Assessing visitors' motivations: An empirical investigation into the attitudes and intentions behind visiting Kathmandu region.

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Abstract

This master's dissertation aims to study travellers' motivation and the attitude and behavioural factors impacting their intention to visit the Kathmandu region. A positivist-deductive-quantitative roadmap was implied for this dissertation, which was derived by the execution of the existing theory, "the theory of planned behaviour", through which hypotheses were chosen. A total of 282 responses were collected using online survey questionnaires. An exponential-based snowball sampling method was adopted in this research, which was intended to lower the possible encounter of selection bias as this method focuses on identifying participants who fall within the research criteria for sample selection. A multiple linear regression analysis was adopted to measure the impact of travellers' attitudinal and behavioural factors on visitors' intentions. This dissertation has found subjective norms ($\beta = 0.17$, $T= 3.08$, $P= 0.00$) and PBC ($\beta = 0.30$, $T= 5.07$, $P= 0.00$) both positively and significantly impacting travellers' intention to visit the Kathmandu region. Similarly, the destination image ($\beta = 0.30$, $T= 5.07$, $P= 0.00$) and destination familiarity ($\beta = 0.30$, $T= 5.37$,

$P= 0.00$) were found to positively and most significantly impact travellers' visit intention to visit

Kathmandu region among all the variables implied. Interestingly, tourists' attitude towards Kathmandu was found adversely and statistically insignificant. In addition, the majority of the tourists' primary motives for visiting the Kathmandu region were to explore heritage and architectural sites, i.e., one in every four tourists. Lastly, social media sites were among the most preferred ways to get travel-related information about Kathmandu. Therefore, destination management organizations and local authorities can leverage social media as a marketing channel to offer more perks by showcasing Kathmandu as a travel destination to potential tourists worldwide.

This could lower tourists' adverse attitudes towards Kathmandu as a travel destination.

Keywords: Travel motivation, travel intention, and travellers' attitudes and behaviours

Acknowledgement:

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Chapter 1. Introduction

In this section, a brief introduction about the research topic and the relevance of choosing this particular topic will be highlighted. A brief introduction about the study region will also be provided. Lastly, this chapter will end by providing the research question and the objectives.

The tourism sector in the post-modern era has gained significant recognition (Zhao et al., 2023). It has been termed the most significant global enterprise, generating over 10% of global GDP, exports of $1.6 trillion, corresponding to 7% of global exports, and offers 1 in 10 employment opportunities (Zhao et al., 2023). The travel and tourism sector advancement can potentially upgrade economically conditions and global reputations (Zhao et al., 2023). In the pursuit of making an informed judgment to augment specific destinations, it is equally paramount for governments and tourism management to possess knowledge about the characteristics of their tourism sector and tourist profiles, motivations, and behavioural attributes (Maghrifani et al., 2022). Comprehending factors contributing to visitors' motivations and behavioural attribution is crucial (Maghrifani et al., 2022). It is crucial as comprehending tourist behaviour provides insights for tourism management and governments, aiding them in aligning their actions and goals (Maghrifani et al., 2022). Additionally, satisfied visitors are more likely to offer positive word-of-mouth to fellow travelers and revisit the tourist destination (Poudel & Phuyal, 2016). However, few applications have focused on investigating tourists' motivational factors for visiting and their behavioural attribution, particularly in Nepal (Poudel & Phuyal, 2016). In fact, focusing on tourists' motivations and behavioural attributions remains scarce, and delving into further niche destinations such as Kathmandu Valley is entirely unexplored. Tourism activities, especially in the Kathmandu region, have been spurred more than ever (D. Shrestha et al., 2023). It is a capital city and a significant transit point for international and domestic tourists because of the Tribhuvan Airport (Lieze, 2023). More importantly, the availability of modern amenities, ancient culture and architecture, vacation themes, and Tribhuvan airports' being considered a pivotal transit point for domestic and international tourists has made this place a gateway point (Pokharel, 2022). However, research on tourists' reasons for visiting the Kathmandu region and their attitudes and behavioural attributes has been inadequately researched.

