of the seller, and the product characteristics that might affect their choice. Timothy (2005) claims tourists may or may not have a shopping list for specific things to purchase and simply prefer enjoyment and pleasure and want to find some unique and attractive that reflects the local culture of the place.

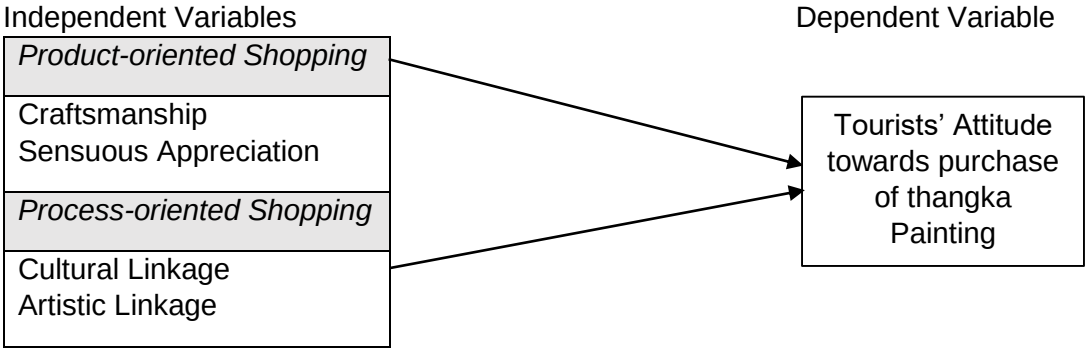
Furthermore, Littrell (1996) found that women purchase craft during their travel because of their aesthetic quality and called it a sensuous appreciation, it particularly refers to the multisensory attachment such as colour, design, beauty and style, and softness. Thangka painting bears all these features and choice can be prepared as per individual perception. Turner & Reisinger (2001) also found three significant product attributes for tourists purchasing cultural products: value (range, quality), product display characteristics (colour, display, packaging, size), and uniqueness (memory of the trip). Thangka is a cultural product as it possesses different cultural features and it holds a great value in the religious and spiritual value. Similar to this, Throsby (2003) set up the following important characteristics of cultural products: aesthetic properties, spiritual significance, symbolic meanings, historic importance, artistic trends, authenticity, integrity, and uniqueness. Due to its religious purpose, the thangka is considered a very special craft, Cotte (2007) claimed it performs various functions such as a religious meditation where it is used as a tool to a path of enlightenment; different kinds of religious events as protector of a house or person; and religious teaching.

Gordon (1986) said shopping is an important travel activity; thangka painting can be a unique product to purchase to venerate their travel experience. Because of its uniqueness and significance, it can be purchased as a souvenir to gift somebody back home or just a decorative material to preserve travel memories. This purchasing behaviour can be influenced by the tourist attitude towards other cultures (Kim & Littrell 2001). Tourists who respect and tolerate other cultures will appreciate it more , and the experience they had during their vacation will lead them to buy local products.

Dash (2010) found that consumers buy handicraft items because of their religious depiction, the study further reveals that there is a significant relationship between income and expenditure towards purchasing handicraft. Other features like the artistic nature of the product also influence buying it. Similarly, Dasgupta & Chandra (2016) found consumer is motivated to purchase handicraft because of their sustainability aspects, cultural aspects, utilitarian aspects, novelty seeking, artisan linkage, contradictory aspects, and nature linkage

Conceptual model and hypothesis development for the study

The consumer may have optimistic views regarding various features of handicrafts, such as genuineness, artistic qualities, value, and individuality, etc. thus the consumer beliefs can result in a positive attitude in the mind of the consumer (Hansen et. al., 2004) Eagly & Chaiken (1993) described a multilateral view of the development of attitudes and attitudinal responses; viz. the attitude of the people is based on cognitive, affective and behavioural processes and responds to attitude objects through cognitive, affective, and behavioural retorts. Thangka paintings appear attractive to tourist might take it as a decorative material and purchase it, and for the spiritual tourist, it can be a source of wisdom, belief, and spiritual knowledge. More precisely role of tourism typologies, the conceptualization of shopping experience as product-oriented shopping and process-oriented shopping by Littrells (1996) aided for this research. Previous research by (Littrell 1990, 1994; Littrell, Anderson, & Brown 1993) on, "consumer attitudes towards craft products and tourists' perceptions of product authenticity shopping", helped in the development of these form shopping orientation. The study revealed that tourist attracted to product oriented shopping, want to learn about the raw materials and processes behind craft products and put high importance on the craftsmanship and aesthetics of products. On the other hand, tourists attracted to process oriented shopping enjoy meeting the artisans, hearing their stories, enjoying craft demonstrations, and learning their local context about the cultural and historical significance of a craft. Since the tourists as per their behaviour choose to purchase the product, and their attitude is shaped by its features. Thangka paintings beside its unique look, it tells something about the unique history, culture, policies, social life, practices, and many other aspects of the lives of the ethnic people. On the ground of this; the model developed for the current research is presented below.



