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*How do social media travel influencers
impact Millennials' visit intentions?*

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Abstract

This master's dissertation attempted to investigate the impact of social media travel influencers' traits, "expertise, information quality, content attractiveness, and credibility" on their follower's perceived trustworthiness. Later, the perceived trustworthiness was measured by millennials' intention to travel to the Pokhara region of Nepal. Utilizing Stimulus-Organism-Response "S-O-R" as a theoretical framework, the aforesaid four traits of influencers were termed as a stimulus, perceived trustworthiness was termed as "Organism," and the intention to visit the destination was termed as the "Response" factor. A positivist research philosophy, along with a deductive research approach, was implied in this dissertation. A total of 237 responses were gathered by using an online survey questionnaire, in which snowball sampling was adopted for sample selection. This dissertation employed structural equation modelling to analyze the relationship between the aforementioned variables. The SEM findings reveal that social media travel influencers' expertise ($\beta = 0.434$, C.R = 7.803, P= 0.00) and information quality ($\beta = 0.272$, C.R = 5.80, P= 0.00) significantly impact their followers' perceived trustworthiness of the shared content. However, influencers' credibility and content attractiveness were also found to have a significant positive relationship, but not as much as expertise and information quality. social media travel influencers' expertise has a strong and positive correlation with trustworthiness (0.79), which implies that influencers with a high degree of expertise on travel-related information hold greater perceived trust in their followers about Pokhara as a destination. However, expertise may not impact SM-travel influencers' credibility more, as this paper has produced a weak but positive correlation (0.50).

In the context of limitation, the survey project was able to gather only 237 responses, which is still below par when it comes to generalizing the findings to a similar region within a similar research field. Tourism entrepreneurs, especially destination operators, can best leverage these insights by employing social media travel influencers with a high degree of travel-related expertise and high information quality. Additionally, this dissertation has found Instagram and YouTube to be the most preferred platforms for seeking travel-related content.


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Chapter 1: Introduction

This section acts as an opening chapter to establish a framework for the entire dissertation. Firstly, this chapter will provide a quick summary of the main issue of the dissertation within social media travel influencers, millennials, and their travel decision-making. This chapter provides the relevancy of this research and how it helps provide insights to potential readers. Finally, this chapter will end by providing the dissertation's questions and objectives.



Modern traveller's rely extensively on social media platforms for travel information and destination selection (Li & Zhou, 2023). Travelers' social media influencers have recently significantly influenced travelers' decision-making, as highlighted by recent investigations, such as Rao Hill & Qesja (2023) and Li & Zhou (2023). Simplistically, travel social media influencers (SMIs) may influence users' or viewers' views and travel choices by sharing content creation through their travel experiences and other possible alternatives on social media sites (Li & Zhou, 2023). Social media influencers have found significant involvement, especially in the tourism marketing sector, and hold a decisive role in tourist travel decision-making processes (Raafat et al., 2023). However, there has been a significant drought of research on travel SMIs' influence, particularly on millennials. A significant quantity of research has attempted to explore the assumption that all travelers have similar visit intentions, preferences, attitudes, and behavioral reasoning. Therefore, this master's dissertation will be extensively focused on Millennials as this segment is crucial and is considered the largest travel and tourism consumer (Kim & Park, 2020); however, they have got minimal attention despite being considered the largest potential customer group. On the other hand, Millennials were raised when cutting-edge ICT gears became a necessary component of daily routine and thus termed “digital natives” (Ramadhan & Syahputri, 2020). More importantly, Perčić and Spasić (2021) found that millennials prefer to travel and enjoy vacations more, but what makes them visit more or what factors impact their visitation more is still a subject of research. For instance, the role of travel SMIs in their willingness to travel and explore different tourist destinations is underexplored, and the traits of travel SM travel influencers on millennials' perceived trust and

visit intention are rarely studied. Therefore, this master's dissertation will attempt to explore what traits of social media travel influencers affect their followers to develop trust in their shared content and how that trust influences travel intention.

More and more travel destinations are seen partnering with travel SMIs to promote and endorse their travel-related products and services (Kapoor et al., 2022). From that perspective, research on how the different attributions of travel SMIs within travel and tourism impact users' attitudinal and behavioral intentions is a crucial topic of study (Doğan et al., 2021; Kapoor et al., 2022). Doğan et al. (2021) found that the attractiveness and expertise of travel SMIs noticeably impact users' inclination to travel to the recommended destination. Meanwhile, the trustworthiness of travel SMIs was found to be a catalyst between the quality of rendered content and users' inclination to visit (Doğan et al., 2021). Similarly, Saini et al. (2023) found several factors of travel SMIs that could impact viewers' propensity to visit, such as the quality of the content creation, follower size, reviews, and responses to viewers' inquiries. However, the research by Saini et al. (2023) is also limited by assuming every traveler, despite being born in a different era, has the same behavior and perceptions, due to which true understanding of young travelers might be affected. Though prior research has explored the characteristics of travel SMIs affecting viewers' attitudinal and behavioral intentions to some extent, it significantly lacks a grasp to understand young travelers' perceptions towards social media travel influencers and their traits.

In recent times, with the rapid proliferation of social media usage, influencer marketing has become a potent method to impact consumers behavior and choices when selecting any products, services, or experiences, and have found extensive reliance on the endorsement of SMIs they follow (Sesar et al., 2021). Though social media influencer marketing was initially initiated in the fashion sector, it has expanded to various fields in which travel and tourism are some of the fastest-growing markets (Sesar et al., 2021). In the current climate, the social media platform Instagram, with over 1 billion interactors since 2018, constitutes one of the prominent platforms for influencer marketing (Asdecker, 2022, p. 2). According to Statista (2024), the global influencer marketing market size in 2016 was \$ 1.7 billion, which went up to an estimated \$24 billion, with a cumulative annual growth rate of approximately 14%. Social media influencer marketing, especially targeted to travel and tourism, has gained wider recognition at present time (Asdecker, 2022).

Social media platforms offer their viewers an efficient and instantaneous stage to express their social content in many formats, for instance, content, stories, reviews, and narrations (Ong et al., 2022). SMIs have gained wider attention in both academia and market practices due to the increasing popularity of social media sites and their role in marketing across different industrial sectors (Ong et al., 2022). Numerous research such as (Masuda et al., 2022; Sesar et al., 2021), have shown that SMI marketing is highly efficacious in reaching many marketing goals, including increasing brand recognition and consumer buying intention (Ong et al., 2022). Similarly, market practitioners in the travel and tourism sector have acknowledged the ability of SMIs to enhance the promotion and endorsement of travel destinations and associated products (Ong et al., 2022). According to Ong et al. (2022), prior research in the field of travel and tourism has examined the impact of SMI marketing on travel destination image and their intention using concepts such as self-congruence and SMI credibility, expertise, and content information quality; however, such studied by putting all consumers in a single basket. Assuming all consumers are “travelers” with the same behavioral factors affects the true understanding of their decision-making behavior. For instance, young adults might have different levels of motivations, preferences, and perceptions than older travelers. In the context of Nepal, the exploration of social media travel influencers' role in travelers' intention to visit tourist destinations is rarely studied. Despite Nepal being a popular tourist destination, and the role of social media and influencer marketing is growing, their influence on travel intention is still outshined. However, it might be too broad to study the whole of Nepal as a study area as it needs a cautious selection of samples from each region in a systematic way to generalize the whole country. Therefore, this dissertation sticks to a single tourist destination “Pokhara” as a study area for two reasons: firstly, Pokhara is one of the popular tourist destinations of Nepal, and secondly, the researcher belongs to this region, which gives a better understanding about the destination both academically and practically. In addition, it also helps to gather samples more conveniently than other destinations, which is rather unknown.

1.2 Problem statement

Despite influencer marketing growing at a whopping 14% annually from 2016 to 2024 (Statista, 2024), still SMIs' impact on particular generations, such as Millennials, is still scantily

studied. Since millennials are counted as the largest consumers of travel and tourism, they have gotten minimal attention despite being considered the largest potential customer group (Kim & Park, 2020). On the other hand, millennials are characterized as technologically savvy and were born when cutting-edge information and telecommunication (ICT) become a part of daily routines (Ramadhan & Syahputri, 2020). In fact, Perčić and Spasić (2021) found that millennials are more active in vacationing and traveling and prefer to travel and enjoy vacation more as compared to any other generation cohorts. Despite the potential to understand millennials' travel destination selection, perceived experiences, and attitudinal and behavioral constituents, none of the academic research has explored their research from this avenue. However, numerous academic researchers such as (Asdecker, 2022; Masuda et al. 2022 Sesar et al., 2021) have attempted to explore SM-travel influencers' impact on millennials' visit intention but holistically. When studied from a holistic perspective, it seems to be a daunting challenge to understand a particular generation's "for instance, young adults, elders, children, middle-aged adults, etc." visit intentions, travel selection, decision-making processes, and attitudinal and behavioral aspects.

Unlike traditional forms of marketing, these influencers articulate their travel experiences, trip planning, and recommendations with a dual interaction with their followers via comments, messages, and live streams (Chu et al., 2020). These social media are more popular with young adults, especially millennials, and their travel experiences, recommendations, and travel-related insights have made them a one-stop solution for travel planning and decisions (Han & Chen, 2021). Millennials, in particular, have found these social media travel influencers more authentic and relatable, and more importantly, the shared content is perceived highly by their followers, matching these millennials' anticipation (Han & Chen, 2021). In addition, one of the reasons behind finding these social media travel influencers' shared content more relatable due to their similar backgrounds (Han & Chen, 2021). Since these groups grew up in the digital era and admired the supremacy of social media for maintaining social relationships, a growing trend of implying social media travel influencers for seeking travel-related content is seen in recent times (Han & Chen, 2021). However, what factors of social media travel influencers' traits are more crucial for trust build-up and how such factors influence their visit intention are still underexplored topics. This might be because social media influencer marketing is still considered an emerging phase.

Therefore, to overcome this research gap, this master dissertation will be limited to how SM-travel influencers' traits, such as information quality of the content, expertise level, content

quality, and credibility, impact millennials' trust build-up and how it affects their travel intention. This dissertation will adopt “Pokhara” as a study area to comprehend how millennials from Pokhara, Nepal, behave towards SM-travel influencer's traits and form trust and how these factors collectively affect their travel intention to visit Pokhara.

1.3 Research Questions

- 1) How do the traits of SM-travel influencers impact millennials' visit intentions, and what factors of these influencers' traits particularly impact millennials' perceived trust in the shared travel content?
- 2) How do Millennials perceive SM-travel influencers' content as trustworthiness, and how effectively does it impact their followers' intention to visit the endorsed destination?

1.4 Research objectives

- To explore the linkage between social media travel influencers' traits and their influence on their followers' perceived trustworthiness
- To study and evaluate the role of SM travel influencers on millennials' intention to travel.
- To understand and explore SM- travel influencers' traits such as credibility, information quality, expertise level, and content quality, perceived trustworthiness on their follower's travel intention

1.5 Significance of the study

Exploring “How Social Media Influencers Impact Millennials' Visiting Intention?” will permit us to learn more about the connection between content creation and influencers' impact on millennials' intention to visit tourism destinations within social media platforms. This understudied research will allow more nuanced findings and patterns of discovery on how millennials perceive the travel decisions, trustworthiness, and visit intentions shared by their travel influencers on Social media. Since this dissertation will focus on Millennials from Pokhara, Nepal, it will provide more insight into the destination management organizations, tour operators, and entrepreneurs in Pokhara to understand millennial travelers' attitudes and perceptions towards social media travel influencers.

On the other hand, the outcomes from this research will enable it to get more precise strategies and actions that DMOs and social media marketers can apply to millennials to boost their sales and visit repetitions in the Pokhara region. Furthermore, prior research has explored the characteristics of travel SMIs impacting netizens' attitudes towards their content' quality, information accuracy, expertise level, and credibility to some degree; however, they failed to grasp and comprehend millennials' points of view. Therefore, this research is worth exploring as it sheds some insights on the role of SM-travel influencer's traits on millennials' willingness to visit Pokhara, Nepal. Through this, entrepreneurs and tourism marketers, especially within Pokhara, can leverage the potential of social media travel influencers and what traits are crucial to grasp before hiring such influencers as a marketing and promotional agent

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter gives a thorough overview of travelers' travel decisions, making the impact of social media influencers on their travel decision-making. This chapter will provide specific emphasis on millennials by addressing who they are and why it is crucial to research this particular generation. This dissertation will also extensively focus on the S-O-R theory, in which social media travel influencers' expertise, information quality, content quality, and credibility act as stimuli. Furthermore, the impact of these factors on trustworthiness will act as an organism, and travel intention will be the response factor. Lastly, based on the S-O-R theory, this chapter will end by providing a hypothesis to test in the later phase.



2.1 Travel decision-making

One of the core objectives of tourism research is to determine how travelers make their vacation decisions and what factors affect their travel behaviours in a favourable or unfavourable way (Karl et al., 2020). When visitors embark on a journey, they meticulously consider a multitude of factors, both internal and external, which play a pivotal role in shaping their travel decisions (Karl et al., 2020). The collective influence of these factors determines the duration, frequency, and destination of their travel (Karl et al., 2020). According to Moutinho (1987), the translation of an intricate conceptual model of travelers' behavior into a clear and simple learning framework is a daunting challenge because travelers' decisions are comprised of multifaceted factors, including their personal preferences, motivations, and socioeconomic, cultural, and accessibility factors. Similarly, in post-modernist society, the addition of the digital revolution with changing social trends has further complicated the comprehension of travel decision-making and urges more interdisciplinary approaches for its comprehensive investigation (C. Jiang & Phoong, 2023). Given the diverse array of factors shaping travelers' decisions and travelers' willingness to visit, researchers within tourism focus on certain factors while omitting several other determining factors (Karl et al., 2020).

Numerous research such as (Dellaert et al., 2014; Karl, 2018), within the tourism field, have found comprehending travelers' intention to visit as a series of complex, interconnected, and

chronological decisions articulated by potential tourists over a period of time. During the tourist's decision-making phase, a sequential approach takes place with a series of clearly structured stages (Fang & Pan, 2024). These stages start with problem recognition, followed by goal accumulation, creating alternative options, gathering details about these alternatives, evaluating alternatives, final decisions, and remarks for future decisions (Crompton, 1992). These processes are impacted by numerous factors ranging from social-psychological aspects like "individual traits, perceptions, life-cycle stages", emotional aspects, "mundanity, trips, feelings, and excitements", external aspects "location's image, cross-cultural inputs, marketing tactics", and also the trip conditions such as "peers' size, distance and duration" (Crompton, 1992; Sirakaya & Woodside, 2005). Probing deeper, in recent times, with the rapid proliferation of social media and influencers, marketing has altered several of the public's lifestyles, behaviors, and decision-making processes (Zak & Hasprova, 2020). Lately, users and businesses have extensively implied social media influencers (SMIs) due to their ability to reach large audiences with minimal effort and cost (Doshi et al., 2023). At the same time, SMIs have the ability to penetrate niche segments (Mendoza-Moreno & Turriate-Guzmán, 2022). Similarly, social media travel influencers have recently become a widely used information source in the tourist industry (Asdecker, 2022; Pop et al., 2022). In fact, it is argued that users who utilize social media to develop their routines and skills have a "spilled-over" effect on the travel and tourism industry (Pop et al., 2022, p. 8).