Tourism as an activity encompasses multitudes of tourist behaviours and internal and external motivational factors that impact such behaviour (Yousaf et al., 2018). The Tourism sector is seen as

highly dynamic as it comprises tourists for leisure purposes, relaxation from mundane life, cultural and pilgrimages, social meetings, and other activities (Yousaf et al., 2018). Fodness (1994) has found that individual tourists' travel itineraries are strongly connected to their psychological sequence, which might be implied when examining various motivating drivers that could encourage them to travel. Hills (1965) investigated the motivation of travellers in reaction to "Psychosomatic weariness". They desire to get away from their monotonous life, restore their positive emotion and learn ways to enhance mundane lives and energize them before returning to work. Similarly, Crompton (1979) found motivations to be just one of the many components that lead people to experience new locations and execute something fresh and novel. Similarly, Dann (1981), in his seminal research, stated that travellers' mental states influence their motivations to seek new destinations, and knowing such motivations brings tourists to travel, which benefits marketers. Zhang and Zhang (2022) found that the primary motives for vacationing mainly derive from a break from individuals' daily routines and environment to reduce mental tiredness.

Since tourist travel intentions are linked to both push and pull motives: push (individual motives) and pull (image of the destination and recommendations), it becomes a fundamentally daunting challenge to comprehend the linkage between travel motivations, their behavioural attributions, and intention to visit (Maghrifani et al., 2022). Individuals go to specific destinations for numerous regions, for instance, experiencing novel things, destination attractions, recommendations, etc. (Maghrifani et al., 2022). Sung et al. (2016) assert that travellers tend to stock their personal desires initially while making a travel plan and then later build on the impressions of the destination to match up. Despite such research happening in the academic world, tourist motivations, intentions, and behavioural attribution toward traveling to Nepal are scantily researched. Researchers such as (Baniya & Paudel, 2016; Gautam et al. 2022 Poudel & Phuyal, 2016) attempted to study to some extent, and when delving into specific regions such as Kathmandu, it is entirely unexplored. After assessing these scholars' claims and findings, it seems crucial to understand tourist motivations to visit specific travel destinations and how they develop behavioural intentions. Since, it allows destination management organizations (DMOs) and local government to attract more travellers and offer novel experiences per their expectations

1.2 Research gap and Significance of the research

Tourists' attraction to Kathmandu Valley comes with many purposes as this destination holds multiple facets of niche tourism segments such as cultural and heritage sites, which offers a home to seven destinations that are termed as UNESCO world heritage sites, including from Pashupatinath and

Swayambhu Nath, Kathmandu-Bhaktapur-Patan Darbar square (UNESCO World Heritage, 2024). These sites have their cultural importance and offer spiritual, heritage civilization, and recreational purposes (UNESCO World Heritage, 2024). Additionally, Kathmandu, a capital city with ample modern facilities, bustling streets, vibrant markets, artisan workshops, and local cuisines, makes it more appealing to visit (Shresthacharya, 2020). These multi-purpose visits combine to satisfy a unified purpose for tourists, which is also reinforced by Kathmandu as a popular, budget-friendly destination, offering a slight edge over its pricier counterparts (Nepal, 2022). Additionally, Kathmandu has established itself as a prominent hub for global and local tourists from varied interests. It was recently awarded the world's best nature destination for 2024 (Leasca, 2024) and second best for 2023 (Nandi, 2023). Along with these honours, it has gained many others in the past, such as global trending destinations, best trekking destinations, etc (see Table 1).

Table 1. Rating of Kathmandu as a travel destination on different travel themes.

Year	Destination	Platform	Rank	Awarded as	Source
2024	Kathmandu	Tripadvisor	1st	Travelers' Choice award- best nature destination in the world	(Leasca, 2024)
2023	Kathmandu	Tripadvisor	9th	Global trending destination	(Nandi, 2023)
2023	Kathmandu	Tripadvisor	2nd	Best nature destination in the world	(Nandi, 2023)
2022	Kathmandu valley	Wanderlust	5th	Best cultural UNESCO sites to visit	(Baxter, 2022)
2014	Nepal	Lonely Planet	N/A	Top 10 best trekking destinations in the world	(Poudel & Phuyal, 2016)
2014	Nepal	New York Times	N/A	Top 53 destination to visit in the year 2014	(Poudel & Phuyal, 2016)
2013	Kathmandu	Tripadvisor	3rd	Rising destination in the world	(Poudel & Phuyal, 2016)

