Rabi Sangyan रवि संज्ञान

Inferential Analysis of Service Marketing Factors Influencing Customer Satisfaction in the Tourism Sector of Eastern Nepal

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Article Info.	Abstract
Corresponding Author **Rohit Rijal** ***Email*** rohit.rijal9742606577@gmail.com 	This research investigates the impact of service marketing factors on customer satisfaction and loyalty within the Nepalese tourism industry, focusing on service quality, price competitiveness, location accessibility, cultural experiences, and brand image. A diverse sample of 185 respondents was analyzed, revealing a near-even gender distribution predominantly from the 26-35 and 36-45 age groups. The descriptive analysis indicated that while service quality is generally perceived positively, improvements are needed in pre-trip information provision. Price competitiveness was identified as a strong asset, but enhancing pricing transparency could further strengthen this factor. Respondents expressed positive feedback regarding location accessibility and cultural experiences, although concerns about the authenticity of cultural performances emerged. Correlation and regression analyses demonstrated significant relationships between service quality, price competitiveness, location accessibility, cultural experiences, brand image, and customer satisfaction. Notably, price competitiveness and location accessibility were robust predictors of satisfaction. The findings underscore the multifaceted nature of service marketing in Eastern Nepal's tourism sector and provide actionable recommendations for stakeholders to enhance tourist experiences and promote sustainable growth in the industry. Continuous adaptation of marketing strategies is essential to maintain competitiveness in the evolving tourism landscape. *Keywords*: service quality, price competitiveness, location accessibility, cultural experiences, brand image, tourism

Introduction

The Nepalese tourism sector has undergone significant growth over the past few decades, establishing itself as a vital contributor to the national economy. This growth has been driven by Nepal's rich cultural heritage, stunning landscapes, and adventure tourism opportunities, attracting millions of international visitors annually needs intensive marketing (Mishra, 2023; Mishra & Aithal, 2021a&b). Despite this progress, there remains a notable gap in research regarding the effectiveness of tourism market promotion activities in Nepal. Studies such as those conducted by Lu and Nepal (2009) highlight the profound impact of tourism on local communities, yet there is still limited understanding of how promotional strategies influence tourist behavior and satisfaction. Srinivasan (2009) describes tourism as a complex functional system composed of five components: tourists, attractions, service facilities, transportation, and information direction.

This multifaceted nature of tourism underscores the importance of effective marketing strategies that can enhance tourist experiences and foster loyalty. Travel serves as a powerful catalyst for human development and global communication, allowing individuals to exchange ideas and build relationships across cultures (Li & Petrick, 2007). This highlights the need for sustainable practices within the tourism sector to ensure that its benefits are preserved for future generations. Research conducted by Baroni et al. (2000) emphasizes the socio-economic and environmental impacts of tourism in regions like the Everest National Park. The influx of tourists has led to substantial changes in local economies, often resulting in the abandonment of traditional practices in favor of mass tourism. While this shift has generated wealth for some communities, it has also undermined local customs and social structures. The transformation of dwellings into lodges and the proliferation of small shops along trekking routes illustrate how deeply intertwined tourism is with local livelihoods. The Chartered Institute of Marketing defines marketing as a management process responsible for identifying, anticipating, and satisfying customer requirements profitably (Kotler et al., 2009). In the context of Nepal's tourism sector, effective marketing strategies are essential not only for attracting visitors but also for ensuring their needs are met throughout their journey. This involves a coordinated approach that encompasses planning, implementation, and evaluation of promotional campaigns aimed at enhancing customer experiences. Okuwobi (2006) argue that effective service marketing requires the development of a desirable image, particularly given the intangible nature of services. The creation of a strong brand image is critical for service providers in Nepal's tourism sector, as it influences customer perceptions and their likelihood to recommend services to others. Gummesson (2002) highlights that traditional marketing concepts must evolve to accommodate the unique characteristics of services, emphasizing relationships and interactions between providers and customers. The complexities inherent in service marketing necessitate a focus on several key dimensions. For instance, understanding service quality is vital; Mackoy and Spreng (1996) note that there is an established relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. However, this relationship can vary depending on specific contexts and consumer expectations. In Nepal's case, ensuring high service quality is essential for fostering repeat visits and positive word-of-mouth referrals. Furthermore, effective market analysis is crucial for identifying target demographics and tailoring promotional efforts accordingly. As noted by Plog and Goeldner (2004) understanding market segments allows organizations to differentiate themselves from competitors and develop sustainable competitive advantages. The dynamic nature of tourism marketing requires continuous adaptation to changing consumer preferences and market conditions. In light of these considerations, the overarching goal of this research is to explore current service marketing strategies employed by tourism service providers in Nepal and their impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty. By identifying effective strategies that resonate with diverse tourist demographics—considering factors such as service quality, pricing transparency, accessibility, cultural authenticity, and brand perception—this study aims to provide valuable insights for industry stakeholders. Ultimately, addressing these challenges will be crucial for not only attracting tourists but also retaining them while encouraging positive word-of-mouth recommendations—essential components for sustainable growth in Nepal's tourism industry. The findings from this research will contribute significantly to the body of knowledge surrounding tourism marketing in Nepal while offering practical insights that can enhance the industry's growth trajectory. By focusing on sustainable practices and enhancing customer experiences through effective service marketing strategies, Nepal can solidify its position as a premier destination that meets both current tourists' needs and future visitors' expectations.