Note: From Litterell (1996)

Research Gap

Thangka has become a popular tourism product; many tourists have shown interest in this product because of its uniqueness. It is difficult to understand which design of thangka painting tourists are interested in. The tourism shopping experience involves selecting products that are very closely linked with their attitude towards possessions and acquiring possessions. It is the major contributor to tourists' identity (Belk, 1988). When they purchase any item, different factors play a pivotal role in selecting the product such as product quality, story behind it, cultural factors, and store environment, etc. This behaviour is backed by impulsive, planned, or experiential shopping behaviour. This behaviour is influenced by the way products are introduced to them. It can be product oriented or process oriented. Littrells (1996) introduced product oriented and process oriented Shopping experience which has aided the current study. The relationship between attitude and shopping behaviour has several empirical studies. Most of the study related to it has been undertaken in the western countries although Nepal has unique products of crafts with distinctive features. The study related to it is minimum as compared to the product available. Out of the variety of crafts available in Nepal, thangka painting has its features, and it holds special space in spirituality and religion along with this it is an attractive look and can be good decorative material as well. It is portable and durable. It can be a good product to buy as a travel memory or as a gift to present someone. The study is still in its infant stage, so the current research aims to plug in the gap in terms of attitude and the factors that influence purchasing thangka painting.

Hypothesis

H1: Tourists' attitudes towards product-oriented shopping positively impacts their attitude towards purchase of thangka painting.

H2: Tourists' attitudes towards process-oriented shopping positively impacts their attitude towards purchase of thangka painting.

3. Research Methods

Research Design

The study adopts a quantitative approach with a descriptive and explanatory research design. The study used a descriptive research design for analysing the factors that influence attitude towards the purchase intention of thangka painting. Similarly, the study used an explanatory research design to test the relationship and impact of dependent and independent variables in the study. The exact number of the population of the study is unknown. So the current researcher followed Rose, Sprinks & Canhoto (2015) method to calculate sample size for an unknown population. Primary data was collected using a survey questionnaire with the tourists who bought the thangka painting in Thamel and Bouddha area. Total 230 questionnaires were distributed in March and April of 2019, out of which, the researcher received 156 questionnaires that were usable for the study. The study used correlation and regression analysis to test the inter-relationship of

dependent and independent variables. The analysis is necessary as it helps researchers to evaluate the causal effect of one variable on other variables.

Questionnaire development, and Reliability and Validity

Questionnaires were developed under a descriptive format where participants were asked to rate the two independent and one dependent variable. There were various statements under the variable, and respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with these statements by selecting a corresponding number on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from (1) Strongly disagree to (5) Strongly agree. The questionnaire also includes some questions to clarify the respondent's basic information and features of the respondents.

To make the research reliable and maintain consistencies, data were collected from the selected region to avoid errors. The researcher used Cronbach's alpha coefficient to measure the scale's internal consistency. According to George and Mallery (2003), any scale greater than 0.7 is acceptable. Table 1, displays the result of the reliability test

Table 1: Reliability test

Factors	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items	Measure
Product oriented Shopping	0.753	5	Acceptable
Process Oriented Shopping	0.760	6	Acceptable
Attitude towards Purchase	0.896	5	Acceptable

4. Data Analysis and Discussions

The study aims to examine the relationship dependent variable (tourists' attitude towards purchasing thangka painting) and the independent variable (process-oriented shopping, and process oriented shopping. The impact of the former on the latter is also measured for which correlation and regression analyses on the data have been performed.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics

Panel A: Tourist Attitude towards Purchase of Thangka		
Components	Mean	Std. Deviation
They elicit an encrypted message about the place they come from.	4.2628	0.8807
Intrinsic beauty in colour, design, and craftsmanship in crafts.	4.5705	0.6437
A souvenir representing a local culture.	4.641	0.60052
Cultural and religious values.	4.6154	0.71357
An opportunity to shop in a local environment and encourage tradition.	4.641	0.65203
Total	4.5462	0.45000