Despite these remarkable awards on different niche tourism segments, research on tourist motivations to visit Kathmandu and their attitudes, behavioural attributes, and intentions is still underexplored. Though few researchers, such as (Baniya and Paudel, 2016 Gautam et al., 2022 and Poudel & Phuyal, 2016), have studied motivations to travel and travellers' attitudes, their study was generalized across Nepal, which seems too broad and lacks regional speciality. Nepal is multiculturally prosperous, with 142 ethnic groups and 124 different spoken languages (The Kathmandu Post, 2024), three major geographical regions (Timalsina, 2024), and ten central religious beliefs (National statistics of Nepal, 2021). Incorporating all these diversities ranging from ethnicities, religions, terrains, and languages, tourists' attitudes and motivations may switch while visiting different destinations of Nepal, which complicates the true analysis of the study; therefore, to comprehend more nuanced comprehension of their motivations, attitudes, and behaviours delving into specific regions for instance, Kathmandu valley would be more effective and worthwhile researching. Additionally, honing on this region and uncovering unique insights into visitors' intentions, attitudes, and behaviours helps to adopt appropriate tourism strategies that match their reasons for visiting, helps precise marketing efforts, and better policy formulation and governance. Ultimately, it will help enhance tourists' travel experiences and boost Kathmandu destinations as a premier destination as it offers academic perks and practical insights for tourism management and regional communities alike.

1.3 Research questions

    I)   What prime motivating factors drive tourists to visit Kathmandu Valley?

    II)   How do tourists' attitudes and behavioural attributes impact travel intention to visit Kathmandu Valley?

    III)   How do tourists perceive the image of their destination, impacting their travel intention to visit Kathmandu Valley?

1.4 Research objectives

-    Identify and evaluate different reasons behind tourists visiting Kathmandu Valley.

-    Identify and explore critical determinants influencing tourists' attitudes and behaviours towards visiting Kathmandu Valley.

- Investigate the relationship between tourists' perception of destination image and familiarity while visiting Kathmandu Valley and asses their travel experiences and intention.

1.5 Significance of the study

This dissertation holds significant importance both theoretically and practically, especially in the field of understanding tourists' behaviour and tourism management. Firstly, this dissertation will contribute to the academic discourse on travellers' intention to visit certain destinations,

"Kathmandu in this case," by adopting a widely recognized theoretical model, "i.e., the theory of planned behaviour". This theory will enrich the literature by focusing on how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control affect tourist intention to visit the Kathmandu region. Furthermore, this dissertation will highlight any anomalies that have been discovered that are highly contradictory to the prior researchers' findings. Such anomaly findings will enable many routes for further exploration of underlying causality and effects leading to such results. In terms of tourism operators and destination management organizations (DMOs) this dissertation could become a cornerstone for comprehending how social influences, personal sentiment, and individuals' behavioural controlling abilities affect their visit intention. Since this paper is focused on a single geographical segmentation; therefore, tourist operators, DMOs, and stakeholders within this region. This could leverage to understand tourists' behaviours and visit intentions more effectively. This dissertation will also study other factors, especially tourists' motivation, the image of the destination, and destination familiarity, that impact travellers' visit intentions. The outcomes from these variables on travel intention will provide social proof and help these agencies leverage this dissertation to attract more tourists to the Kathmandu region. Lastly, the findings from this dissertation can help policymakers identify and formulate potential barriers that lead to adverse or low popularity of Kathmandu as a travel destination. By comprehending potential factors that adversely impact tourists' travel intention to the Kathmandu region, effective policies can be implemented to create a ground for maintaining a positive environment for potential tourists to travel.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter will provide an in-depth understanding of Kathmandu as a tourist destination, along with travelers' motives for traveling to this region. An extensive exploration of travel motivation, perceived destination image, and familiarity will be highlighted. Lastly, the theory of planned behavior will be implied as a theoretical framework, and a hypothesis will be postulated through this model.

Travel motivation is the driving force behind why individuals choose to travel (Crompton, 1979). Dann (1977) studied "what encourages tourists to travel" and found tourists' travel motivation fundamentally lies in the socio-psychological conceptualization of "anomie" and "egoenhancement". Firstly, the anomie is considered as the desire that an individual has for favourable affection, love, and aspiration to exchange communication with their fellow friends (Dann, 1977). Individuals seek to overcome the mundanity routines they feel in their daily lives, and the significant solution to get rid of this mundanity is by taking a vacation and getting energized (Dann, 1977). Secondly, the individual seeks acknowledgment, and traveling enables a supreme chance to boost ego-enhancement (Dann, 1977).