Research Objective

The general objective of this research is to identify the impact of service marketing factors influencing customer satisfaction and loyalty in the Nepalese tourism industry, such as service quality, price competitiveness, location accessibility, cultural experiences, and brand image on the tourism sector in Nepal.

Theoretical Framework for Eastern Nepal's Tourism Sector

In the following figure, the researcher has identified three dependent variables and one independent variable relevant to the tourism sector in Eastern Nepal:

Dependent Variables
- Customer Satisfaction
- Customer Loyalty

Independent Variables
- Service Quality
- Price Competitiveness
- Convenient Location
- Cultural Experiences
- Brand Image

Measurement Criteria of Variables

Dependent Variables Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty

Customer satisfaction is defined as a measurement that determines how happy customers are with a company's products, services, and capabilities. In the context of Eastern Nepal's tourism sector, customer satisfaction can be gauged through surveys and ratings that reflect tourists' experiences with local accommodations, trekking services, and cultural interactions. High levels of customer satisfaction are essential for fostering loyalty, which describes an ongoing emotional relationship between tourists and service providers. Loyal customers are more likely to engage with and repeatedly purchase from these providers, creating a cycle of trust and positive word-of-mouth promotion.

### Independent Variables Service Quality

Service quality refers to the assessment and evaluation of the overall excellence, performance, and value of the services provided by tourism operators in Eastern Nepal. It encompasses the extent to which the delivered service meets or exceeds customer expectations, particularly in areas such as trekking guides, hospitality services, and cultural experiences. Key dimensions include reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles.

Price Competitiveness. Price competitiveness refers to how the pricing of tourism services in Eastern Nepal compares to similar offerings in other regions or countries. It involves assessing the affordability and perceived value of services such as trekking packages, accommodations, and local tours. Understanding price competitiveness is crucial for attracting budget-conscious travelers while ensuring that service quality justifies pricing.

Convenient Location. A convenient location is particularly significant for tourism in Eastern Nepal due to its diverse attractions ranging from the lush Terai plains to the towering Himalayas. Accessibility to major trekking routes, cultural sites, and transportation hubs greatly influences tourists' decisions. Locations that save time and effort enhance overall satisfaction and encourage repeat visits.

Cultural Experiences. Cultural experiences are a vital draw for tourists visiting Eastern Nepal. These experiences include interactions with local communities, participation in traditional festivals, and exposure to local customs and cuisine. The authenticity of these cultural offerings can significantly impact overall tourist satisfaction.

Brand Image. Brand image refers to the overall perception that tourists have about Nepal as a travel destination. A strong brand image that resonates with potential visitors can enhance their overall experience and foster trust in the services provided by local operators. Effective branding strategies are essential for differentiating Eastern Nepal from competing destinations.