The volume of information posted by SMIs greatly impacts organizing a trip plan and making final decisions while making these arrangements (Pop et al., 2022). However, the tourism sector, including potential tourists, may be subject to both favorable and unfavorable effects from the growing use of social media influencers in decision-making (Faisal & Dhusia, 2022). Pop et al. (2022) studied the influence of SMIs on travel decision-making and found that social media influencers' rising impact is positively changing travelers' behavior. Furthermore, the structural equation modeling implied by Pop et al. (2022) has found that travel influencers' trust in social media positively impacts each phase of travelers' decision-making processes. The intangible character of travel services and travelers' perceived risk throughout the decision-making process has promoted a substantial discussion about the impact of SMIs on traveler's behavior (Pradhani & Hendijani, 2023). Numerous studies have investigated Social media travel influencers' impact on various aspects, such as destination information (Nakhon, 2022; Pop et al., 2022; Saini et al., 2023), purchase intention of tourist products and services

(Boonsub, 2022; Chakraborty, 2016), attitudes and perception (Faisal & Dhusia, 2022; Ghaly, 2023; Han & Chen, 2021). Despite the potential insights this research offers into the impact of social media travel influencers on different aspects, understanding these influencers' specific traits or attribution is equally pivotal when planning destination selection and facilitating their travel decision process. This dissertation will narrow down social media travel influencers' specific traits or attribution and how they impact travel intention. For instance, Manthiou et al. (2024) found a lack of empirical-based studies on the impact of SMI attributions or features on users in regard to travel intention.

2.2 Social media influencers

Social media influencers (SMIs) are considered a subset of digital content creators which has a large fan following, exclusive brand persona, and consistent engagement with business sponsors (Mısır, 2023). The majority of SMIs' revenue generation comes from endorsing branded products and services to their niche audiences; however, this varies depending on their endorsed platforms, such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, etc (Cheah et al., 2024). According to Zhou et al. (2021), SMI marketing is typically viewed as “authentic” compared to conventional marketing forms because its endorsement comes under creators' content armour. Riaz et al. (2022) said that, due to the widespread cultural appeals, SMIs communication techniques leverage the notion of authentic and trustworthy forms of advice and opinions. It might be because SMIs are often portrayed to their netizens as ordinary people with “a feeling of just like us”; hence, their marketed messages are delivered with realness and comprehensibility to their audiences (Hund, 2023). Over the last decade, social media has disrupted the way people interact, information consumption, and exchange (Jayanto et al., 2022). The rise of social media influencers (SMIs) is viewed as another significant development from it (Jayanto et al., 2022). SMIs are those who have built authority, knowledge, and credibility with a large following of users or fans on social media sites (Jayanto et al., 2022). These influencers utilize their social sites to disseminate information such as narration, storytelling, photos, and videos, as well as to promote their endorsed items (Jayanto et al., 2022).

SMIs unlike conventional marketing, which involves a brand or firms directly endorsing their offerings to their consumers, SMIs use a more personal and users' relatable approach (Jayanto

et al., 2022; Joshi et al., 2023). SMIs interact with their followers by sharing genuine experiences, suggestions, and views, which affects users' decision-making processes, attitudes, and behaviors (Vrontis et al., 2021). However, their level of expertise, followers' size, content quality, and other factors are crucial for developing consumers' positive intent to buy their endorsed offerings (Vrontis et al., 2021). Social media influencers are grouped into various categories depending on their size (Burclaff, 2023; Wei et al., 2021). For instance, macro-influencers are categorized as those who have fans following sizes ranging from one thousand to millions of followers (Wei et al., 2021). Micro-influencers are termed as those who have followers ranging from a few thousand to over one hundred thousand (Wei et al., 2021). Meanwhile, nano-influencers are viewed as those with a follower size from a few hundred to a few thousand (Wei et al., 2021).

Although SMIs have gained widespread popularity and are often regarded as efficient marketing tools, a rising skepticism over their legitimacy and efficacy has recently been seen (Najmi Nuji et al., 2023). Critics such as (Hudders et al., 2021; Vrontis et al., 2021) assert that SMIs often endorsed their offerings from a solely monetary perspective, with no genuine belief in the quality and relevancy of the items they offered. Furthermore, it has been observed that the effect of SMIS in recent times is not as prominent as previously thought (Belanche et al., 2021). Vrontis et al. (2021) claim that the emergence of SMS has resulted in an oversaturation of endorsed items on social sites, making it complex for users to navigate between genuine and money-oriented endorsements. Critically, The blurred lines between genuine and money-oriented endorsements might jeopardize the influencer's and brands' perceived integrity (Vrontis et al., 2021). Wellman et al. (2020) I believe that SMIs have the audacity to reach huge audiences and alter consumers' behaviors and perceptions like any other form of marketing tool, but the marketing of overgrown influencers also raises an issue of authenticity as it is sometimes difficult to detect whether the endorsed item is genuinely endorsed or a paid version.

2.2.1 Social media travel influencers

The growth of social media platforms has created a new strain of influencers specializing in traveling and travel-related content, which are social media travel influencers (Pop et al., 2022). These social media travel influencers share travel-related experiences, storytelling, photos, and videos of the destination's pictures and information and offer different content related to trip

planning and must-do activities (Seeler et al., 2019). Pop et al. (2022) state that social media travel influencers are more relatable and effective sources for travel-related information than travel operators and travel guidebooks. Additionally, social media travel influencers keep traveling and searching for new travel destinations and information, which makes them constantly updating their content, capturing real-life experiences and travel trends (Magno & Cassia, 2018). These activities of social media influencers have made them the go-to information source for people looking for up-to-date and appropriate information, especially during vacation planning (Magno & Cassia, 2018). In the modern era, as traveling has become more accessible and affordable, the number of netizens seeking travel-related information and inspiration has increased (Magno & Cassia, 2018). Xiaoluan (2021) found social media travel influencers to be more effective sources of information because of their visual content and because they share a genuine experience “verbatim” with their audience. Chu et al. (2020) found that social media travel influencers have significantly satisfied netizens’ wanderlust, especially those who cannot physically travel to the destination. These influencers articulate their travel experiences and aesthetically captivating content and actively engage in dual interaction with their followers via comments, messages, and live streams (Chu et al., 2020). Exploring further depth, these social media are more popular with young adults, especially millennials, and their genuine travel experiences, itineraries, accommodation and cuisine suggestions, and cultural insights have made them a one-stop solution for travel planning and decisions (Han & Chen, 2021). Millennials, in particular, have found these influencers more authentic and relatable, and more importantly, the delivered content is perceived as high, matching to these millennials’ expectations (Han & Chen, 2021). In addition, millennials’ reason for finding these social media travel influencers’ content more relatable and aligning with their expectations might be their similar backgrounds (Han & Chen, 2021). These groups grew up in the digital era and admired the supremacy of social media as a platform for exposing self-expression and relationship nurturing (Han & Chen, 2021).

2.3 The surge of traveling interest among millennials¹

Migacz and Petrick (2018) found that millennials are distinguished by a strong desire for travel motivated by self-empowerment, adventure seeking, and a desire for genuine experiences

¹ Millennials are those born between “1981 and 1996” (2018).

(Migacz & Petrick, 2018). Millennials prefer traveling more than other generations (Sofronov, 2018). According to Sofronov (2018), millennials account for twenty-seven percent of the earth's human population, which is over 2 billion people. Millennials, also referred to as "Gen Y," are technologically savvy and consume technology more prominently than other generations (Nawaz, 2020). According to Rendell (2011), Millennials are unique and have the largest demographic size since the retirement of "Baby Boomers." For instance, they surpass over 25% of the US workforce and 50% of the Indian population, and they are expected to have a strong workforce with over 50% of the global workforce with considerable demand and up-to-date technologies and skills (Rendell, 2011). When retrieving this information into the travel and tourism sector, millennials account for a significant audience; in fact, millennials' preference for flexible jobs enables the tourism sector to benefit greatly from "Bleisure²-travel" (Kochhar, 2023). The success of social media travel influencers in shaping millennials' travel choices emanates from a feeling of trustworthiness and personal bondage (Han & Chen, 2021). The trend of "Instagrammable³ moments" seized by social media travel influencers has significantly captivated millennials' desires to travel and showcase their travel experiences to fellow members (Unger & Grassl, 2021; Utari et al., 2021). Since millennials apprehend verbatim experiences and insights, influencers who can offer such demand will make social media an indispensable platform for travel-related information and motivation (Han & Chen, 2021). Ketter (2021) studied the characteristics and traveling behaviors of European millennials. The study implied qualitative – content analysis and found millennials' travel behaviors in four mini-trends, i.e., "creative, off-the-beaten, substitute accommodation, and fully digital tourism". Furthermore, Ketter's study found that Millennials are viewed as a significant demographic that holds the major share in global travel, and these mini-trends are reshaping the transformation of the tourism industry.

Similarly, Han and Chen (2021) studied how social media influencers influence millennials' visit intention. It was found that SMIs perceived credibility substantially and positively influenced millennials' intention to visit their endorsed travel destinations (Han & Chen, 2021).

² Bleisure travel refers to a combination of "business and leisure", in which travelers merge business trips and leisure activities due to the nature of their flexible jobs (Batala & Slevitch, 2024).

³. Instagrammable moments mean moments or content showcased to fellow social site members with aesthetic appeal, activities, and unique experiences shared on the Instagram platform. Instagrammable moments are especially created during traveling but also come with other events and even everyday life shared with other Instagram members to heighten their online presence (Utari et al., 2021).

Likewise, Garg (2020) studied the factors that impact millennials' travel accommodation selection during their visit to travel destinations. This method implied quantitative research by surveying 200 participants and found that millennials' decisions to choose Airbnb as an accommodation are determined significantly by these four factors: socio-economic, ecological, technological, and social media influencers' quality of endorsements. Constantoglou and Trihas (2020) evaluated the influence of social media on the travel preferences of Greek millennials. The results from 261 samples showed that social media has been proven to be the decisive factor in the kind of vacation the millennial generation chooses.

2.4 Theoretical framework

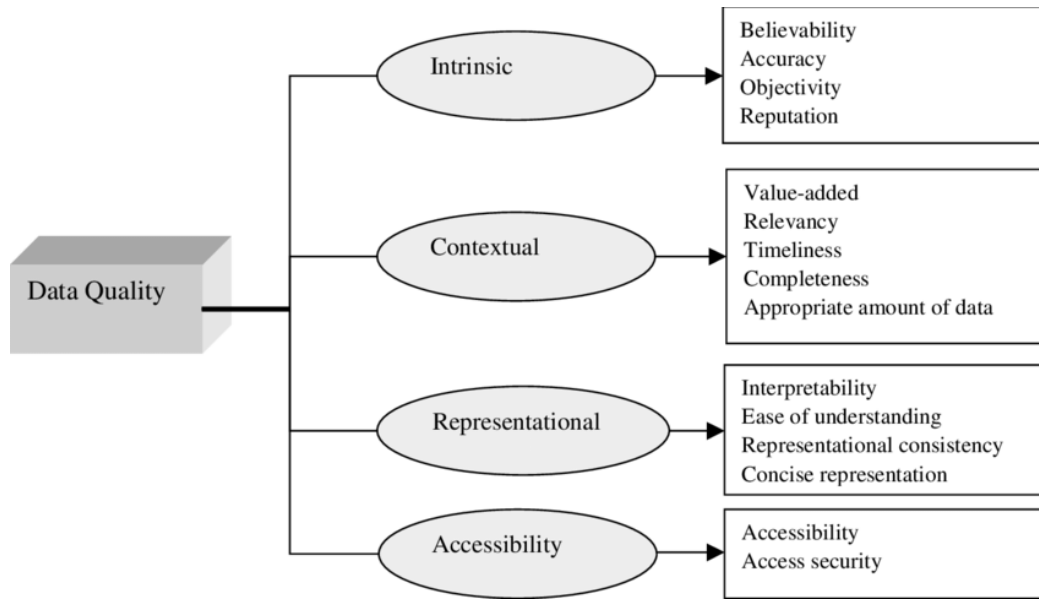
With the rise of social media platforms, the way travelers accumulate travel-related information, destination selection, and decision-making have changed radically (Chung & Koo, 2015). Consequently, both brands and users increasingly rely on SMIS to endorse items (Faisal & Dhusia, 2022). The S-O-R theory is viewed as prominent in understanding the linkages of these influencers, users, and intentions (Seçilmiş et al., 2022). The S-O-R theory, which Mehrabian and Russel initiated in 1974, stands for Stimulus-Organism-Response theory implies explaining the association between environmental stimulus, individual organisms, “humans/agents”, and their outcomes as responses (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). It is a widely applied theory in various fields, such as psychology, marketing, and environmental design to comprehend how people respond to various stimulus factors in their environments (Choi & Kandampully, 2019; L. Zhu et al., 2020). In the context of virtual environments, S-O-R theory is widely implied to comprehend consumers' behaviors with the rapid proliferation of the internet (J. Kim & Lennon, 2013; B. Zhu et al., 2019). In response to SMIs and their users' intention to visit travel destinations, the stimulus refers to social media influencers' attributions, such as their credibility, trustworthiness, the quality of the content presented to users (Yusra et al., 2023). Similarly, the organisms symbolize those users, “i.e., netizens” who process SMIs information and opinions (Yusra et al., 2023). The response referred to users' impressions of SMI traits affecting their willingness to visit the endorsed travel destination. According to Seçilmiş et al. (2022), the S-O-R theory enables us to understand how SMI traits directly influence users' intention to visit travel destinations. Social media users tend to create favorable intentions to travel to an endorsed destination if they regard the influencer's expertise in

traveling ideas and faith in the provided content, with no involvement of paid endorsement (Dhanesh & Duthler, 2019).

2.4.1 SMIs traits as stimuli

Users within social media platforms are constantly seeking content from their influencers, and several qualities of SMIs may influence users to follow them (Pop et al., 2022). For instance, Magno and Cassia (2018) found that social media users' approbation of SMI content depends on their level of information quality. According to Wang and Strong (1996), the information rendered to the audience, “i.e., data quality,” is measured as trustworthy if it has four qualities: “intrinsic information quality, contextual information quality, representational and accessibility information quality.” When understanding from Wang and Strong's (1996) information quality perspective, the intrinsic quality can be seen as the accuracy of information or content presented in their social site accounts about different destinations, experiences, and information. Similarly, for social media travel influencers, the contextual quality can represent netizens' interests and demands, for instance, how easily influencers tailor their content to provide travel tips and suggestions that fit with users' preferences. Similarly, with the representational quality, the clarity and consistency in rendering travel-related information across several platforms are given priority. The visual quality and storytelling approach used by SMIs enables users to detect how they perceive it faithfully in terms of understanding and consistency across different social sites. Similarly, the accessibility quality pertains to how easily users can assess the information. In this context, accessibility means how accessible the information is to its followers across different social platforms. The overall model of Wang and Strong (1996) is presented below:

Figure 1: Information Quality



Source: (Wang & Strong, 1996)

Similarly, Raafat et al. (2023) studied "How SMI's Credibility Affects the Travel Decisions of the Egyptian Millennials." In this study, a total of 581 Egyptian millennials were taken as a participant in the survey questionnaire, and it found that "trustworthiness, attractiveness, and expertise" positively affected millennials' intention to visit travel destinations endorsed by their influencers. Similarly, Upananda & Bandara (2022) studied the SMI impact on users' travel intention among Sri Lankan social media users. The study implied convenience sampling of 150 participants in which multiple linear regression was implied to find SMIs' content quality and trustworthiness impact on travel intention. It was found that both content quality and trustworthiness were positively related to visit intention, but trustworthiness was found to be insignificantly impactful. Similarly, Chen et al. (2023) studied how SMI can impact "Instagram" users' travel-related behaviors. The study implied structural equation modeling and fuzzy set comparative analysis from 364 participants and found that the greater the level of SMIs' expertise on travel-related information and experiences, the better it produces trustworthiness for them. The other prior researcher's findings in relation to social media influencers' qualities and attribution on visit intention are presented in the table below.