When individuals talk about what stimulates them to travel, they frequently link it to the conception of "push and pull motivation" (Crompton, 1979). The pull motivating factor of travel originates from the destinations' attraction rather than developing from the tourists' inner perspective (Crompton, 1979). From a conventional standpoint, people used to perceive that push motivating factors enabled them to find why tourists want to take a vacation and pull factors to explain why they prefer which vacation to take (Crompton, 1979). For instance, Dann (1977) acknowledges that tourists might be interested in certain types of vacation as they hold a lot of attractive factors, but they only decide to go there if they need to travel. This means that push motivating factors come prior to pull factors, in terms of both theoretically and practically (Dann, 1977). Viewing this perspective of push and pull motives, Hill (1965) eloquently addressed the motives for travel: "*People go on vacation, especially when they perceive "psychological damage or empty inside," and the vacation is viewed as a remedy to recharge and heal. When an individual goes on a*

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vacation, they acquire and stockpile "internal goods," which helps them feel better when visualizing, especially after they return to their daily routines."

It seems agreeable that most of the tourist scholars in this field feel that the main motive behind taking a vacation is to improve themselves in some ways. However, this might not be the only case, as personal growth via travelling can be just one of the avenues for personal growth. For instance, Howard and Sheth (1969) acknowledged two types of motivation to travel, i.e., "specific and nonspecific". If an individual's goal is specific, then taking a vacation is the only way to meet it. Meanwhile, if it is non-specific, the same sorts of pleasure can be achieved by doing any other activities besides travelling to destinations (Howard & Sheth, 1969).

Exploring travellers' motivation to travel to various destinations is a multifaceted topic that depends on different factors (Silva et al., 2020). These factors could be individuals' psychological motivations, cultural motivations, prestige and social status, recreational and leisure motivations, and novelty exploration (Silva et al., 2020). Tourists may be driven to explore destinations with the intention of encountering cross-culture, discovering others' way of living, and personal development, and exploring new challenges and excitement (Yan & Halpenny, 2019). Gaining insights into the factors that impact tourist willingness to travel to certain destinations may be shaped by extensive exploration of tourists' psychological and emotional factors that shape their motivation to travel (Silva et al., 2020). Since individuals' psychological motivators incorporate with visitors' thirst for a sense of connection and their aspiration to familiarize themselves with unfamiliar environments (Silva et al., 2020). Emotional factors could be travellers' pursuit of enjoyment and reviving their mundanity, escapism, and wanderlust and pursuit of personal development (Silva et al., 2020).

Similarly, travellers who are culturally motivated to visit certain destinations are keen to acquire information and apprehension of other cultures, their belief systems, histories, traditions, and ways of living (K. Kim, 2007). Such traveling offers a chance to widen their knowledge, reassess their belief systems, and merge themselves in comprehending a diverse range of cultural practices, attitudes, and perspectives around the globe (K. Kim, 2007). Meanwhile, travellers who are more motivated by social status and prestige are

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focused on exploring experiences that enhance their social status and provide them with a sense of accomplishment (Correia et al., 2016). It can be perceived as a craving to acquire opulent experiences that might be inspirational or emblematic of individual accomplishment (Correia et al., 2016). According to Teo et al. (2014, p. 4), travellers' behaviour are mainly affected by several factors that outline their motivation to visit certain destinations; in which factors such as destination image, expedition quality, travel satisfaction, and perceived value directly impact travellers' attitudes and behaviours.

Meanwhile, Chen and Tsai (2007) assert that tourist location positively influences visitors' behavioural attribution, leading to visiting, revisiting, and spreading positive word-of-mouth to other travellers. Carton and Beeton (2004) affirmed that alterations in the socio-cultural characteristics of tourists act as significant differences in visitors' motivations and their behavioural attribution. Hudson (2000) has characterized tourist behaviours into typologies as per their experience and motivations for taking a vacation, i.e., "bubble visitors,"; "experienced visitors,"; "wide horizon visitors," and "immerses". Moreover, the yearning to seek novel experiences and the urge to escape reality reflects a normal individual instinct for exploration and a break from routine activities (Silva et al., 2020). This motivation comes because of the need for revitalization, personal development, and novelty seeking, which extends individual beyond their confines of ordinary living (Silva et al., 2020).