Figure 1

Diagrammatic Presentation of Theoretical Framework
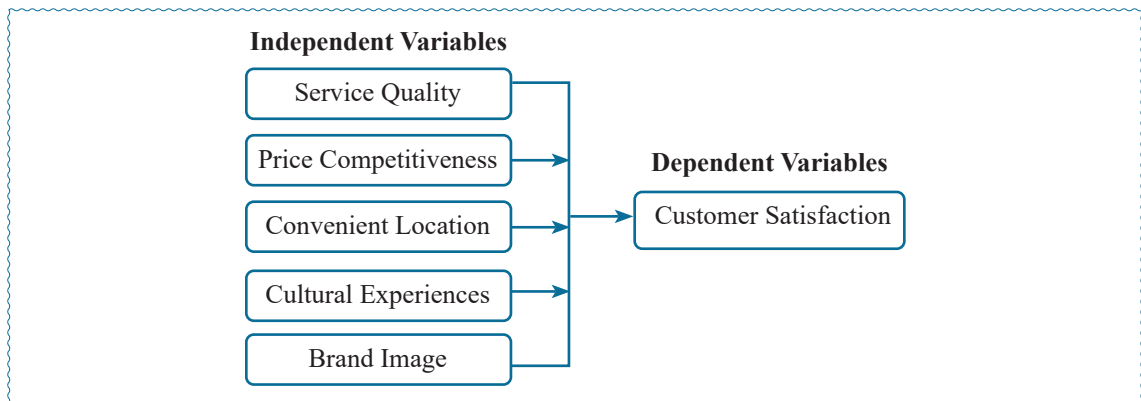
This theoretical framework provides a structured approach to understanding how various factors influence customer satisfaction and loyalty within Eastern Nepal's tourism sector. The framework is conceptualize based on Bastola et al. (2021), Mishra and Aithal (2022), Mishra and Aithal (2023), Mishra (2020), Mishra et al. (2021& 2023).

By examining these relationships through targeted research, stakeholders can identify effective service marketing strategies that not only attract tourists but also enhance their overall experiences. Addressing these variables will be crucial for sustaining growth in this vibrant sector while promoting responsible tourism practices that benefit local communities and preserve the region's unique cultural heritage.

Research Design and Plan

This study presents a comprehensive descriptive analysis of service marketing and customer satisfaction within the tourism sector of Eastern Nepal. The research design outlines the methods and procedures for data collection and analysis, employing descriptive research methodologies tailored specifically to this context. Explanatory research helps elucidate aspects of customer satisfaction and loyalty, critical to understanding tourist experiences.

Data Sources

The study utilized both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire administered to a sample of 185 respondents, ensuring that all research objectives were addressed. Secondary data was sourced from existing literature and previous research to validate findings and provide contextual background.

The primary objective is to explore factors influencing customer satisfaction and loyalty in Nepal's tourism industry, focusing on service quality, price competitiveness, convenient locations, cultural appeal, and brand image. Ultimately, this research aims to develop effective marketing strategies that enhance tourism in Nepal.

Study Area

The research focuses on the tourism sector in Eastern Nepal, targeting both international and domestic tourists visiting popular hubs such as Antu Dada, Pathibhara, Illam, Phidim, and the Kirat Museum. This geographic focus was selected due to the high volume of tourist activity, making it a cost-effective choice for data collection. A sample of 185 tourists was surveyed over a 25-day period.

Population and Sample Size

The research population consists of individual travelers who have visited Nepal as tourists. To ensure a representative sample reflecting diverse demographics and experiences, respondents were selected from various tourist locations in Eastern Nepal. This approach allows for generalizations about customer preferences and behaviors based on the collected data.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection involved an extensive literature review and the development of a comprehensive questionnaire addressing key aspects of service marketing in Eastern Nepal's tourism sector. This study employs both qualitative and quantitative methods: quantitative research quantifies attitudes and behaviors, while qualitative research provides deeper insights into motivations and opinions, enhancing overall understanding of the tourism landscape.

Methods of Data Collection

Primary Data

Primary data was collected through a self-administered survey that included both open and closed-ended questions. Additionally, direct personal interviews with tourists provided valuable insights into their experiences and perceptions.