Table 1: SMI's qualities impacting users' traveling intention

Author	Studied	Method	Sample size	Study region	Findings
(Ong et al., 2022)	Studied parasocial relationship of SMI, content quality, and intention to visit.	Quantitative – likelihood equation model	501	Singapore	Content quality was found to impact destination image and visit intention directly.
(Li & Zhou, 2023)	How SMI's content quality affects visitors' visit intention	Quantitative – scenario-based experiments	60	China	Humour-based content was found to significantly and positively impact users visit intention compared to non-humorous content.
(Laurance et al., 2023)	How YouTube influencer's content credibility and Information quality impact young adults travel intention and destination image	Quantitative-partial least square - Structural equation modeling	198	Indonesia	Information quality has no direct impact on visit intention but positively and directly impacts on destination image.
(Faisal & Dhusia, 2022)	How SMIs attributes and source	Quantitative– structural	166	India	SMIs' expertise and trustworthiness

	credibility impact travel intention	equation modelling			significantly and positively impact users' travel intentions.
(Binbasioglu et al., 2023)	How do SMI travel-related posts on Instagram impact visit intention	Qualitative – Content analysis	N/A	Turkey	Influencers' content about the “Cappadocia- Turkey destination” triggered positive emotions in their followers and made a positive impression of the destination.
(Nakhon, 2022)	How millennials view SMIs' source credibility and information Quality users' intention to visit	Quantitative – multiple regression analysis	436	Thailand	SMIs' credibility significantly and positively impacts millennials' intention to visit, followed by information quality.
(Pop et al., 2022)	SMIs' trustworthiness on millennials' travel decisions	Quantitative– structural equation modeling	162	Romania	Users’ trust in SMIs has a favorable and significant

					impact on each phase of decision- making processes
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After assessing all these scholar's findings, the researcher has come up with the following hypothesis:

Ha1: The higher perceived information quality from SMIs' travel-related content positively and significantly impacts trust development in its users.

Ha2: The higher perceived expertise quality from SMIs' travel-related content positively and significantly impacts the trust development of its users.

Ha3: The higher perceived content attractiveness of SMIs' travel-related content positively and significantly impacts the trust development of its users.

Ha4: The higher perceived source credibility of SMIs' travel-related content positively and significantly impacts the trust development of its users.

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2.4.2 Trustworthiness as an Organism Factor

The notion of “Organism” within the S-O-R model is viewed as a mental and physical process that results from how users or viewers interpret and react to the stimuli (Bagozzi, 1986). In this situation, both favorable and unfavorable impressions are possible as the reaction to the stimuli is subjective and varies depending on users’ perception and knowledge (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Lau and Lee (1999) found that trustworthiness towards a brand is directly related to brand loyalty, and trust is viewed as an expectation that comprises a positive presumption about other fellows or people’s incentives. Similarly, in the context of SMIs' qualities and travel intentions, trustworthiness is a significant mediator (Upananda & Bandara, 2022). Saini et al. (2023) studied SMI's content quality and engagement with users’ travel decision-making by adjusting trust as a moderating variable. Based on the systematic literature review from 36

publications, it was found that SMIs are a potent marketing tool that enables the development of trust in their audience, especially during travel-related decision-making (Saini et al., 2023). The study by McNair (2021) has found that trustworthiness has a positive and significant impact on travel intention. Similarly, the study by Lou and Yuan (2019) has found that the informative value of SMI content, such as “attractiveness and perceived similarity,” acts as a qualification for SMIs' trust. Yılmazdoğan et al. (2021) studied the impact of Instagram influencers on their follower's willingness to visit travel destinations. Based on the 379 participants' responses using structural-equation modeling, it was found that both trustworthiness and influencers' expertise significantly and positively impact travelers' intention to visit travel destinations (Yılmazdoğan et al., 2021). After assessing these prior researcher's findings, the researcher has come up with this hypothesis:

H5a: Higher perceived Trust in the SMIs content positively and significantly impacts users' travel intention.

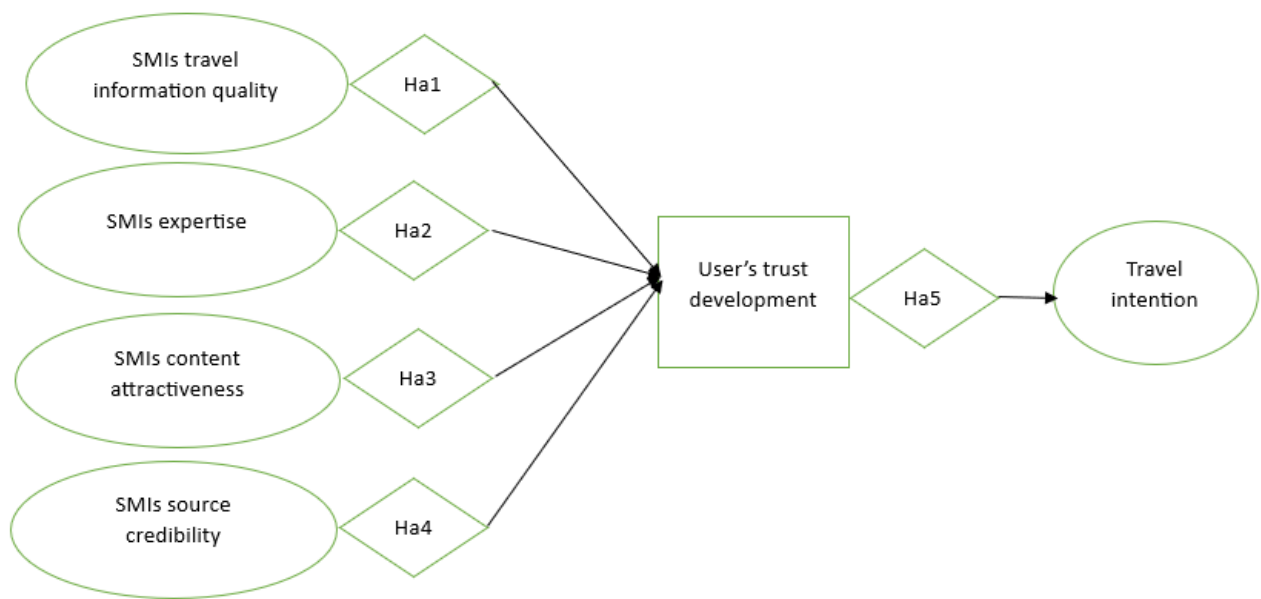
2.4.3 Travel intention as a Response factor

In a situation where everything is presumed normal, tourists' plans to travel are mainly determined by their own level of preferences, prospects, individual motivations, and satisfaction level (X. Jiang et al., 2022). However, existing studies have neglected other pivotal factors, such as “subjective and objective” factors (X. Jiang et al., 2022). In the context of the S-O-R model, travelers' willingness to visit a destination is a response factor that is triggered by various stimuli, including SMI qualities such as information quality, credibility, and attractiveness (Seçilmiş et al., 2022). Che et al. (2017) studied customer buying decisions in Instagram stories using consumer trust as a control variable. Che et al. found that perceived benevolence and integrity were substantial factors in building customer trust, and customer trust, in the end, was found to have a significant impact on Instagram users' buying intention. In this dissertation, the notion of purchase intention can be viewed in terms of travelers' intention to visit a destination. According to Magno and Cassia (2018), social media users' inclination to visit travel destinations based on SMIs' endorsements significantly depends on their trust level and the quality of information rendered by SMIs.

2.5 Research model

After assessing the literature and S-O-R theory, this paper has formulated the following research model:


Figure 2: Research model



Source: Self-articulated.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This dissertation methodology section will highlight the selection of different methods, research philosophy and approach, sampling technique, and data analysis. It will also explain the relevance of selecting suitable methods over other alternatives. In addition, it will also highlight the targeted population and area as a sample for the dissertations' empirical analysis. This chapter will also highlight the technique used to gather data as well as the process of analysis.



3.1 Research design

As aforesaid, the goal of this master's dissertation is to discover the impact of social media travel influencers on their followers' travel intentions. From that perspective, the primary data collection, "online survey questionnaires⁴," would help answer research questions more effectively, as Saunders et al. (2019, p. 193) advocate that survey strategy is one of the popular strategies, especially for the collection of standardized data from a large pool of participants. At the same time, it is one of the most economical and has better comparison ability. So, quantitative data collection is best suited with survey questionnaires, and the relevance of selecting quantitative data collection for this dissertation is rooted in these three conditions:

- i) The postulation of a hypothesis based on the existing theory called the "S-O-R" theory needs quantitative data to verify because only quantitative data allows testing of the hypothesis postulated from this existing theory.
- ii) Section 2.4.1, as a reference, suggests that almost every prior study within this research field was quantitatively studied.

⁴ Since the research is about how followers feel about social media influencers' traits, such as expertise, credibility, trustworthiness, and content quality, impact their perceived trust and how that trust influences them to make positive travel intentions, it seems more logical to ask via social media channels. The survey enables more participants to reach at a fast pace and comparatively inexpensively. Therefore, an online survey questionnaire was chosen.

- iii) The nature of the research question demands checking the impact of social media travel influencers' characteristics, such as "information quality, credibility, trust, attractiveness," on their follower's perceived trustworthiness and travel intention. *"How do the traits of SMIs impact visiting intentions, and what factors of SMIs characteristics particularly impact millennials' perceived trust in the shared travel content?"* and *"How do Millennials perceive SMIs traits and trustworthiness of posts as social media content, and how effectively does it impact on their follower's intention to visit the endorsed destination?"* Since the postulated hypothesis needs to be tested, which requires numeric data, inferential statistics enable us to measure the strength and relationship of these qualities with users' travel intentions. This way, the answer to the research question becomes more meaningful.

3.2 Positivism research philosophy

The circumstances of this dissertation drive this dissertation toward positivist philosophy because positivist philosophy believes in objective-based realities that are possible via quantified data (Saunders et al., 2019). Positivism philosophy addresses the paramountcy of "factual" insights accumulated via observation, which includes variable measurement (Saunders et al., 2019). Positivism philosophy enables the researcher to remain external from their personal values and interpretation of the research. Positivist scholars rely on quantifiable analysis, which is consistent with empiricist belief, where knowledge stems from individual experiences (Collins, 2010). Along with that, positivists' ontological view of the world is distinct, observable, and atomistic in nature, where each observation links with scientific-based research and follows logic, unlike interpretivism philosopher who prioritizes subjective interpretation and actively links themselves to the research processes (Collins, 2010). After assessing these factors, this dissertation will benefit more by developing objective-based realities as it allows the test of the postulated hypothesis and also allows the detection of the strength and relationship of each SMI quality on their users' travel intention.

3.3 Deductive research approach

According to Collins (2010), the deductive approach is focused on hypothesis development based on existing theory, through which the researcher designs the research strategy to test the validity of the hypothesis (Saunders et al. (2019, p. 176) assert that the deductive approach is more advantageous whenever a researcher adopts a hypothesis based on an existing theory or model. The deductive approach starts with a predicted pattern that is assessed against the observation; meanwhile, the inductive approach starts with observation and ends with a pattern development (Collins, 2010). In this dissertation, the researcher has postulated a hypothesis based on the predicted patterns using prior researcher's findings; therefore, deductive is imperative as it enables the postulated hypothesis to be tested and find whether the tested hypothesis is accepted or rejected. Bryman (1998) found that the alignment of positivism, deductive, and quantitative research design is crucial to producing objective reality. This helps to test the hypothesis and offer better generalization to a similar research field (Bryman, 1998). In addition, the deductive approach is more associated with quantitative data collection, which helps to diagnose the interconnection between variables that are observed numerically and scrutinized using statistics and other graphical presentations (Saunders et al., 2019). For this dissertation, it is imperative to collect data in a bulk and standardized way, which will only enable the researcher to test the validity of the postulated hypothesis. Therefore, deductive is more applicable to this dissertation.

3.4 Quantitative research method

The quantitative research method utilizes numerical-based measurement along with some forms of statistical exercises to find a causal relationship between the adopted variables in the research (Saunders et al., 2019). In this situation, it aims to find a causal relationship between the traits of social media travel influencers such as “information quality, expertise, credibility, content attractiveness affect their perceived trustworthiness, and how trustworthiness impacts the followers travel intention to visit travel destination.” Within the quantitative method, the collected primary data guarantees that all respondents who participated in the research understand the questions similarly so that the responses can be gathered consistently (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 178). Therefore, a clear and concise questionnaire is imperative to gather responses in a consistent manner (Saunders et al., 2019). Thus, questionnaires were arranged simply and easily understood, and no forms of “leading questionnaires or manipulative questionnaires” were presented in the survey project.

According to Collins (2010), the quantitative research method applies when the researcher needs to test a theory or hypothesis; meanwhile, qualitative research is more relevant in comprehending concepts and experiences where patterns are developed based on observation. From this perspective, quantitative research is more applicable because the researcher ought to test the hypothesis “section 2.5 – research model” rather than understand the conception and experiences of social media travel influencers in a subjective manner.

3.5 Survey research strategy

Survey research strategy means collecting responses from many participants using standardized questionnaires who qualify for the research project (Collins, 2010). Similarly, Ponto (2015, p. 171) acclaims that a survey strategy is a legitimate approach that enables several evident advantages, especially when it comes to describing and exploring constructs and variables of interest. In our situation, it is clear that the researcher wants to explore the impact of social media travel influencers’ qualities on users’ travel intentions. For that, acquiring a significant amount of responses from a large pool of participants is necessary, which is best possible via a survey strategy. Additionally, the survey strategy typically goes well with the quantitative research method (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 178). Since the postulated hypothesis in “literature section 2.4.1 and 2.4.2” requires enough evidence to accept them as true or false, standardized forms of participants’ responses are necessary, which is best possible via survey strategy.

3.5.1 Questionnaire design

The construction of survey questionnaires entails meticulous planning and execution so that they perfectly align with research goals and have greater validity and reliability between and among the implemented questionnaires. While planning survey questions, a clear understanding of each social media travel influencer’s traits “i.e., information quality, expertise, credibility, content attractiveness, trustworthiness” was observed and later checked how well it aligned with prior researchers’ questionnaires who studied under the same topic but in a different geographical context. This dissertation has implied online survey questionnaires

in which the questionnaires were delivered via social media platforms. This way, large standardized responses can be collected within a shorter period of time, as researchers do not need to present physically to every potential participant. The survey questionnaires first commence with demographic statements such as “participants – age, marital status, occupation, educational qualifications, gender, etc.). Transitioning to the core questionnaires, the researcher has arranged questionnaire statements in a “first-person” perspective, with an anticipation that it will encourage participation and also brings a sense of ownership over the participant's responses. The categorization of questionnaires into two-phase “demographic and core questionnaires,” is to make participants more focused yet lowering their cognitive load, at the same time, enables to collect data in a structured manner. Lastly, the core questionnaires are arranged on a 5-Likert scale in which the options are arranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree “in an ascending order.” The Likert scale is often used as a measurement tool in the survey strategy that enables the assessment of respondents’ attitudes, opinions, or perceptions toward the discussed topic or statements (Kale et al., 2015). More importantly, the Likert scale enables the arrangement of participants in an ordinal scale, which makes it easier for data analysis and to produce responses in graphical settings such as “bar-diagram, pie-chart, line graphs, etc.”