Panel B: Product-Oriented Shopping		
Components	Mean	Std. Deviation
Thangka painting shows unique features that are not found in other countries.	4.1923	0.91662

The workmanship in the thangka painting reflects intelligence of the artist.	4.3974	0.75928
Workmanship evokes the intricacies of the concerned traditional values of art.	4.5705	0.60228
The aesthetic quality is important because it is an aid for meditation and religious activities.	4.3077	0.80815
Thangka painting has intrinsic beauty in colour and design.	4.6923	0.5402
Total	4.4321	0.43254

Panel C: Process-Oriented Shopping

Components	Mean	Std. Deviation
Thangka painting represents Nepalese culture.	4.4487	0.78119
It can help me to understand Buddhist culture and the way of Meditation.	4.359	0.77833
I can use thangka painting for different kinds of religious events, functions, etc.	3.9103	0.973
The pattern formed in thangka has artistic linkage among different cultures.	4.2372	0.73715
It helps me to understand the artist's perception of his tradition and culture.	4.4487	0.77289
Buying this kind of art is preserving some countries tradition and culture.	4.6667	0.61522
Total	4.3451	0.51470

Five statements were used to measure descriptive analysis of tourist attitude towards purchase of thangka paintings. Statement three (A souvenir representing a local culture) and statement five (An opportunity to shop in the local environment and encourage tradition) has the same and the highest mean score of 4.641 with a standard deviation of 0.60052 and 0.65203 respectively, here statement three has the lowest standard deviation. The lowest mean score is observed in statement one (They elicit an encrypted message about the place they come from) by 4.2628 with the highest standard deviation of 0.8807. The table shows that the overall item has a mean value of 4.5462 which indicates that the response is very positive.

Similarly, five statements were used in product-oriented shopping to measure descriptive analysis, the highest mean score and the lowest standard deviation is observed in statement five (Thangka painting has intrinsic beauty in colour and design) by 4.6923 and 0.5402, whereas statement one (Thangka painting shows unique features that are not found in other countries) has the lowest mean score of 4.1923 and highest standard deviation by 0.91662. The table shows that the overall item has a mean value of 4.4321 which indicates that the response is positive.

Finally, in process-oriented shopping, six statements were used to measure the descriptive statistics. The highest mean score of 4.667 and lowest standard deviation of 0.61522 is observed in statement six (Buying this kind of art is preserving some countries tradition and culture). Whereas statement three (I can use thangka painting for different kinds of religious events, functions, etc) has the lowest mean score of 3.9103 and the highest standard deviation of 0.973. The overall item has a mean score of 4.3451 which indicate that the response is very positive

Correlation Analysis

Table 3

Variables	Product orientation shopping	Process orientation shopping	Tourist attitude towards purchase of thangka
Product orientation	1		
Process orientation	0.312**	1	
Tourist attitude towards purchase thangka	0.350**	0.519**	1

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

The correlation coefficients between Product orientation shopping and tourist attitude towards purchase of thangka shows a significant relationship (coefficient =0.350 significant at 1%). Similarly, the correlation between Process orientation and tourists' attitude has a significant positive relationship with the correlation coefficient value of r=0.519, significant at 1%).

Further, since there is a significant correlation between dependent and independent variables, it permits to run a regression analysis to examine the impact of independent variables over dependent variables . The results of linear regression are shown in table 3.

Table 4: Regression Analysis

a. Dependent Variable: Attitude towards the purchase	
b. Predictors: (Constant), Process-Oriented, and Product-Oriented	
Constant	1.863 (0.00)
Process- Oriented shopping	0.397 (0.00)
Product- Oriented shopping	0.216 (0.004)
R^2	0.308
Adjusted R^2	0.299
F	34.106 (.000)
The number in the parentheses is a p-value *Significantly different from zero at the 0.01 Level Note: Based on the authors' Survey, 2019	

Table 4 shows the regression results of purchase intention. The F- Value figuring 34.106 which is significant at 0.01 level indicates that the regression model fits with the data when performing the regression of dependent and independent variables. It denotes that the independent variables have a significant amount of variation in attitude towards purchase of thangka. Here R square is 0.308 or 30.8%, which explains that 30.8% change in the dependent variable is predicted by the independent variables.