Similarly, McCormick et al. (2012) found a growing interest in tourism literature to link travel and tourism to collect memorable travel experiences. For example, the research by McCormick et al. (2010) has found that tourism comprehends hedonic factors, novelty seeking, involvement in local culture, sense of refreshment, and knowledge-seeking components have a significant connection with destination qualities and travellers' overall satisfaction. Additionally, it was concluded that visitors with close interface with destinations' local culture are able to collect inimitable travel memories (McCormick et al., 2010). Tourists' destination selection is affected by their level of travel experiences, which enables a substantial understanding of their motivations, desires, and pursuit of their satisfaction (McCormick et al., 2010). Widjaja et al. (2020), found that activities such as local gastronomic offerings and authentic touristic activities are pivotal in compel tourists to visit a destination, as these factors provide epicurean activities only available in specific destinations.

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Similarly, Larsen (2007) acknowledged that tourists often recall positive travel memories compared to negative ones; therefore, destination management organizations (DMOs) who can render memorable experiences to their customers by adding different facilities and services allow better platforms to attract tourists to their destinations. Leu and McKercher (2006, p. 409) claimed that time devoted to a travel location is perhaps a significant principle that shapes visitors' travel behaviour as it affects their motivation to engage in a range of touristic activities available for experience. Aligning with this, Henscher and Truong (1985) contended that time is considered one of the potential few fundamentals which is impossible to store for future use; therefore, travellers' time budget is normally static before arrival to the travel destination and is highly challenging to adjust it. From that perspective, tourists views the duration of travel as a crucial component "discretionary factor" as it motivates them to focus on how time is spent as compared to the amount of time available for tourist activities (Hensher & Truong, 1985).

Silva et al. (2020) asserts that comprehending insights into tourists' motivation for travel is crucial to the tourism fraternity. Pull and push motivating factors might evaluate tourists' motivation to travel. In which pull factors are viewed as positive attribution of a tourist location that entices visitors, which could be a natural beauty, picturesque views, cultural encounters, significant cultural and historic sites, ample recreational activities (Awaritefe, 2004). In contrast, push factors could be viewed as individual motivations that drive them apart from their everyday surroundings, such as the urge for relief from monotonous daily routines, novelty encounters, and personal development (Awaritefe, 2004).

Figure 1. Travel motivation – push and pull factors.
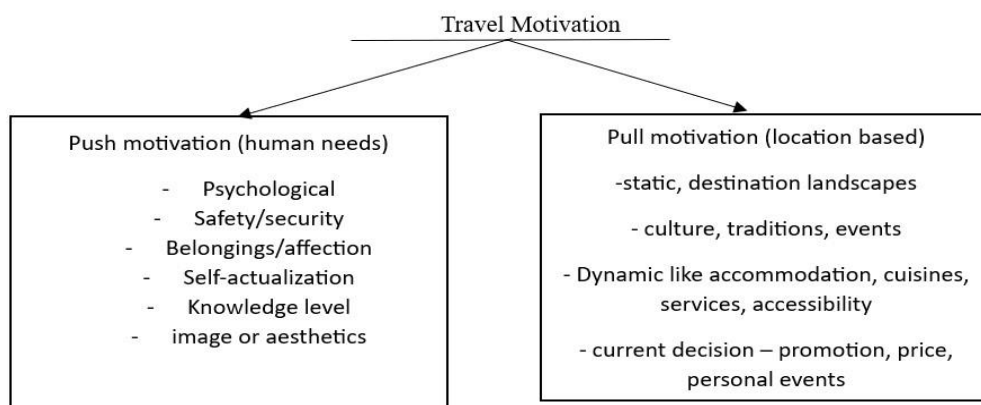
Via scanning prior literature, it is apparent that tourists' motivation is considered a primary factor behind tourists' visit intention. Therefore, we have come up with the following hypothesis:

Ha1: Travel motivation positively and significantly impacts tourists' intention to visit a destination.