3.5.2 Target population and region

The target population for this dissertation comprises millennials, “sometimes called Generation Y,” who are currently between 28 and 43 years old. Millennials belong to a demographic cohort that was born between 1981 and 1996. It is evident from the literature that Millennials are more technologically savvy, prefer traveling and vacationing, and consider themselves within an active work age group. Since Millennials have greater familiarity and encouragement with social media platforms and are likely to be affected by travel influencers in their travel decision-making phase, exploring this relationship is worthwhile and might provide many underexplored insights to potential readers and marketers. In this case, this dissertation will help generalize to millennials from Pokhara who have decent knowledge about social media and travel influencers. However, participants’ current temporary residence does not affect to participate in this survey project

In addition, this dissertation has selected Pokhara as a study region, which is one of Nepal's popular tourist destinations. Pokhara is known for its stunning landscapes, abundant adventure, and recreational activities, with rich cultural events and cuisines (Sharma, 2023). Pokhara is situated amidst the majestic Himalayas, luring travellers from around the world. It is equally popular with young adults who are seeking to add unique travel experiences to their travel books (Sharma, 2023). Focusing on this region, this dissertation aims to explore how social media travel influencers, such as “information quality, content attractiveness, credibility, trustworthiness, expertise,” impact millennials' intention to visit Pokhara as a travel destination. This targeted geographical region enables detailed examination of the interplay between social media travel influencers and travel behavior within a well-defined and culturally rich travel destination, which might provide valuable insights to tourist operators, DMOs, and marketers on how to leverage SMIs qualities for marketing purposes. Therefore, millennials residing in the Pokhara region will automatically become potential participants in this survey project regardless of their background.

3.6 Snowball sampling method

This dissertation will employ a snowball “non-probabilistic” sampling technique. Snowball sampling is mostly popular in such situations when the population is difficult to reach or somewhat hidden, especially when the population is complex to locate (Simkus, 2023). The snowball sampling first starts with a certain fraction of respondents “who are called seeds,” and later these first respondents refer to other groups and people to participate in the survey project (Simkus, 2023). However, this sampling method has its own drawbacks, as researchers have less control over the participant's selection. Therefore, participants were encouraged to refer to successors with decent knowledge about social media and influencer marketing who are only from the Pokhara region. This method is more applicable to this dissertation because of two reasons. Firstly, the administration of survey questions via social media enables one to penetrate the target population faster and helps to gather larger standardized data. Secondly, the researcher is far from the targeted area, “Pokhara,” so virtual presence and snowball sampling might be the only options to gather the participants' responses for this dissertation.

3.7 Ethical consideration

Research ethics means the standard set of behaviors that enable the researcher to conduct in relation to the rights of those who either are the subject of the research or affected by the research (Saunders et al., 2019). The online medium provides access to find participants and enables the execution of research online; however, in practice, it is more difficult than it may seem (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 240). Since this dissertation has adopted social media as a channel to distribute survey questionnaires to potential participants, several factors need to be considered in active surveillance. Firstly, this dissertation only targets “individual person access,” where only participants with their own social media accounts are chosen instead of any form of “elite person access.” Targeting individual person access with their personal social media account does not offend any organizational ethics they are entitled to. During the survey questionnaire construction, the questions are arranged in "first perspective," which enables participants to feel ownership of their responses. Additionally, this dissertation encourages participants regardless of any background; however, they must be 28-43 years old, residing in the Pokhara region or temporarily elsewhere, and have a social media account. Though participants are encouraged to participate, the freedom is completely up to them whether they want to participate. A short-informed consent was provided to the participants, indicating the purpose of the dissertation, their participation nature, and the safety and security of their given responses. Participation was set completely voluntarily, and participants were assured that their responses were solely intended for this dissertation and were kept highly confidential. Additionally

Chapter 4: Results and Findings

This chapter summarises the empirical outcomes gathered from the survey data in a more straightforward and systematic manner. It will first provide the participants with general information, “i.e., demographic information.” After that, a statistical analysis, such as correlation, structural equation modeling, survey questionnaire results, and a reliability test, will be addressed. This chapter especially focuses on the relationship between social media influencers’ traits, “credibility, expertise, information quality, and overall content attractiveness,” and perceived trustworthiness. later, the overall impact of perceived trustworthiness will be evaluated to measure millennials’ travel intentions. This section will incorporate several tables, graphs, and charts to gather data more meaningfully and logically.



A total of 303 responses were gathered via an online survey questionnaire administered through the social media platform – Facebook during the second and third week of May. A total of 237⁵ responses were finalized for the empirical processing as the remaining 66 responses were found incomplete.

4.1 Demographic Profile

Looking at Table 2, the majority of Millennials were between 21 and 35, 23-31-year-olds were 34%, and 32-35-year-olds were 28%; collectively, they account for 62%. The female-to-male participants were found to be fairly distributed; however, male participation was slightly more, an approximation of male to female ratio of 1.28:1. Similarly, the majority of the millennials were found to either bachelor or master passed, collectively accounting for 82% (n= 194); where bachelors’ degree holder was 43%, and masters’ degree holder were 36%.

⁵ Before administered to actual participants, a pilot test was done to check any mistake or any sorts of leading questions that brings bias to the results. No such incidence was found. Pilot test was administered to four friends who were closer to researcher’s circle.

Likewise, most of the participants were married 54% (n=128), followed by single as a marital status of 40% (n=94). In the context of participants' employment status, almost 1/3rd (i.e., 32%, n=75) were self-employed, followed by 30% as full-timers. 19% were still studying and, therefore, anticipated doing student-related jobs.

Looking at the participants' income status, the majority, 68% (out of 237 responses), were found to have a monthly income of over 1,00,000 Nepalese rupee, followed by 11% who had between 80,001 and 1,00,000. Almost half of the participants' current residence was in Asia (44%, n=104), followed by 28% from Australia/Oceania and 24% from Europe.

Table 2. Respondents' demographic profile

Profile	Segments	Percent	Response	G. total
Age	23-31	34%	81	237
	32-35	28%	66	
	36-39	17%	41	
	40-43	21%	49	
Gender	female	43%	103	237
	male	56%	132	
	third gender	0%	1	
	prefer not to say	0%	1	
E.qualification	bachelor's degree	46%	109	237
	master's degree	36%	85	
	diploma or vocational degree	11%	26	
	high school	3%	7	
	school level	3%	6	
	doctorate	2%	4	
Marital status	married	54%	128	237
	single	40%	94	
	divorced	4%	10	
	widowed	1%	2	
	living together	0%	1	
	other	1%	2	

	Employed part-time	17%	41	237
	Self-employed	32%	75	
	Employed full-time	30%	71	
	Student	19%	45	
	Unemployed	2%	5	
Income status ⁶	Under 20,000	5%	12	237
	20,000 - 40,000	5%	12	
	40,001 - 60,000	6%	14	
	60,001 - 80,000	4%	10	
	80,001 - 100,000	11%	27	
	Over 100,000	68%	162	
Residence	Europe	24%	56	237
	Asia	44%	104	
	Australia/Oceania	28%	66	
	Africa	0%	1	
	N. America	1%	2	
	S. America	3%	8	

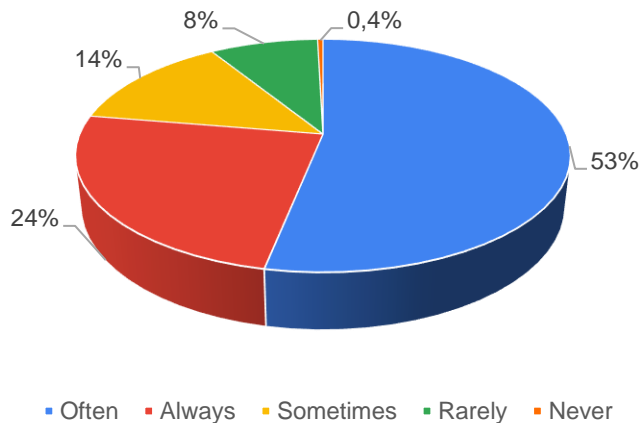
4.2 Frequency of consulting SM-travel influencers for travel-related content

A questionnaire was asked, “*How often do you use social media travel influencers’ content for travel-related information?*” to know social media travel influencers’ content role on millennials’ acquiring travel-related information. It was found that 53% (n=126) of participants often use SM-travel influencers’ content for seeking travel related information. Similarly, 24% (n=58) were found always using SM-travel influencers’ content. Meanwhile, 8% and 14% were found “rarely” and “sometimes” using it, respectively. Meanwhile, a rare 0.4% (one participant) was found never using it for acquiring travel related information.

Chart 1: Regularity of using SM-Travel influencer's content for acquiring travel related information.

⁶ Income status was expressed in Nepalese Rupee (NPR) on a monthly basis.

Regularity of using SM-Travel influencer's content for travel related info. (N=237)

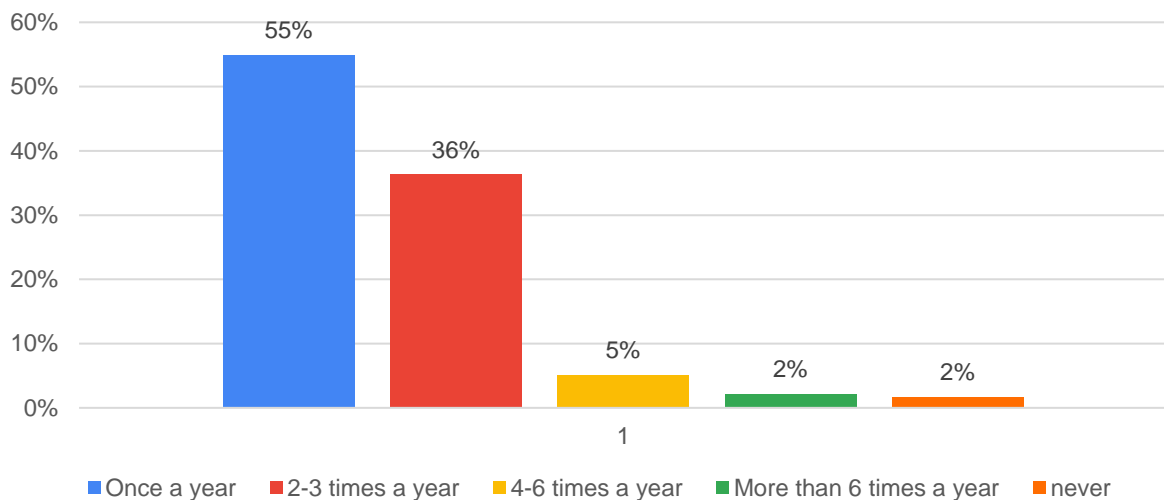


4.3 Millennials' Travel Frequency

Similarly, a questionnaire was surveyed of 237 millennials on their annual vacation frequency. Chart 2 presented below illustrates that over half of the participants (precisely 55%, n=130) went on vacation only once a year, followed by 36% (n=86), who went two to three times a year. These two findings collectively depict that 91% out of the total surveyed millennials take at least one vacation in a year. Only a rare 2% (four participants) were found taking zero vacations in a year.

Chart 2: Millennials travel frequency

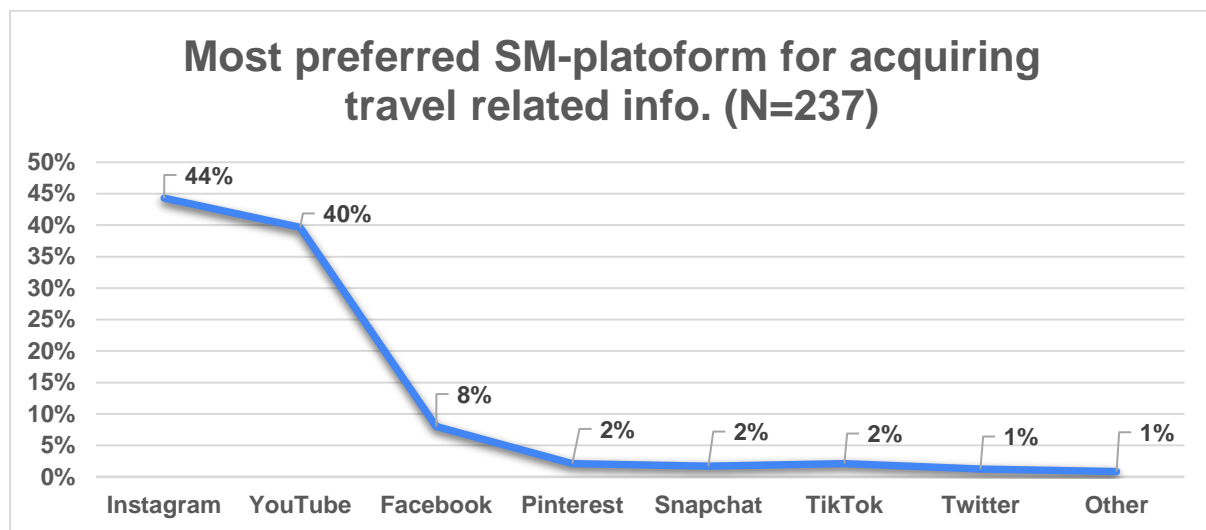
Millennials travel frequency - annual basis (N=237)



4.4 Millennials preferred social media platforms for acquiring travel information

Out of the surveyed 237 millennials, two social media platforms, “Instagram” and “YouTube,” were found to be the leading choices in acquiring travel-related information, collectively accounting for 84%. Individually, 44% (n=105) found Instagram more preferred, followed by 40% to “YouTube”. Meanwhile, only 8% (n=19) found Facebook preferred for acquiring travel-related information.

Chart 3: Preferred social media platforms for acquiring travel information



4.5 Statistical summary of the surveyed core questionnaires.

A total of six predictors were adopted to measure each predictor’s influence on millennials’ travel intentions. Firstly, two central tendency statistics, “mean and media,” were implied to know the flow of responses on a 5-Likert scale options. For each predictor, three questionnaires were adopted.

The observed mean value for each questionnaire response, based on 237 participants’ responses, shows a mean value of over four except for a few questions, “i.e., questionnaires number 2 and 3 implied under credibility predictor, and 7th questionnaire implied under trustworthiness”. Similarly, the mean value observed for each questionnaire by 237 participants was four, indicating that 50% of responses are ticked on either “agree -4” or “strongly agree -5” on 5-Likert scales. The observed mean, and media value on each survey

questionnaire from 237 responses clearly indicates a “left-skewed or negatively skewed” distribution of responses on 5-Likert scale options.

Similarly, a Cronbach's alpha tool was adopted to measure the items implied under each predicted reliability. According to Saunders et al. (2019), Cronbach's alpha test is a measure of the internal consistency of a set of scales implied under research. In which a high Cronbach's alpha (typically over 0.7 or 70%) indicates that the items have a similar underlying construct or produces how closely each does each set of test items forms as a group (Saunders et al., 2019). According to McNeish (2018) Any values over 0.7 indicate reliable or high consistencies; meanwhile, values less than 0.7 indicate questionable “items poorly measure similar properties.” Though a higher Cronbach's alpha value indicates items have higher reliability, it is a bit more complex than thinking that only a higher alpha value is better. For instance, an extremely high Cronbach's alpha, “i.e., >95%,” might indicate that the survey questions are redundant (Frost, 2022).

The observed Cronbach's alpha value, as presented in “Table-4” below, indicates that all items implied under each predictor were found reliable except questionnaires implied under “expertise”, which marginally failed to become reliable; thus, the value indicates questionable. Similarly, items adopted under “credibility” were found highly reliable as compared to other adopted predictors.