Secondary Data

Secondary data was sourced from various platforms, including academic articles, publications from the Nepal Tourism Board, and relevant government departments. This existing data contextualized the research and provided a backdrop for analyzing primary findings.

Instrumentation

The study utilized a structured questionnaire divided into three sections: demographic information, independent variables (service quality, price competitiveness, convenient location, cultural experiences, brand image), and dependent variables (customer satisfaction), measured using a Likert scale. The questionnaire comprised 34 structured questions designed to elicit detailed responses regarding tourism experiences.

Administration of Instruments

Questionnaires were distributed directly to respondents, both in-person and online, with an estimated completion time of 8-10 minutes. The language used was clear and accessible to facilitate understanding. The study's purpose was communicated to enhance participation and accuracy. The demographic section helped profile respondents, while the remaining sections assessed various independent and dependent variables relevant to the research.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

This section aims to analyze and interpret the data collected during the study, presenting results from the questionnaire survey. The main objective is to analyze data, test hypotheses, and determine the significance of the relationships stated. The analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics Software and MS Excel to generate tables and figures illustrating findings. The analysis includes descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and hypothesis testing.

This chapter is organized into four parts:

1. **Respondents' Profile:** Providing insights into the demographic characteristics of respondents.
2. **Descriptive Analysis:** A comprehensive examination of the collected data.
3. **Inferential Statistics:** Correlation and regression analysis of variables.
4. **Discussion:** Interpretation of the results obtained from the analysis.

Respondents' Profile

This section details the demographic characteristics of the 185 respondents, including gender, age, marital status, and travel history.

1. **Gender Distribution:** The study found a nearly balanced gender distribution, with 48.6% female and 49.7% male respondents.
2. **Age Group Distribution:** The largest segment was within the 26-35 age group, comprising 44.4% of respondents, followed by 29.7% in the 36-45 group.
3. **Marital Status:** A majority of respondents (58.4%) were married, while 38.9% were unmarried.
4. **Travel Experience:** All respondents confirmed that they had traveled to Nepal, ensuring the relevance of their insights.

Reliability Analysis

The final questionnaire was constructed around several dimensions as represented in the research framework. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha for each variable:

Table 1

Reliability Analysis

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Service Quality	0.662	5
Price Competitiveness	0.658	5
Convenient Location	0.626	5
Cultural Experience	0.732	5
Brand Image	0.616	5
Customer Satisfaction	0.785	5

A Cronbach's Alpha above 0.6 indicates acceptable reliability for the scales used in the study.

Statistical Analysis Plan

Data was edited, coded, categorized, and tabulated to ensure clarity. SPSS and Microsoft Excel were utilized for data analysis, employing descriptive statistics and inferential analysis techniques. The Chi-square test was used to assess associations between variables, while percentages illustrated respondent frequencies.

Inferential Analysis

To test hypotheses and explore relationships.

This structured approach sets the foundation for a thorough analysis and discussion of the collected data, contributing valuable insights into the dynamics of service marketing and customer satisfaction in Eastern Nepal's tourism sector.

Data Analysis

Inferential Analysis

Inferential statistics analyze the relationships between the variables identified in this study, focusing on customer satisfaction in the context of Eastern Nepal's tourism sector. Using the sample size of 185, the analysis aims to deduce the properties of the underlying probability distribution and test the hypotheses formulated in earlier chapters.

Correlation Analysis

Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted to assess the strength and direction of relationships among the dependent and independent variables. This bivariate analysis measures how closely two variables are associated, with a correlation value ranging from -1 (perfect negative correlation) to +1 (perfect positive correlation). A correlation of 0 indicates no relationship between the variables.