Similarly, to determine which independent variables significantly predict tourist attitude towards purchase of thangka painting. The value of t-test statistics has been analysed. T-test value for product orientated shopping was calculated at 2.937 with a beta value of 0.216 (p-value of 0.004 $p<0.05$). The value of beta is the degree of change in the outcome variable for every one unit of change in the predictor variable the outcome variable by beta value i.e. is 0.216 in the case of product-oriented shopping, therefore, H1 is accepted. And in the case of process-oriented shopping t-test value is 6.416 with a beta value of 0.397 (p-value of 0.000 <0.05) the result supports H2 process-orientation shopping has a significant impact on tourist attitude towards purchase of thangka painting.

The current research focuses on the relationship between factors and tourist attitude. The result of the study reveals that there is a significant relationship between the factors influencing attitude towards purchase of thangka painting in the study. The finding of the current study was partly similar to Dash (2010) the objective of their research was to study the perception of customers towards handicraft. Where the research applied descriptive research design and the study revealed that the consumer preferred handicraft items because of their religious depictions, and research further reveals there is a significant relationship between income and expenditure most of the respondent was motivated to buy the products due to artistic nature and the consumer further impressed by the quality. In the current research, the context of buying thangka painting Craftsmanship, Sensuous appreciation of product oriented shopping. Similarly, cultural and artistic linkage of process oriented has a significant on attitude towards purchase of thangka, In the same way, the current research shared the close linkage with the study of Silver & Kumdu (2012) the objective of their study was to explore the determinant factors which influence the Swedish customers" decision to buy handicrafts the study revealed that the Purchase decision of handicraft products was determined by, product's authenticity; genuineness, artistic value, the origin of the craft, and income level, etc. have a significant impact. Besides this, the opinions of friends and family have the highest influence on the purchase decision. Product appearance and showing up the shoppers" social status are the next two most influential factors. Even though the current study included limited factors for the study. The determinant factors such as artistic value, product authenticity, and appearance are similar to the factor of the current study and the factor paid a substantial role in attitude towards purchase of thangka paintings

6. Conclusion

Handicrafts are a unique expression of the particular culture or community, through local craftsmanship and materials. Talking about different handicraft products available in Nepal thangka paintings are one of the products mostly purchased by international tourists as a souvenir. Thangka paintings have religious, cultural, and traditional values, and mostly they are painted by specific local tribes so buying it supports the local community in preserving the culture and tradition. Purchase attitude is determined by; the value of the product; how tourists encounter the product and perceive it which is based on their beliefs. The uniqueness and attractiveness of the thangka painting attract tourists as it holds spiritual and religious value so the tourists are attracted towards it. Most of the visitors display interests after they have known its importance since it has its own religious and ethnic value. The tourists who are tolerant towards other religions buy this product as a decorative material.

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The authors claim having no conflict of interest in the research work.

Appendix

Respondents Profile

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Respondent by Nationality	Australian	2	1.3
	Bangladesh	2	1.3
	Belgium	5	3.2
	Canadian	3	1.9
	Chinese	15	9.6
	Czech	1	0.6
	Danish	1	0.6
	Dutch	7	4.5
	French	19	12.2
	German	9	5.8
	Indian	13	8.3
	Indonesia	1	0.6
	Israeli	5	3.2
	Italian	7	4.5
	Japanese	4	2.6
	Malaysian	1	0.6
	Norwegian	2	1.3
	Pakistan	1	0.6
	Singapore	2	1.3
	Spanish	4	2.6
	Swedish	1	0.6
	Swiss	2	1.3
	Thailand	1	0.6
	Turkish	3	1.9
	UK	7	4.5
	USA	37	23.7
	Vietnam	1	0.6
Respondent by Age	Below 20	22	14.1
	21-30	66	42.3
	31-40	35	22.4
	41-50	24	15.4
	Over 52	9	5.8

Respondents by Gender	Male	75	48.1
	Female	81	51.9
Respondent by Education Level	High School	27	17.3
	Bachelor	76	48.7
	Masters	43	27.6
	PhD	10	6.4
Respondent by Occupation	Student	79	52.0
	employee/ job holder	33	21.7
	self-employed	31	20.4
	Unemployed	4	2.6
	Others	5	3.3
Respondent by Marital Status	Married	93	59.6
	Unmarried	63	40.4
Respondent by Religion	Buddhist	24	15.4
	Catholic	5	3.2
	Christian	26	16.7
	Hindu	14	9.0
	Jainism	2	1.3
	Jewish	5	5
	Muslim	4	4
	None	73	73
	Spiritual	2	2
	Yogi	1	1