Table 4: Statistical summary of the surveyed core questionnaires

Factors	Survey items	Avg	Median	Cronbach alpha
Credibility	1. I consider social media travel influencers trustworthy travel information providers for the Pokhara region.	4.06	4	0.835
	2. I am inclined to rely on travel suggestions from social media influencers when visiting the Pokhara region.	3.99	4	
	3. I trust the reliability of travel information social media influencers share about the content of Pokhara region.	3.95	4	

Inf. Quality	4. I consider the travel information shared by social media influencers for the Pokhara region to be excellent quality.	4.28	4	0.704
	5. social media influencers' information on the Pokhara region is comprehensive and precise.	4.32	5	
	6. Social media influencers' content dramatically impacts how I see tourist spots in the Pokhara region.	4.16	4	
Trustworthiness	7. I trust social media influencers when they propose travel-related items or services in the Pokhara region.	3.92	4	0.732
	8. I trust that social media influencers reveal any potential biases or sponsorships when endorsing travel-related items or services connected to the Pokhara region.	4.26	4	
	9. I am more likely to accept a social media influencer's advice about visiting the Pokhara region if they share their personal experiences or preferences.	4.52	5	
Expertise	10. I believe social media influencers are well-informed about vacation places and experiences in the Pokhara region.	4.58	5	0.689
	11. I think social media influencers have better experience than professional travel advisers or agencies when it comes to traveling to the Pokhara region.	4.34	4	
	12. I have gained valuable travel advice from social media influencers on coming to the Pokhara region.	4.11	4	

Attractiveness	13. Influencers' material's visual appeal and aesthetics affect my desire to visit the area.	4.29	5	0.756
	14. I am inclined to follow a social media influencer who often shares visually attractive travel information about the Pokhara region.	4.34	4	
	15. I am enticed to visit the Pokhara region mainly because a social media influencer has illustrated it visually.	4.16	4	
Travel intention	16. I am really motivated to visit the Pokhara region due to endorsements from social media influencers.	4.31	4	0.768
	17. I intend to change my vacation itinerary to incorporate the Pokhara region based on the impressions of social media influencers.	4.24	4	
	18. Based on the content provided by social media influencers, I am eager to visit the Pokhara region as a tourism destination.	4.19	4	

4.6 Correlation analysis

The adoption of correlation analysis was to examine how social media travel influencers' credibility, information quality, expertise, content attractiveness, and perceived trustworthiness as an observed variable affect each other and how these factors also affect millennials' travel intention to visit Pokhara, Nepal. The correlation analysis was implied to find insights into the magnitude of the relationship and its direction "i.e, whether positively or negatively correlated."

Table 5, presented below, shows the correlation matrix of seven predictors. According to Mukaka (2012), the correlation matrix is a widely implied statistical tool to measure the linear association between two predictors in any data set (Mukaka, 2012). It helps to detect the strength of the predictor's relationships and their directions, “i.e., the positive or negative association” (Mukaka, 2012). Several thresholds have been adopted to define a “weak-moderate-strong” correlation. However, this dissertation will adopt one of the simplified correlation thresholds for interpretation adopted by Schober et al. (2018, p. 1765). According to Schober et al.’s conventional method of interpreting correlation values, (0.00 to 0.10) is negligibly correlated, (0.10–0.39) is weakly correlated, (0.40–0.69) is moderately correlated, (0.70–0.89) strongly correlated, and (0.90–1.00) is very strongly correlated. Using this threshold as a reference, social media travel influencers' trustworthiness positively and moderately correlates with travel intention. Meanwhile, social media travel influencers' expertise has a strong and positive correlation with trustworthiness (0.79), which implies that influencers with a high degree of expertise on travel-related information hold greater perceived trust in their followers about Pokhara as a destination. However, expertise may not impact SM-travel influencers' credibility more, as this paper has produced a weak but positive correlation (0.50). Meanwhile, the greater the information quality about travel related content on Pokhara, the perceived trust on that travel influencers was found high and positive “i.e., positive and strong correlation value of 0.75”. Influencers’ content attractiveness about Pokhara destination was the only strongly correlated factor on millennials' travel intention to visit this destination (0.73).

Table 5: Correlation analysis

	Credibility	Information Quality	Expertise	Attractive ness	Trustworthi ness	Travel intention
Credibility	1					
Information Quality	0.57	1				
Expertise	0.50	0.67	1			
Attractiveness	0.65	0.70	0.76	1		
Trustworthiness	0.62	0.75	0.79	0.75	1	
Travel intention	0.68	0.58	0.66	0.73	0.64	1

4.7 Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)

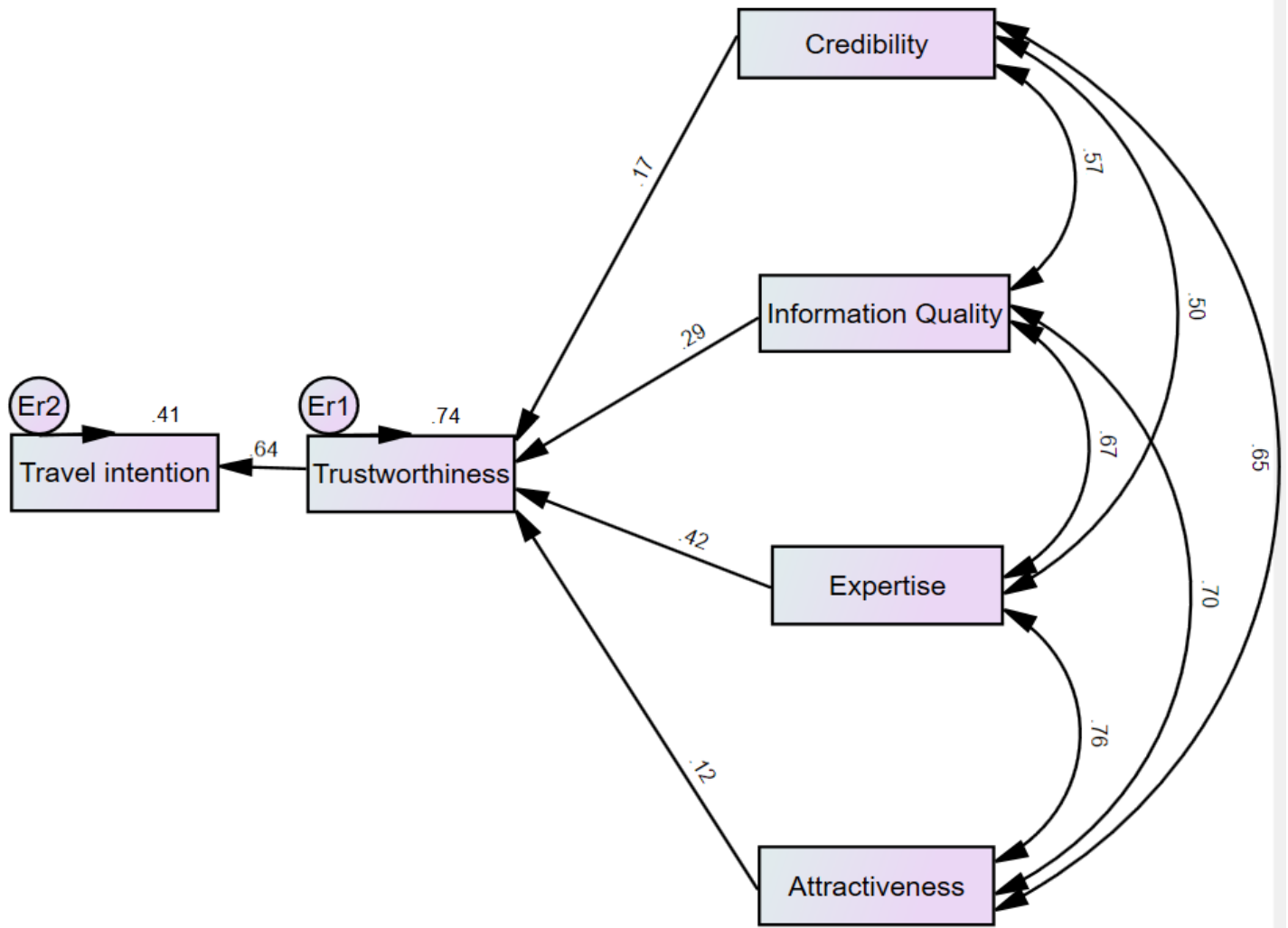
This dissertation has adopted SEM⁷ to find social media travel influencers' credibility, information quality, expertise, and content attractiveness in relation to their followers' trustworthiness and how that perceived trustworthiness leads to positive intention to travel to the Pokhara destination. SEM is a comprehensive statistical tool that helps to find structural relationships between measured and latent variables. SEM seems more fitting for this dissertation, unlike other linear regression models, such as multiple linear models, because SEM can cooperate with multiple respondent variables and combine both factor and regression analysis simultaneously. This dissertation has adopted two endogenous variables "trustworthiness (1st) and intention to visit Pokhara destination (2nd), which will be assessed by using exogenous variables such as social media travel influencers "credibility, information quality, expertise, and content attractiveness). These exogenous variables will initially be measured against trustworthiness, and the impact of overall trustworthiness will be evaluated on millennials' travel intention to visit Pokhara destination. This illustration might be better understood by looking at the "chart- 4" below.

Chart 4 below shows factor loadings among observed variables by the latent variable's "trustworthiness" and "millennials' travel intention." Firstly, factors loading for the perceived trustworthiness of social media travel influencers were measured in which their level of expertise (0.42) was found to be the most crucial factor for creating high trust in their followers, followed by information quality (0.29) as crucial for creating trustworthiness on their follower's cognition. Meanwhile, social media travel influencers' credibility (0,.17) was found to strongly influence their followers to perceive it as trustworthy; however, not as strongly as influencers' expertise and information quality. Lastly, the overall attractiveness (0.12) of the content shared by social media travel influencers was found least influential on their followers to trust it.

Secondly, the overall impact of perceived trustworthiness on social media travel influencers was found to strongly and positively impact their followers' intention to visit a travel destination, "i.e., Pokhara." The factor loading of 0.67 strongly suggests a positive and strong relationship between followers' perceived trustworthiness of SM-travel influencers and their intention to visit the Pokhara destination.

⁷ For computation of structural equation modelling, IBM- AMOS version 26 was implied.

Chart 4: Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)



4.8 Regression analysis

Table 6, presented below, shows SEM—the regression analysis. SM-travel influencers' expertise was found to be most significant and positive on trustworthiness. The coefficient value of expertise ($\beta = 0.434$, C.R = 7.803, $P = 0.00$) indicates positive and significant impact on millennials travel intention to visit Pokhara. Statistically, keeping other factors at constant, if followers found social media travel influencers' content with higher expertise compared to

prior times, their intention to visit to Pokhara region increases by 43.4%. Similarly, information quality ($\beta = 0.272$, C.R = 5.80, P= 0.00) indicates a significant and positive relationship with millennials travel intention towards Pokhara. In a similar fashion to influencers expertise, if content shared by social media travel influencers perceived with high level of information quality, millennials intention to visit Pokhara region increases by 27.2%. Meanwhile, SM-travel influencers credibility and their shared content attractiveness were found significant; however not significantly as their expertise and information quality. In fact, content quality “attractiveness” was found significant by marginally.

Lastly, the SEM coefficient for trustworthiness was found (0.671) indicates a substantial positive influence, which depicts that for each one unit increased in perceived trustworthiness of travel influencers content by their followers, their intention to visit Pokhara increases by 0.671 units. The observed P.value indicates a statistically significant relationship with visit intention. In a practical term, these findings suggest that followers perceived trustworthiness on travel influencers is a crucial factor to make individuals to create positive travel intention. When followers feel shared content by their travel influencers are of high trustworthy, the chances to be persuaded by their content is high. However, factors such as “information quality” and “expertise” are pivotal if the goal is to get high trust on social media travel influencers recommendation.

Table 6: SEM regression analysis

Endogenous		Exogenous	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
Trustworthiness	<---	Credibility	0.127	0.033	3.861	***	par_7
Trustworthiness	<---	InformationQuality	0.272	0.047	5.809	***	par_8
Trustworthiness	<---	Expertise	0.434	0.056	7.803	***	par_9
Trustworthiness	<---	Attractiveness	0.117	0.057	2.056	0.04	par_10
Travelintention	<---	Trustworthiness	0.671	0.052	12.858	***	par_11

Sig. level = measured at (0.05)

4.9 Model fit summary

The overall model summary for this SEM’s regression analysis indicates that the proposed model poorly fits the data as well. The Chi-square minimum (CMIN) was observed at 112.5

with 5 degrees of freedom, leading to a CMIN/DF of 28.139, indicating a significant discrepancy between observed responses and the SEM model. This is suggested by the R-squared value for trustworthiness (0.744), which means only 74.4% of the variance in perceived trustworthiness changes are explained by the four exogenous factors “credibility, information quality, expertise, and content attractiveness.” In another way, the remaining 26.6% of followers' perceived trustworthiness changes have external factors, “i.e., other than aforesaid factors”.

Table 7: Model fit summary

Model	NPAR	CMIN	DF	P	CMIN/DF
Default model	17	112.55	5	0	28.139
Saturated model	21	0	0		
Independence model	6	1085.810	15	0	72.387
Squared multiple correlations:					
					Estimate
Trustworthiness					0.744
Travel Intention					0.412

4.10 Hypothesis test

In this section, the adopted hypothesis in Literature Section 2.5 as a research model will be tested with the findings derived from the regression analysis of the structural equation modeling. Along with the hypothesis test, a pecking order will be analyzed to determine which factors are more crucial to followers' perception of trust in their social media travel influencers' content.

Table 7: Hypothesis test

Hypothesis	Results	Pecking order	Decision
Ha1. SMI's information quality	($\beta = 0.272$, C.R = 5.80, P= 0.00)	2 nd Crucial	Validated
Ha2. SMI's expertise	($\beta = 0.434$, C.R = 7.803, P= 0.00)	1 st Crucial	Validated

Ha3. SMI's content attractiveness	(β = 0.117, C.R = 2.056, P= 0.04)	4 th Crucial	validated
Ha4: SMI's source credibility	(β = 0.127, C.R = 3.861, P= 0.00)	3 rd Crucial	validated
Ha5: perceived trustworthiness	(β = 0.671, C.R = 12.858, P= 0.00)	-----	Validated

Chapter 5: Discussion

This dissertation aimed to explore “*How do social media traveler influencers impact Millennials’ visit intentions?*” Four variables, “*credibility, information quality, expertise, and content attractiveness,*” were implied to understand how social media travel influencers, using these components, build trust with their followers, leading to subsequent intention to visit Pokhara. A total of 237 responses were gathered via online survey questionnaires, in which snowball sampling was implied for sample selection. This section will discuss the findings of this dissertation’s empirical findings with another scholar, as mentioned in the literature. So, how consistent or different do this dissertation’s findings go with prior researchers’ findings? In the end, this chapter will provide the hypothesis test’s result as mentioned in the literature section “2.5 – Research Model”.