2.2 Destination image and branding

The tourism sector is considered a competitive industry, as many destinations all across the globe compete for a positive image and influx of visitors (Tan & Wu, 2016). Destination attraction has a substantial role in shaping travellers' attitudes and motives to travel to a tourist destination (Tan & Wu, 2016). Tourist destinations appeal have distinctive characteristics and attractions that are different from other places, making them appealing to prospective tourists (Tan & Wu, 2016). Therefore, destination attraction is not only limited to its physical enticements and recreational activities; it comes with a broad range of travellers' experiences, including destinations' sociocultural, historical, and natural assets, local cuisines and customs, and recreational events (Tan & Wu, 2016). Besides, the image of a tourist destination has an integral role in impacting tourists' attitudes and behavioral attribution toward willingness to visit a destination (Phillips & Jang, 2007). Also, the perception of a tourist destination by its tourists is greatly affected by its level of branding (Liang & Lai, 2023).

Numerous research such as (Kanwel et al., 2019; Khan et al., 2017; Phillips & Jang, 2007) found that a positive impression of a destination substantially impacts tourists' decision-making process, which prompts them to select certain destinations over their counterparts. Furthermore, an effective articulation of tourist destination branding strategies can set an exclusive identity for a destination, eventually making it unique from its competing destinations and attracting explicitly targeted markets (Phillips & Jang, 2007). According to Chen and Tsai (2007), "destination image" refers to the psychological or mental visualization that tourists have of a certain site. This visualization encompasses their feelings, knowledge, and perception of the place. The concept of destination image serves two important roles in tourists' behaviours: to stimulate destination selection decision making epoch and to condition such after decision-making epoch based on on-

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site experience, overall satisfaction, intention to endorse to others, intention to revisit". The on-site experience of tourist destination is predominantly influenced by the perceived "trip quality" by evaluating tourists' expectation and their actual results (Chen & Tsai, 2007). However, tourists' after-decision making actions have been underexplored (Chen & Tsai, 2007). Similarly, Hellier et al. (2003) Tourists' perceived value and pleasure are predicted as the antecedents of behavioural intention toward destination quality. However, the association between these linkages is often debatable (Hellier et al., 2003). Similarly, Chena and Tsai (2007) found perceived value as an intermediary protagonist between trip quality and satisfaction.

Figure 2. Conceptualization of destination image
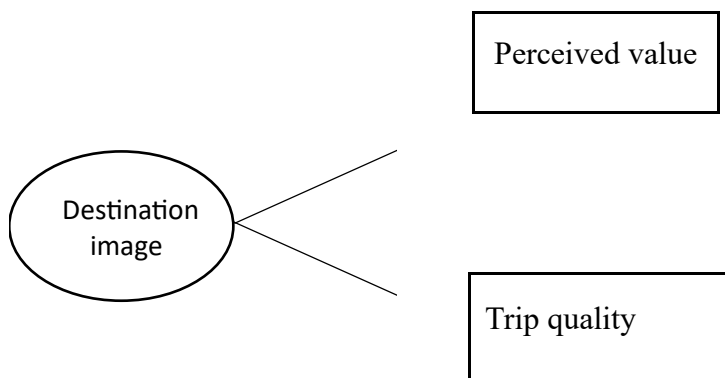
Source: (Chen &Tsai, 2007)

Apprehending the complexities of destination image and branding is vital for destination management organizations to strategically position and brand their destination in the cross-border market (Kanwel et al., 2019). Subsequently, the "psychological" and "socio-cultural" factors affect visitors' attitudes and behavioural motives in order to gain an in-depth conception of intricate dynamics engaged in location selection and tourist behaviour (Chahal & Devi, 2015). Though the positive perks of destination attraction, its image, and marketing on visitors' destination selection and motives have been expansively explored, it is more crucial to grasp the possible adverse impact and constraints connected to above-mentioned components (Qu et al., 2011). At first, the branding of certain destinations might result in standardization and commodification of visitors' travel experiences.

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Destinations might focus on prioritizing developments that incur mass tourism, which could be detrimental as it possibly dilutes the destinations' authenticity and distinctiveness (Qu et al., 2011).

The overreliance on creating distinct destination images and branding could reinforce stereotypes that could intricate destinations' socio-cultural and historical importance (Qu et al., 2011). Sometimes, it might lead to shallow apprehension of the destination, leading to overwrought expectations from its visitors, which subsequently brings displeasure when arriving at the destination (S. Kim & Lehto, 2013). Therefore, the influence of destination image on tourists' attitudes and motives is both significant and complex to comprehend (S. Kim & Lehto, 2013). Manhas et al. (2016) said that though destination image has a noteworthy impact on how visitors perceive and are motivated to visit, DMOs and tourism stakeholders must be aware of possible negative externalities and limitations it may incur due to excessive stress on destination marketing. From that perspective, a balanced approach between the need to attract tourist destinations and the preservation of the location's authenticity is pivotal for the sustainable growth of a tourist destination (Manhas et al., 2016). After scanning prior literature review, we have postulated the following hypothesis:

Ha2: Destination image positively and significantly impacts tourists' intention to visit a destination.