Table 2

Correlation Results

Variables	Service Quality	Price Competitiveness	Convenient Location	Cultural Experience	Brand Image	Customer Satisfaction
Service Quality	1	0.356**	0.384**	0.366**	0.227**	0.186**
Price Competitiveness	0.356**	1	0.597**	0.392**	0.423**	0.451**
Convenient Location	0.384**	0.597**	1	0.214**	0.432**	0.193**
Cultural Experience	0.366**	0.392**	0.214**	1	0.395**	0.313**
Brand Image	0.227**	0.423**	0.432**	0.395**	1	0.340**

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

The correlation table reveals significant relationships among various dimensions of tourism in Eastern Nepal. Service Quality demonstrates moderate positive correlations with Price Competitiveness (r = 0.356), Convenient Location (r = 0.384), Cultural Experience (r = 0.366), Brand

Image (r = 0.227), and Customer Satisfaction (r = 0.186). These results suggest that enhancements in service quality are associated with improvements across these dimensions.

Price Competitiveness exhibits strong correlations with Convenient Location (r = 0.597), Cultural Experience (r = 0.392), Brand Image (r = 0.423), and Customer Satisfaction (r = 0.451), indicating that competitive pricing positively influences perceptions of location convenience, cultural experiences, and overall satisfaction. Additionally, Cultural Experience positively correlates with Brand Image (r = 0.395) and Customer Satisfaction (r = 0.313), highlighting its importance in shaping customer perceptions.

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis estimates the relationships between a dependent variable and one or more independent variables, providing insights into how well the independent variables explain variability in the dependent variable. In this study, regression analysis tests the hypotheses regarding customer satisfaction.

Table 3

Model Summary

Model	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.240	1.54891

The Adjusted R Square value of 0.240 indicates that approximately 24.0% of the variability in customer satisfaction is explained by the independent variables included in the model. The Std. Error of the Estimate of about 1.54891 represents the average prediction error, suggesting that the independent variables collectively provide a moderate prediction of customer satisfaction in Eastern Nepal's tourism industry.

Table 4

Regression ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	165.838	5	33.168	13.825	.0001
Residual	475.028	198	2.399		
Total	640.866	203			

The ANOVA table evaluates whether there is a linear relationship between the variables in the regression model. The p-value (Sig.) associated with the F-statistic is extremely low (p < 0.001), indicating that the model is statistically significant. This suggests that the independent variables collectively influence customer satisfaction.

Table 5

Coefficients of the Regression Model

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
	B	Std. Error				
Service Quality	0.019	0.062	0.3	0.764	0.762	1.312
Price Competitiveness	0.366	0.070	5.216	0.0001	0.558	1.792
Convenient Location	-0.177	0.084	-2.121	0.035	0.561	1.781
Cultural Experience	0.111	0.081	1.374	0.171	0.714	1.401
Brand Image	0.238	0.091	2.608	0.01	0.704	1.42

The coefficients of the regression model show the contribution of each independent variable to the dependent variable, customer Satisfaction. The significance (Sig.) values indicate the statistical importance of each independent variable's contribution to explaining customer satisfaction.

- **Service Quality:** Sig. value of 0.764 indicates it is not statistically significant in explaining customer satisfaction.
- **Price Competitiveness:** Sig. value of 0.0001 shows high statistical significance, indicating it significantly impacts customer satisfaction.
- **Convenient Location:** Sig. value of 0.035 indicates it is statistically significant.
- Cultural Experience: Sig. value of 0.171 suggests it is not statistically significant.
- Brand Image: Sig. value of 0.010 indicates a significant impact on customer satisfaction.

In summary, Price Competitiveness, Convenient Location, and Brand Image emerge as statistically significant predictors of Customer Satisfaction, with their Sig. values below the conventional threshold of 0.05. These findings are crucial for informing marketing strategies and enhancing customer experiences in Eastern Nepal's tourism sector.

Hypothesis Testing

This section focuses on testing the hypotheses developed for this study on customer satisfaction in Eastern Nepal's tourism sector. Each hypothesis evaluates two mutually exclusive statements to determine which is best supported by the sample data. Individual analyses were performed using SPSS for a sample size of 185. Four alternative hypotheses for each independent variable and one for the moderating variable were formulated to explore the relationships among the dependent, moderating, and independent variables.

Hypotheses

H01 There is no significant relationship between perceived service quality and customer satisfaction in Nepal's tourism.