5.1 Overall findings discussion

The majority of the participants were found in the lower half of the millennial age bracket⁸ : 62% from the age group 23-35 years old. The male-to-female participants were fairly balanced, though slightly dominated by males. In terms of qualification, observed millennials found that the majority of millennials have either a bachelor's or master's degree. In the observed income level of millennials, the majority, “over 2/3rd millennials,” had a monthly income of over 1,00,000 Nepalese Ruppe. Despite this, more than half of the observed millennials took a vacation only once a year; however, this paper completely fails to provide insight into the duration of the vacation. Since the average duration of a vacation is missing, it might be biased to criticize whether one vacation in a year is justifiable or not. However, this dissertation has found that millennials are actively using social media travel influencers' content as a prime source for acquiring travel-related information. In which two social media sites “Instagram and YouTube” were found to be the most preferred sources for obtaining travel-related information. This paper has found similar findings when compared to Unnger & Grassl (2021) and Utari et al. (2021), who found that social media travel influencers have significantly satisfied millennials' desire to travel and show their travel journeys and experiences to fellow friends., thus creating an “Instgrammable” moment. This dissertation

⁸ Individuals whose age falls between 23 and 43 are termed as Millennials or Gen Y's.

has verified that millennials' most preferred social media platform for travel-related information and experience sharing is Instagram.

The correlation analysis used in this dissertation provides valuable insights into 'how SM-travel influencers' attributes influence millennials' travel intention to visit Pokhara, Nepal.' Our findings reveal a moderate and positive correlation between the influencers' expertise in the travel field and millennials' travel intentions. This robust methodology strengthens the reliability of our conclusions. At the same time, social media users have become more active and alert on what travel-related information they expect from their travel influencers. Influencers with a low level of expertise in the travel field might not only bring low popularity of the content but also downgrade millennials' intention to visit because the perceived trustworthiness of their content directly and strongly stems from the level of influencers' expertise. Similarly, the overall attractiveness of the content shared by the influencers to their fellow followers has a positive and strong correlation to their travel intention. This means that influencers' content should also have visually attractive content to perceive favorable affection travel intention, enabling them to create a positive travel intention to the endorsed destination, "Pokhara in this case." Meanwhile, the level of information provided about travel-related content by the influencers has a moderated but positive correlation with travel intention. This indicates that social media travel influencers' content attractiveness and perceived trustworthy factors are more crucial for a follower to bring a positive impression, followed by influencers' expertise. Influencers' expertise in travel-related information was found to have a strong and positive correlation with perceived trustworthiness. It suggests that followers find content more trustworthy when influencers have high expertise in travel-related information. Similarly, information quality and overall attractiveness of the content were found to be strongly and positively correlated but marginally short as compared to expertise.

This dissertation has found perceived trustworthiness a crucial factor leading to a positive and significant influence on social media travel influencers' followers. This lends credence to the claims of Han and Chen (2021), who found social media travel influencers have a pivotal amount of positive influence over travel-related decision-making processes made by Millennials. This sway stems mainly from two major factors: firstly, influencers' level of expertise on the shared content, and secondly, the information quality of the shared content. When social media travel influencers provide travel content perceived as trustworthy by their followers, the likelihood of visiting that endorsed destination, Pokhara, significantly

augments. The estimated coefficients of “0.671” with a P.value of “0.00” indicates that trust matters significantly within the social media world, and to increase followers' trust, it is crucial to grasp their trust by demonstrating travel-related content that offers high expertise, better informational quality, followed by influencers’ credibility, and overall attractiveness of the content. In general, trustworthiness becomes pivotal in social media influencer marketing if the goal is to convert travel content into actual travel intention. Also, for tourism operators, destination management organizations, and promoters, these findings highlight the importance of collaboration with social media travel influencers who demonstrate high expertise in travel content and offer high-quality information if their goal is to bring more potential tourists into their destination periphery. However, the two other factors, “influencers’ credibility” and “content attractiveness,” are also crucial.

5.2 Comparison with prior researchers’ findings

This section will compare and analyze the dissertation findings with prior research findings from researchers who studied within the same research field as discussed in the literature section. In the context of travel intention using a response factor within S-O-R theory, which was discussed in the literature section 2.4.3, this dissertation’s findings line up with the findings of Magno and Cassia (2018). Magno and Cassia found that followers of social media influencers have a positive inclination when they find shared content with a high level of trustworthiness and quality of information. This dissertation has found perceived trustworthiness as a crucial factor that significantly and positively impacts millennials' travel intention. However, this dissertation has found influencers’ expertise in travel-related content as the major influencer for followers to build trust compared to information quality. Yılmazdoğan et al. (2021) studied the impact of Instagram influencers' content attribution on their follower's travel intention. Using 379 responses collected from a survey questionnaire and analyzed using SEM, Yılmazdoğan et al. found that trustworthiness has a significant positive impact, followed by influencers' expertise level. This dissertation has found trustworthiness to impact millennials' travel intention to visit Pokhara significantly. And, for trust build-up, an influencer’s high level of expertise is crucial. Therefore, this paper fully supports the results produced by Yılmazdoğan et al’s.

Similarly, Raafat et al. (2023) studied "How SMI's Credibility Affects the Travel Decisions of the Egyptian Millennials."

A total of 581 Egyptian millennials were taken as a participant in the survey questionnaire, and it found that “trustworthiness, attractiveness, and expertise” positively affected millennials' intention to visit travel destinations endorsed by their influencers. This dissertation has also found trustworthiness a major contributing factor for millennials to make positive and significant visit intentions towards the Pokhara region, Nepal. Furthermore, this dissertation has found expertise to be crucial in building positive and significant perceived trustworthiness in followers toward endorsed content. Meanwhile, content attractiveness was the least influencing factor in the entire model, though it was found to be positive and significantly impactful. Raafat et al. (2023) found content attractiveness more impactful than influencers' level of expertise. Therefore, this dissertation's findings partially support Raafat et al.'s findings. Similarly, Upananda & Bandara (2022) studied the SMI impact on users' travel intention among Sri Lankan social media users. The study implied convenience sampling of 150 participants in which multiple linear regression was implied to find SMIs' content quality and trustworthiness impact on travel intention. It was found that both content quality and trustworthiness were positively related to visit intention, but trustworthiness was found to be insignificantly impactful. Meanwhile, this dissertation has found trustworthiness to be the most significant and positive impactful predictor of millennials' intention to travel to the Pokhara region; therefore, this dissertation's findings correlate with the findings of Upananda & Bandara.


5.3 Research limitation

Every research paper, regardless of its depth of insights and scope, comes with some inherent limitations that are imperative to address to sustain scientific precision. This dissertation has some drawbacks that need to be pointed out. Firstly, this dissertation has produced valuable information about how social media travel influencers' attribution affects millennials' travel intentions to visit the Pokhara region. Firstly, this dissertation fails to find out the average duration of vacations millennials take in a year. It was crucial that tourism operators and DMOs plan their travel packages to suit the average length of stay by the millennials. Secondly, this paper was one-sided to quantitative research. However, a mixed-method

approach came to the researchers' mind, but they later stuck with quantitative methods because it was difficult to find potential millennials who had decent knowledge about the Pokhara destination and an intermediate command of English. It was possible to do an interview with close friends of the researcher, but it was denied later as it could bring a sense of "blind loyalty," which may produce more biased results. Thirdly, the survey project was able to gather only 237 responses, which is still below par when it comes to generalizing the findings to a similar region within a similar research field.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This chapter briefly summarises the entire dissertation's results. It reiterates the dissertation's questions and objectives and provides the answers. This chapter emphasizes the dissertation's contribution by providing the overall implications of the dissertation. Finally, this section will also provide room for further research.



This dissertation has explored the multifaceted influence of social media travel influencers' traits, "expertise, information quality, credibility, and content attractiveness" on perceived trustworthiness, and the overall impact of trustworthiness of shared content was examined on millennials' travel intention to visit Pokhara, Nepal. Through a comprehensive theoretical framework grounded on Stimulus- Organism- Response (S-O-R) theory, this dissertation has explained how influencers' traits, "i.e., expertise, information quality, credibility, and content attractiveness," as stimulus factors that stimulate trust development with their follower's "trustworthiness" viewed as an organism, and how millennials react this trustworthiness to make their travel intention is viewed as "response". The findings emphasize a nuanced interplay between these adopted factors, which found that while all adopted traits were found significant and positive in building trust in their followers, influencers' level of expertise and rendered information quality was found more impactful. All postulated hypotheses were accepted. Adopting a structural equation model enables the analysis of participants' responses in a clearer and more precise way. For the first research question, "*How do the traits of SMIs impact visiting intentions, and what factors of SMIs characteristics particularly impact millennials' perceived trust in the shared travel content?*" This dissertation has found all adopted influencers' traits "expertise, information quality, content attractiveness, and credibility" were significantly and positively impactful on millennials perceived trustworthiness in the shared travel content. However, two factors, influencers' expertise on travel-related content and information quality provided on the travel-related content, were found to be more crucial to developing a positive and significant influence on followers' trust development. Similarly, in the second research question: "*How do Millennials perceive SMIs content as trustworthiness, and how effectively does it impact their followers' intention to*

visit the endorsed destination?” This dissertation has found that trustworthiness has a significant and positive impact on millennials' travel intention, as millennials perceive one unit increase on their influencers' content, their chances to visit the destination “Pokhara in this case” increases by 0.67 times, which is highly impactful. However, this dissertation has found other factors that could impact millennials' intention to visit the endorsed destination. Based on this dissertation's result, 41% of changes in variance in intention to visit Pokhara destination is only determined by the perceived trustworthiness of influencers' content, which means 59% is captured as an error term, which means those factors are still unknown “Chart 4: Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)”.

6.1 Research implications

This paper has found noteworthy practical implications, especially in the field of tourism marketing, destination management organizations, and tourism entrepreneurs. Since this dissertation has found perceived trustworthiness on social media, travel influencers' content positively and significantly impacts millennials' travel intention. Similarly, two factors were found to be highly crucial for developing high trust in influencers' travel-related content: influencers' expertise and information quality. Tourism entrepreneurs, especially destination operators, can best leverage these insights, especially when selecting what sorts of attribution they should look for before hiring them to endorse the destination. Additionally, this dissertation has found “Instagram and YouTube” to be the most preferred platforms for seeking travel-related content. Therefore, these findings make it easier for tourism marketers to focus their advertisements on these specific sites. Along with that, this paper highlights the need for SM-travel influencers to prioritize on making high-quality and visually appealing content as it has a significant and positive impact on building trust in their followers. However, one should be cautious because factors other than SM-travel influencers' expertise affect followers' trust, information quality, credibility, and content attractiveness.

6.2 Further study

By constructing several insights and limitations identified by this dissertation, several rooms for research have been detected. Firstly, further studies on this research topic but with a larger

sample size using probabilistic sampling may offer better generalisability than this dissertation's findings. In addition, it is vital to explore other potential factors that may affect millennials' travel decisions, such as millennials' economic factors, individual travel preferences, etc. Additionally, the model presented by structural equation modelling was found to fit poorly, which indicates that more variables are needed to find the model's better explanatory power. Secondly, qualitative research, such as interviews, focus groups, and review of literature, would provide more nuanced findings on this research topic. A mixed method may provide more holistic findings to this research topic. From a different perspective, studying it by exploring opportunities and barriers faced by social media travel influencers might produce a secondary line of findings that this dissertation failed to produce.

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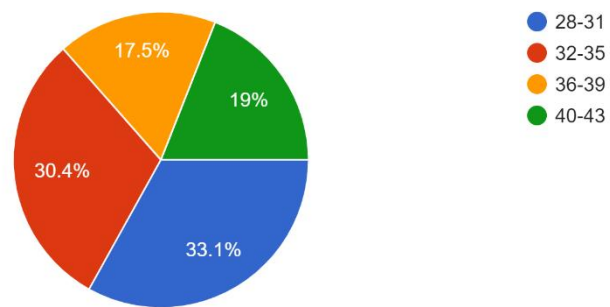
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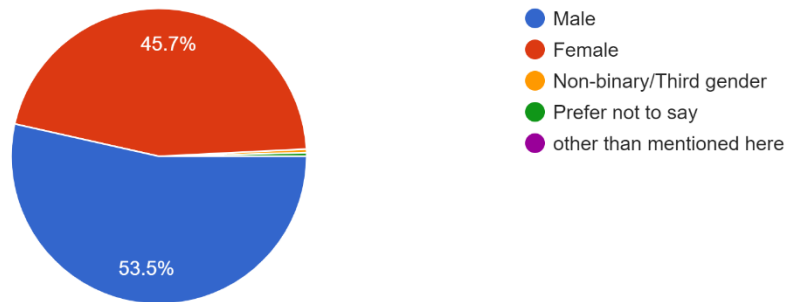
Appendix

My age falls in this category:

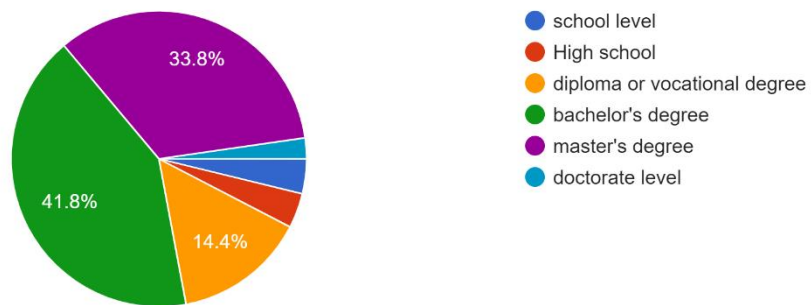
263 responses



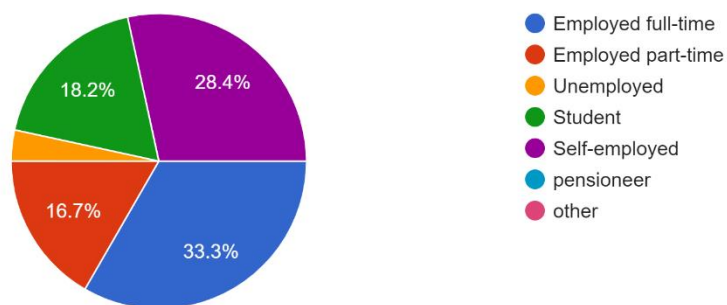
My gender is:
256 responses



My current educational qualification is:
263 responses

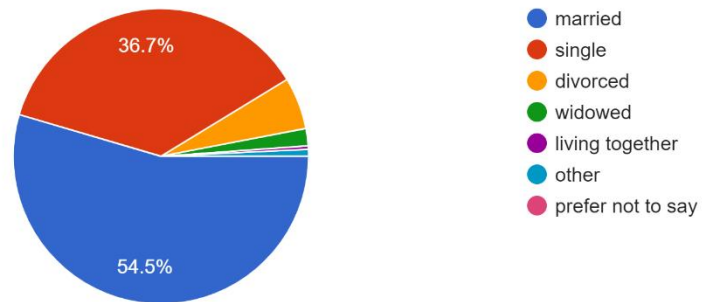


My current employment status is:
264 responses



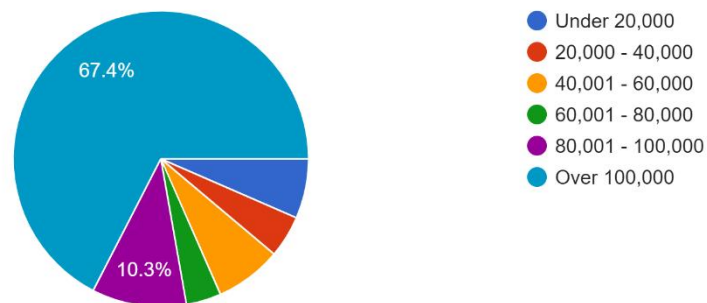
My current marital status is:

264 responses



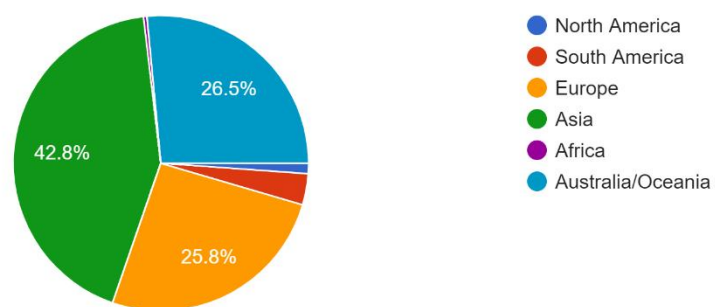
My average monthly disposable income is (Nepalese rupee):

261 responses



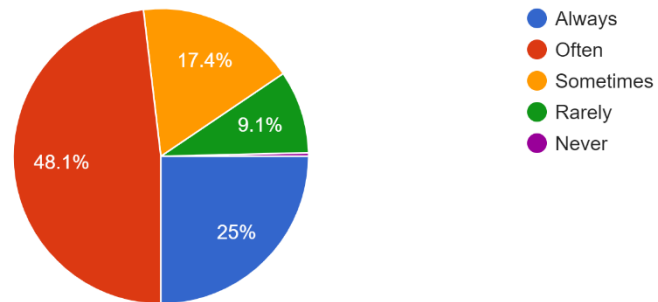
My current region of residence is:

264 responses



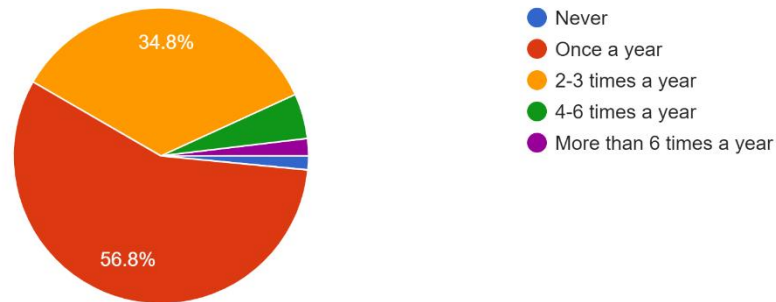
How often do you use social media travel influencer's content for travel related information?