2.2.1 The destination image formation phenomena

As per Reynolds (1965), the destination image is the articulation of a cognitive construct that is processed based on the few imitations of a specific tourism destination from a plethora of information. The plethora of impressions could be the information sources Such as literature, travel magazines, social media sites, Online sources, etc (Choi et al., 2018; Xiang & Fesenmaier, 2022). Moreover, the actual visitation to the destination plays a significant role as the actual perceived image of the destination can be altered based on first-hand information and the actual encounter with the destination (Gunn, 1988).

The impact of those several information channels and their effect in forming a destination image, as per Gunn (1988), is based on traveler's such.

Seven stages of travel experiences are presented as follows:

1. Formation of mental image about traveling
2. Alternation of images based on different information
3. Commitment to take a trip
4. Commute to the spot
5. Explore and participate in destination
6. Return back to home
7. Remodel the image based on the experiences

Gunn (1988) asserts that the image termed in Stage 1 is considered organic as it is formed based on information gathered from random sources such as media reports, schools and universities, and positive word-of-mouth from family, friends, and colleagues. However, in Stage 2, commercial-based information can be accumulated from travel operators, travel guides, magazines, brochures, etc (Gunn, 1988). The outcome of Stage 2 determines the approval of Stage 1 based on how trustworthy and realistic the initial plan is (Gunn, 1988). The perceived image modified in Stage 2 is sometimes called an induced image (Gunn, 1988). In the final stage, the actual encounter with the travel destination forms the true image of the destination; however, it might not be the same for every traveler as their expectations, Knowledge, and visit experience have different realities (Gunn, 1988). Therefore, the perceived image of the destination is also referred to how individuals form their subjective reality about the travel destination (Gunn, 1988). Meanwhile, the concept of "imagery" could be different as it is a way of formulating and storing information "multisensory" into an individual's "working memory" (Echtner and Ritchie, 1991). Imagery is more about how the individual's senses perceive certain things; therefore, it is more dependent on a holistic approach, which is often viewed as mental picturing that completely contradicts "discursive processing" that is formed based on an individual's characteristics, features, and others attributional backgrounds instead relying on holistic jottings (Echtner and Ritchie, 1991). In the context of tourism research, the notion of the destination image is often applied and lamented in this fashion: "destination image is the term that will not be discarded easily, but this term is frequently implied with high vague and altering interpretations" (Pearce, 1988, p. 161). For instance, the understanding of destination image is applied through "an individual's impression of a certain travel destination or their perception, which can be