The Sig. value for "Service Quality" is 0.764, which is greater than the common significance level of 0.05. Therefore, I do not reject H01, suggesting that there is no significant relationship between perceived service quality and customer satisfaction in Eastern Nepal's tourism.

H02: Price competitiveness significantly affects customer satisfaction in Nepal's tourism.

The Sig. value for "Price Competitiveness" is 0.0001, much less than 0.05. Therefore, I support H02, indicating that price competitiveness significantly affects customer satisfaction in Eastern Nepal's tourism.

H03: Convenient location significantly influences customer satisfaction in Nepal's tourism. The Sig. value for "Convenient Location" is 0.035, which is less than 0.05. Thus, I support H03, implying that convenient location significantly influences customer satisfaction in Eastern Nepal's tourism.

H04: Cultural experiences significantly influence customer satisfaction in Nepal's tourism.

The Sig. value for "Cultural Experience" is 0.171, greater than 0.05. Therefore, I do not support H04, suggesting that there is no significant influence of cultural experiences on customer satisfaction in Eastern Nepal's tourism.

H05: The perceived brand image significantly affects customer satisfaction in Nepal's tourism.

The Sig. value for "Brand Image" is 0.010, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, I support H05, indicating that the perceived brand image significantly affects customer satisfaction in Eastern Nepal's tourism.

H06: The combined effect of service quality, price competitiveness, convenient location, cultural experience, and brand image does not significantly explain customer satisfaction in Nepal's tourism.

The p-value associated with the F-statistic for the regression model is extremely low (p < 0.001), suggesting that the overall model is statistically significant. This means that the independent variables collectively have a significant influence on customer satisfaction in Eastern Nepal's tourism sector.

Discussion

The primary aim of this study is to identify the impact of service marketing on the tourism sector in Eastern Nepal. The research focuses on factors influencing customer satisfaction and loyalty, including service quality, price, location, culture, and brand image. Data were collected from 185 tourists, both domestic and international.

The study evaluated different factors affecting tourists' vacation decisions in Eastern Nepal. The dependent, independent, and moderating variables were derived from a comprehensive literature review, which was conceptualized in the second chapter of this study. The framework is built on variables identified in the literature.

Various factors were examined for their impact on vacation decisions, with customer satisfaction as the dependent variable. The results were based on both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses of primary data collected via a survey questionnaire. A pilot study involving 10 respondents was conducted prior to the main survey, yielding an overall Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.682, indicating acceptable reliability. The main study's Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.679, affirming that all variables meet reliability standards.

Data collected from the questionnaires were analyzed using various statistical tools. The first part of the analysis addressed the demographic profiles of respondents, including age, gender, and marital status. The second part involved descriptive analysis of different factors, while the final part focused on inferential analysis using correlation and regression.

Through correlation analysis, it was found that all independent variables significantly impact customer satisfaction. The significance (Sig.) values for each independent variable were crucial in determining their influence. Notably, Price Competitiveness emerged as the most influential factor with a Sig. value of 0.000, followed by Convenient Location with a Sig. value of 0.035. In contrast, Service Quality and Cultural Experience showed higher Sig. values, indicating a lesser impact on customer satisfaction. Brand Image also demonstrated significance with a Sig. value of 0.010.

In summary, in the context of this study, Price Competitiveness, Convenient Location, and Brand Image are statistically significant predictors of Customer Satisfaction, as their Sig. values fall below the common significance threshold of 0.05. These findings are essential for supporting the research objectives and hypotheses regarding customer satisfaction in Eastern Nepal's tourism sector.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has yielded significant insights into the dynamics of service marketing within Eastern Nepal's tourism sector. The demographic analysis of the 185 respondents revealed a diverse sample, with a near-even gender distribution and a predominant representation from the 26-35 and 36-45 age groups. Most participants were married, reflecting a varied demographic mix that adds depth to the dataset. Importantly, all respondents had personal experiences related to the study topic, ensuring a comprehensive and relevant dataset for analysis.