264 responses



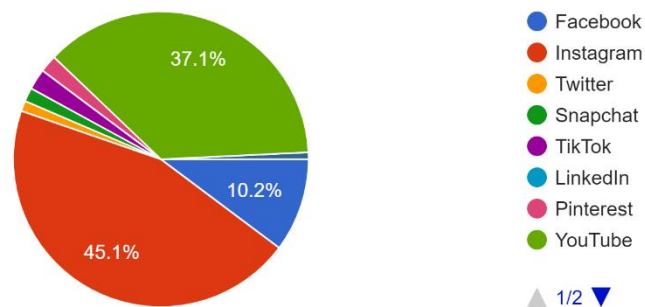
How frequently do you typically travel for leisure purposes each year?

264 responses



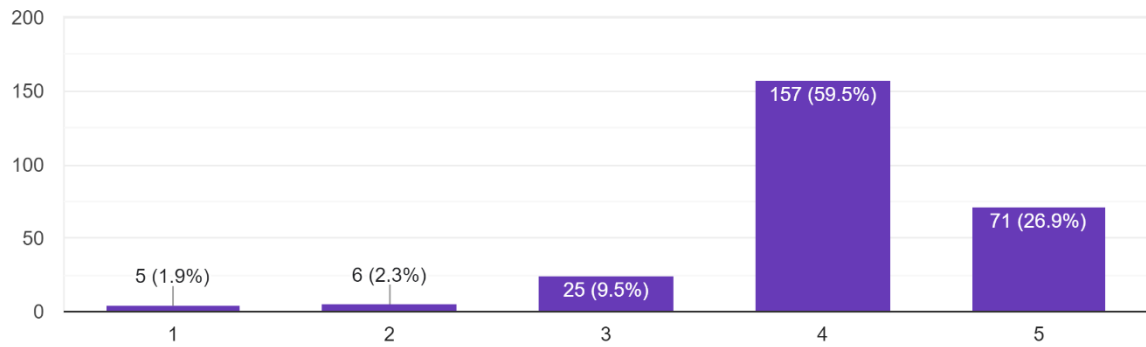
which social media sites do you frequently use for seeking travel related content?

264 responses



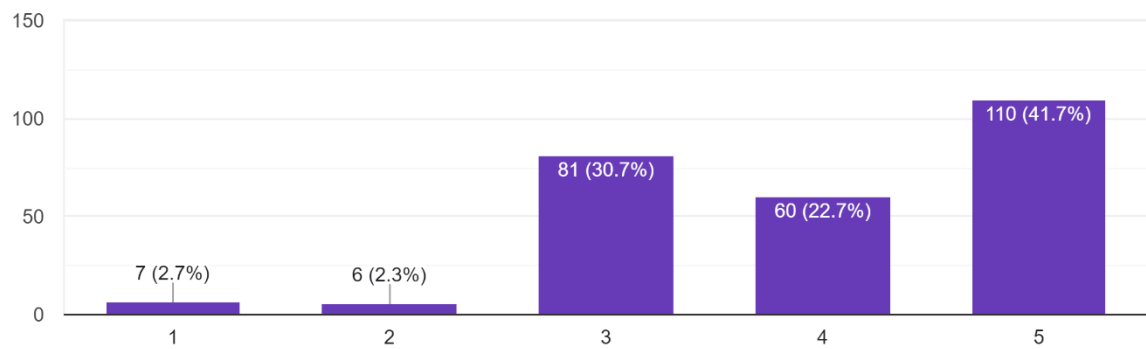
I consider social media travel influencers trustworthy travel information providers for the Pokhara region.

264 responses



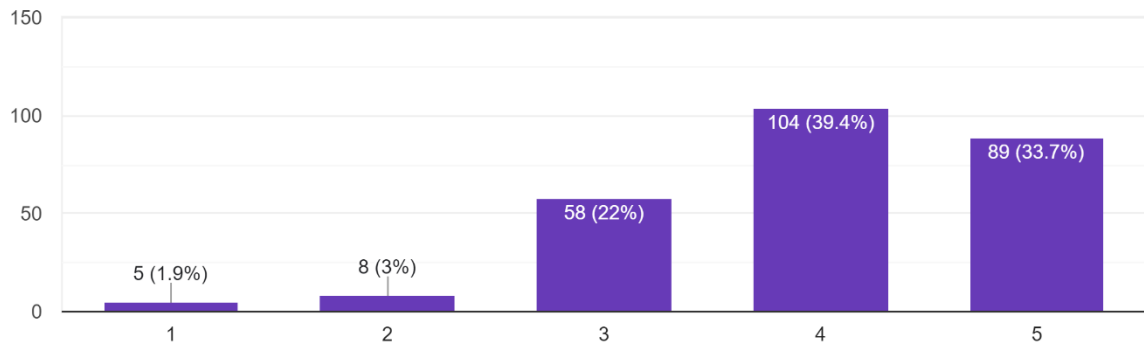
I am inclined to rely on travel suggestions from social media influencers when visiting the Pokhara region.

264 responses



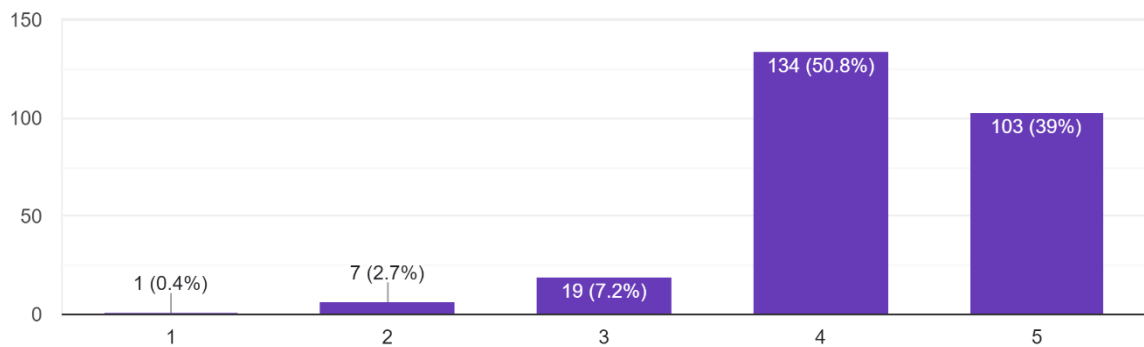
I trust the reliability of travel information social media influencers share about the content of Pokhara region.

264 responses



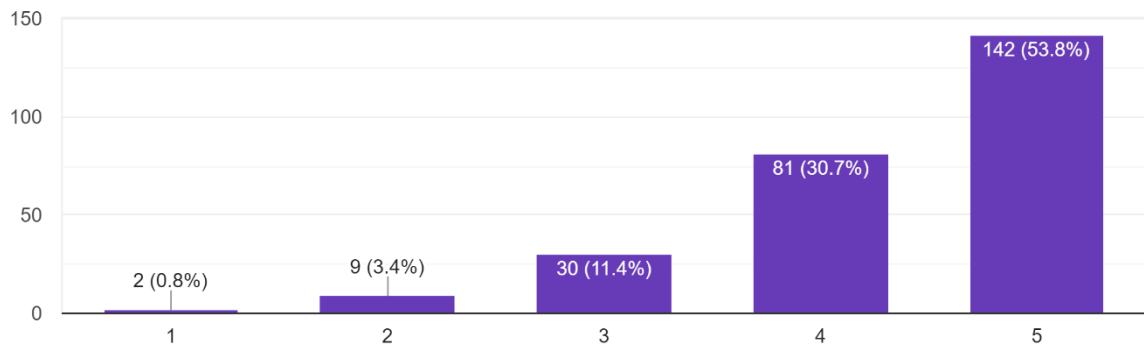
I consider the travel information shared by social media influencers for the Pokhara region to be excellent quality.

264 responses



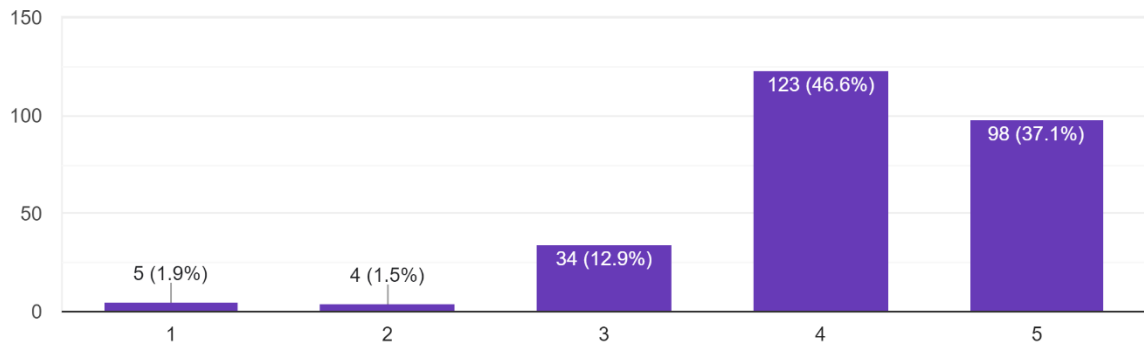
social media influencers' information on the Pokhara region is comprehensive and precise.

264 responses



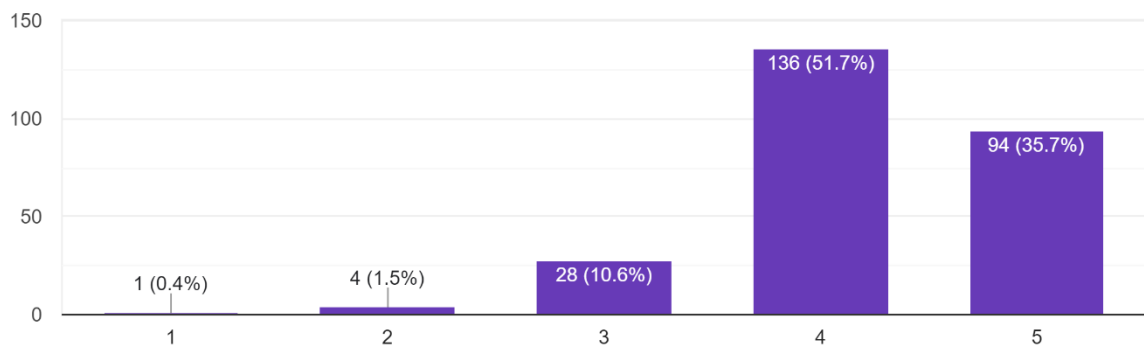
Social media influencers' content dramatically impacts how I see tourist spots in the Pokhara region.

264 responses

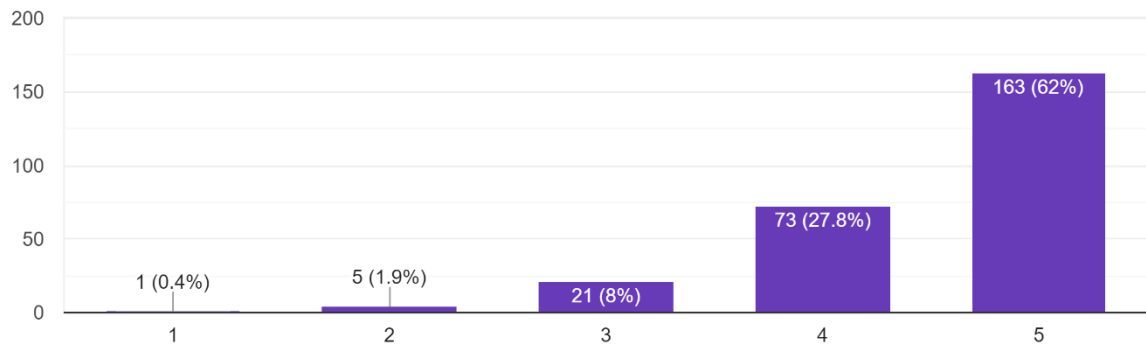


I have confidence in the travel suggestions social media influencers provide for locations and activities in the Pokhara region.

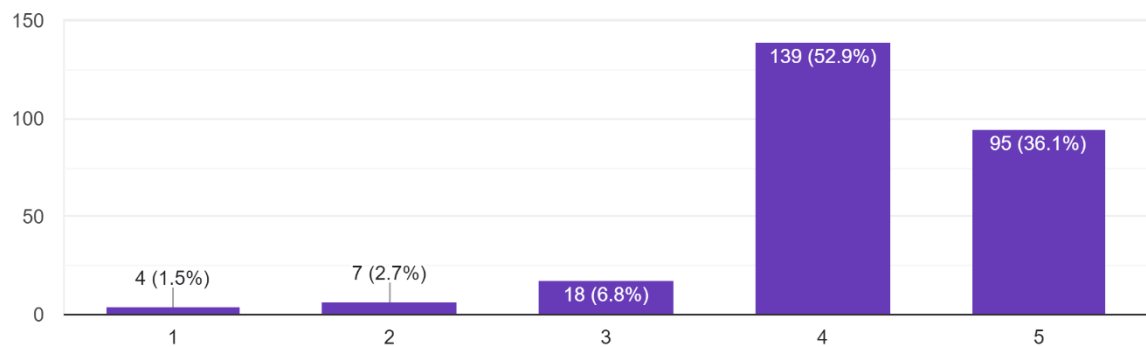
263 responses



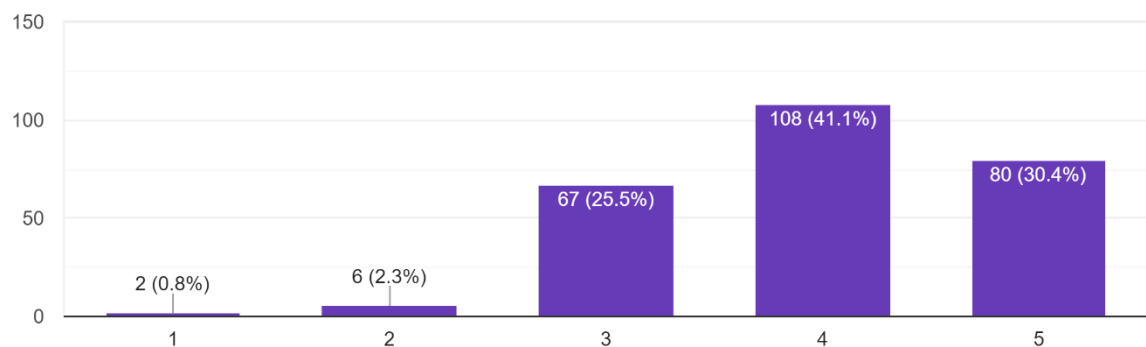
I have found the advice of social media influencers in the Pokhara region trustworthy in the past.
263 responses



Social media influencers' suggestions significantly affect my decision-making process while arranging a vacation to the Pokhara region.
263 responses

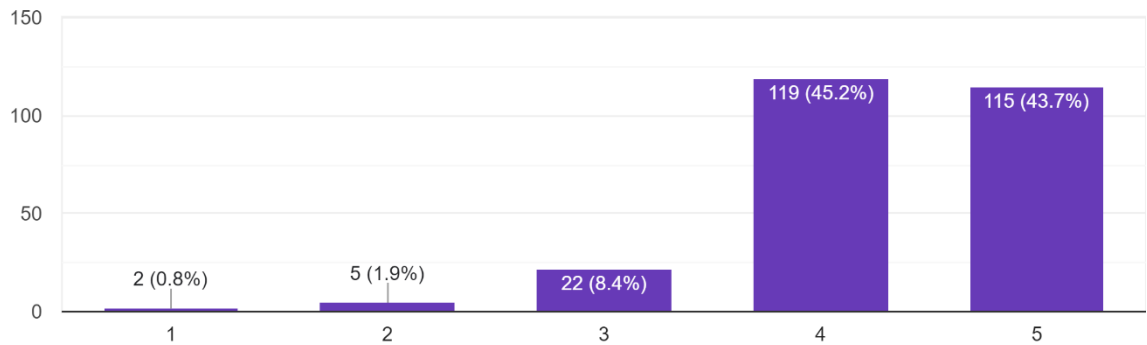


I trust social media influencers when they propose travel-related items or services in the Pokhara region.
263 responses



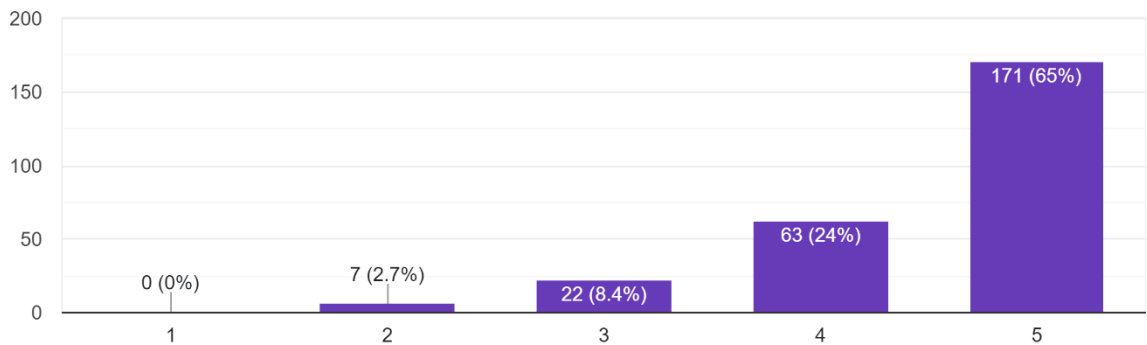
I trust that social media influencers reveal any potential biases or sponsorships when endorsing travel-related items or services connected to the Pokhara region.

263 responses



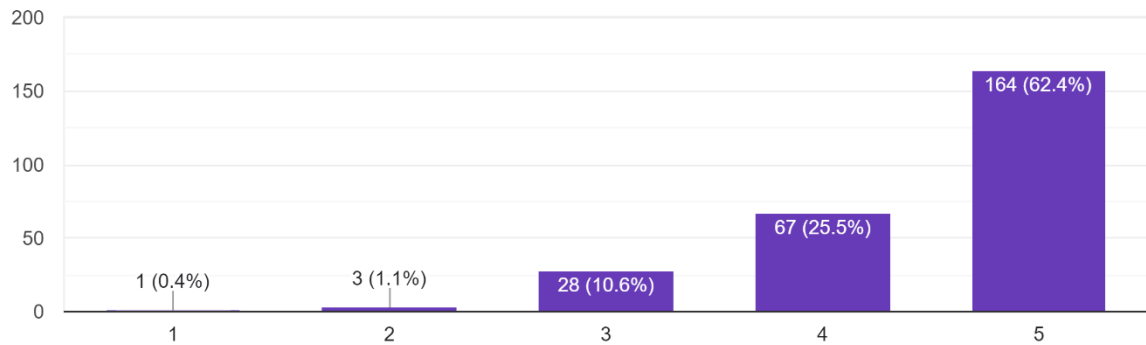
I am more likely to accept a social media influencer's advice about visiting the Pokhara region if they share their personal experiences or preferences.

263 responses



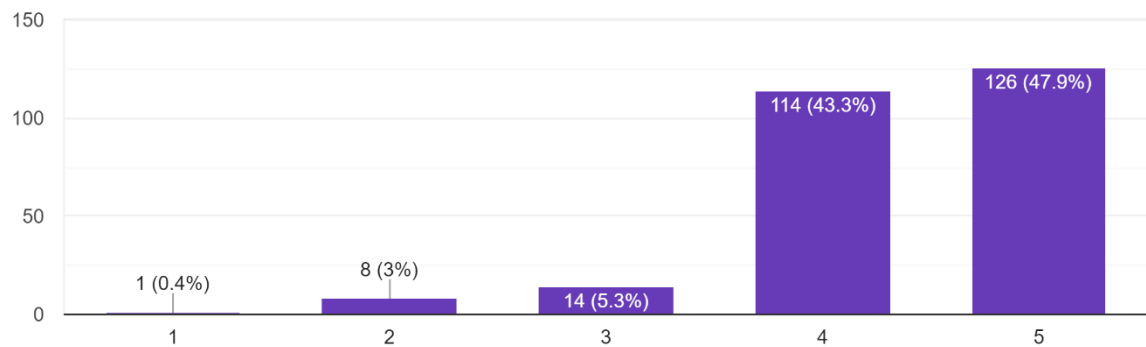
I believe social media influencers are well-informed about vacation places and experiences in the Pokhara region.

263 responses



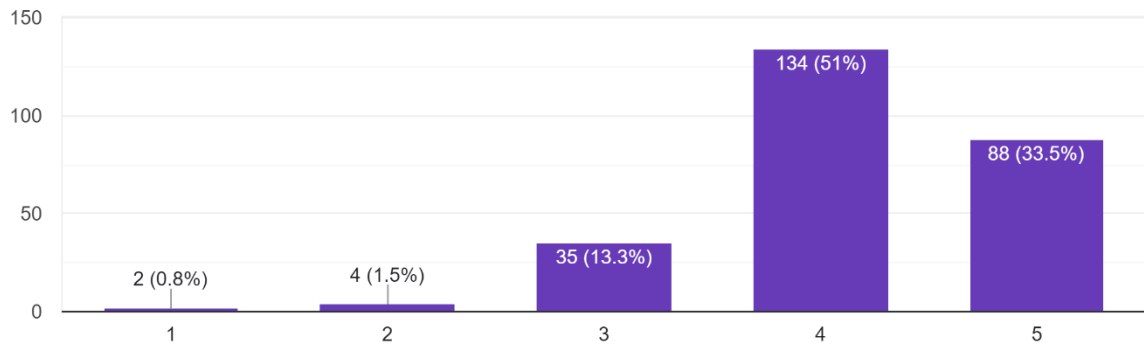
I think social media influencers have better experience than professional travel advisers or agencies when it comes to traveling to the Pokhara region.

263 responses



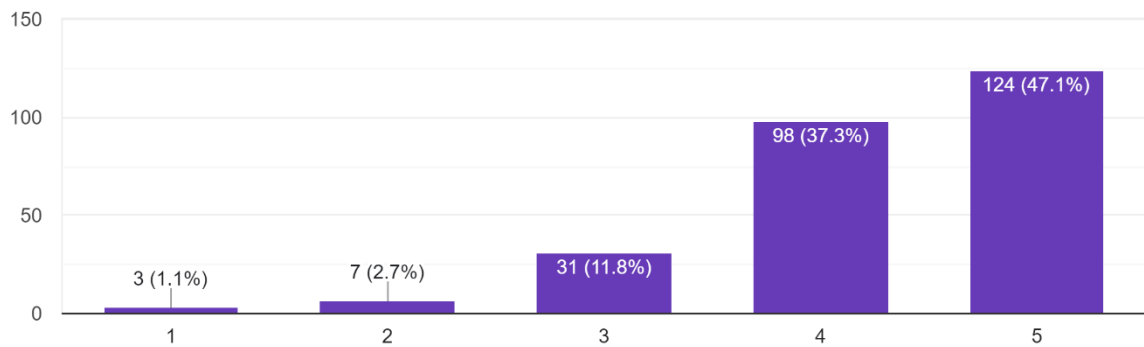
I have gained valuable travel advice from social media influencers on coming to the Pokhara region.

263 responses



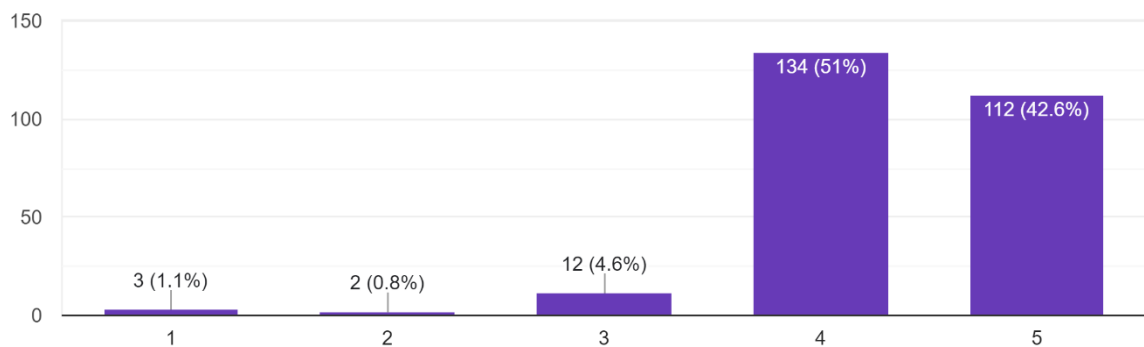
Influencers' material's visual appeal and aesthetics affect my desire to visit the area.

263 responses



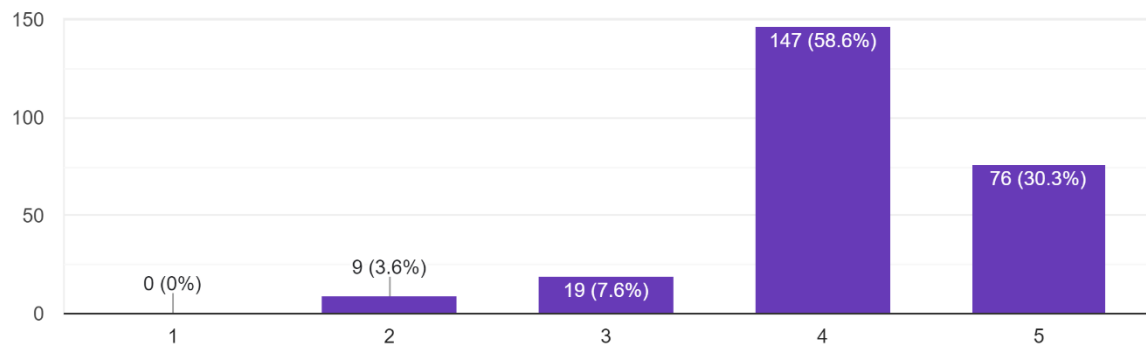
I am inclined to follow a social media influencer who often shares visually attractive travel information about the Pokhara region.

263 responses



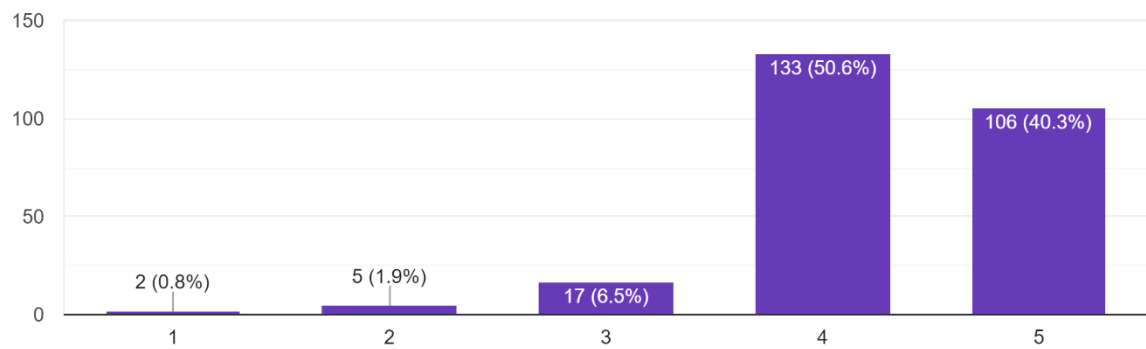
I am enticed to visit the Pokhara region mainly because a social media influencer has illustrated it visually.

251 responses



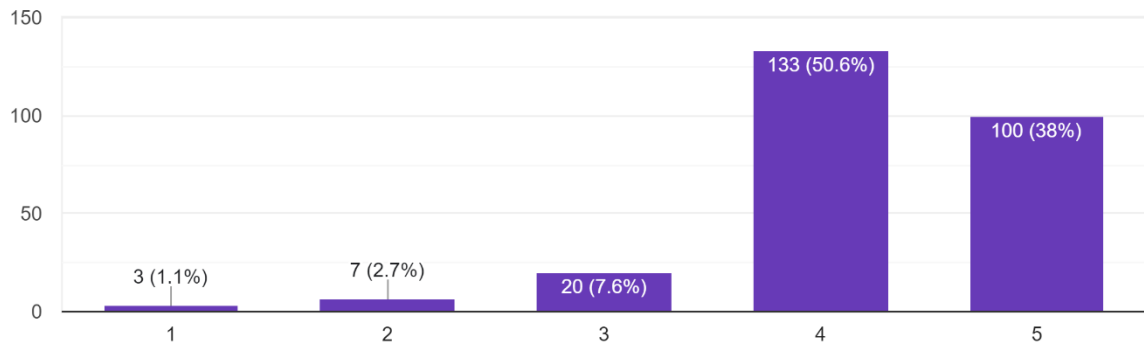
I am really motivated to visit the Pokhara region due to endorsements from social media influencers.

263 responses



I intend to change my vacation itinerary to incorporate the Pokhara region based on the impressions of social media influencers.

263 responses



Based on the content provided by social media influencers, I am eager to visit the Pokhara region as a tourism destination.

260 responses