The descriptive analysis uncovered several key aspects of tourism in Eastern Nepal. While service quality is generally perceived positively, there remains room for improvement, particularly in the provision of pre-trip information. Price competitiveness emerged as a strong asset for Nepal's tourism; however, enhancing pricing transparency could further bolster this strength. Participants expressed positive feedback regarding convenient locations, cultural experiences, and brand image, highlighting Nepal's allure as a travel destination. Nonetheless, certain areas, such as the authenticity of cultural performances and options

for regional exploration, warrant further attention. Overall, tourists reported high levels of satisfaction, with strong intentions to revisit and recommend Nepal to others, albeit with suggestions for minor improvements in tourism services.

The correlation and regression analyses underscored significant relationships between various independent variables—service quality, price competitiveness, convenient location, cultural experience, and brand image—and the dependent variable, customer satisfaction. Notably, price competitiveness and convenient location emerged as robust predictors of customer satisfaction. In contrast, service quality and cultural experience, while not statistically significant, still hold nuanced importance in shaping tourists' perceptions.

Collectively, these findings emphasize the multifaceted nature of service marketing in Eastern Nepal's tourism sector. As the industry continues to evolve, understanding these dynamics is crucial for stakeholders. Strategies aimed at enhancing pricing transparency, improving service quality, and promoting authentic cultural experiences could contribute to a more satisfying and competitive tourism environment.

In summary, this research provides actionable insights that can inform marketing strategies within Eastern Nepal's tourism sector, ultimately contributing to its continued growth and success. However, recognizing the dynamic nature of the tourism landscape is essential, and continuous monitoring and adaptation of marketing efforts are necessary to ensure long-term sustainability and competitiveness.

Recommendations and Suggestions

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study on service marketing in Eastern Nepal's tourism sector, the following recommendations are proposed for stakeholders—including tourism businesses, government authorities, and policymakers—to enhance the overall tourism experience and competitiveness:

Enhance Pre-trip Information Services. Invest in improving the provision of pre-trip information, both online and in brochures. Comprehensive and clear information assists tourists in planning their visits and sets the stage for positive experiences.

Transparent Pricing. While Nepal's price competitiveness is a significant advantage, ensure transparency in pricing to eliminate hidden fees. This transparency will build trust and help tourists make informed decisions.

Infrastructure Development. Continue investing in transportation infrastructure and connectivity to make Eastern Nepal's attractions more accessible. Focus on improving regional exploration options to encourage tourists to discover areas beyond the main attractions.

Cultural Authenticity. Ensure that cultural experiences and performances reflect authentic local life. This authenticity enriches the overall tourism experience and fosters deeper connections with visitors.

Brand Alignment. Align Nepal's tourism brand image with the actual experiences tourists encounter. Consistency between branding and real experiences is crucial for building trust and attracting more visitors.

Service Quality Improvement. Although service quality was not statistically significant, it remains vital for customer satisfaction. Businesses should strive for high service standards, as this indirectly contributes to overall satisfaction.

Interdisciplinary Collaboration. Encourage collaboration among sectors such as tourism, culture, and infrastructure development to create a seamless experience for tourists.

Marketing Strategies. Develop targeted marketing strategies that highlight Nepal's strengths—such as competitive pricing, rich cultural experiences, and convenient locations—tailored to resonate with specific demographics.

Tourist Feedback Mechanism. Establish robust mechanisms for gathering feedback from tourists to identify evolving preferences and areas requiring improvement.

Sustainability Initiatives. Promote sustainable tourism practices, including responsible trekking and conservation efforts, to preserve Nepal's natural and cultural assets for future generations.

Training and Capacity Building. Invest in training programs for tourism industry personnel, focusing on customer service and cultural sensitivity to ensure positive interactions with tourists.

Government Support. Advocate for government support through policies that promote investment, infrastructure development, and sustainable tourism practices.

Research Continuation. Given the dynamic nature of the tourism industry, ongoing research is essential to stay updated on evolving trends and preferences among tourists.

By implementing these recommendations, Eastern Nepal's tourism sector can build on its strengths while addressing areas for improvement, ultimately offering tourists a more enriching and satisfying experience. This approach will contribute to the sustained growth and success of Nepal's tourism industry in the long term.

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