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before visitation or after visitation"(Pearce, 1982). However, this definition has no robust comprehension of whether it considers a holistic or attributional-based approach or could be both. (Echtner and Ritchie 1991, Pg.41) However, Um and Crompton (1990) have added a few insights into this contradicted area by addressing destination image as a blend of gestalt and holistic approach. The work of Echtner and Ritchie(1991) towards the understanding of destination image using four components: "functional, attribution, holistic and psychological feature of certain travel destination might help to provide a comprehensive view of destination image formation"
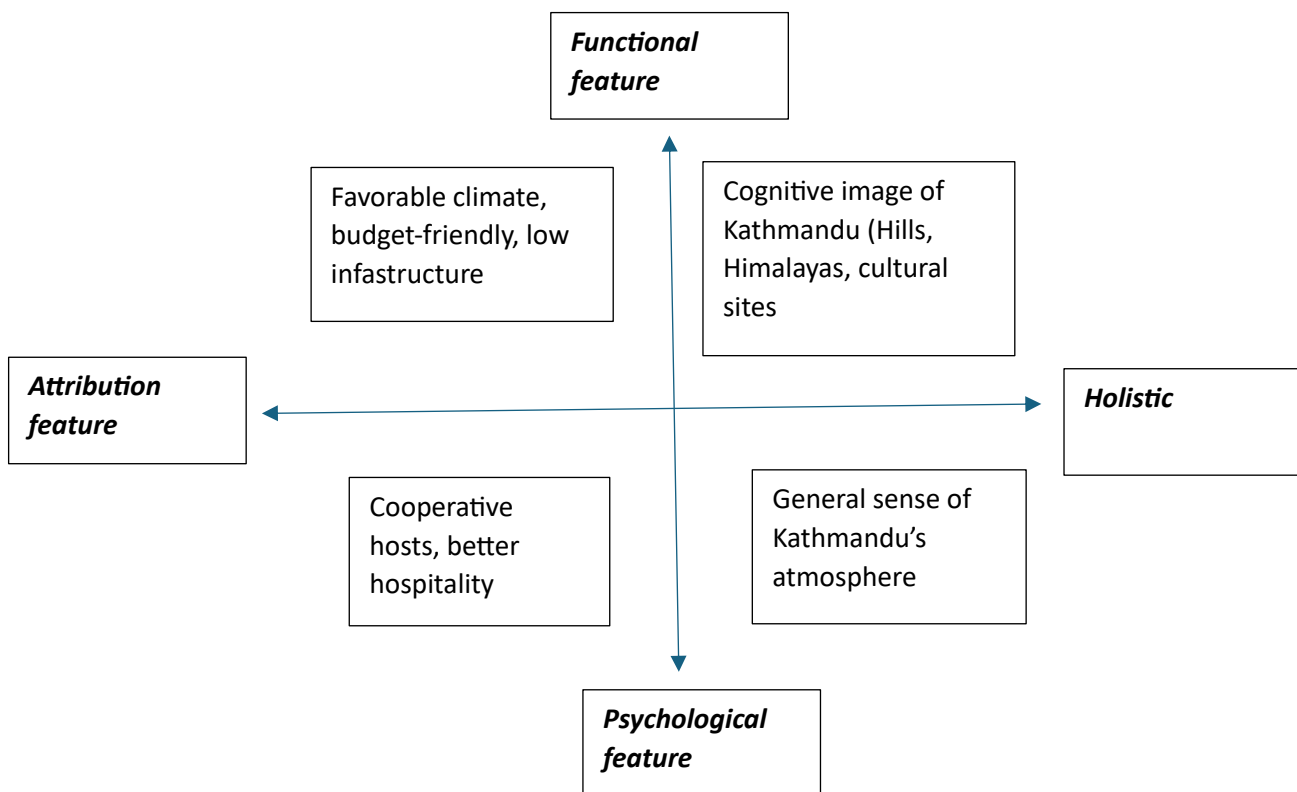
Source: Remodelled based on Echtner and Ritchie (1991)

2.3 Destination familiarity

Destination familiarity is a significant feature that governs travelers' risk perception and their location preferences (Bianchi et al., 2017). Destination familiarity is a broad notion that incorporates many aspects, including the level of an individual's knowledge, awareness, and prior encounters (Bianchi et al., 2017). According to Prentice (2004) there are three types of familiarity, i.e., "informational", "self-evaluation", "and observational". Firstly, informational familiarity relies on the series of implied informational sources, which can be broken down into single or multiple sources. Secondly, self-evaluation values how familiar an individual feels and perceives the location. Thirdly, observational familiarity values how many times an individual has experienced something before, considered as a first-time or recurring one. In the context of tourists' intention to visit a destination, researchers such as (S. Kim et al., 2019; Tan & Wu, 2016) have found that tourists who find a destination with high familiarity are more likely to visit the destination. Similarly, Gibson, and Lepp (2003) It was found that high familiarity with a destination allows tourists to visit risk-free and have more faith in the destination they select.

Kim et al. (2019) have found that increased destination familiarity provides a positive perception of destination image. However, Sun et al. (2013) assert that destination familiarity is more dependent on individuals' subjective perceptions, which might be why every individual's perceived image of a destination could be different. Imagery depends on production aspects of tourism; destination familiarity is dissimilar, and it is more related to tourists' perceived sense of closeness (Tan & Wu, 2016). Notwithstanding its dissimilarities, prior studies such as (Beerli & Martín, 2004; Marinao Artigas et al., 2015) have found that destination family has a positive relationship with destination image. Tan and Wu (2016) assert that tourists might visualize destination image without even visiting, similar to destination familiarity via various informational bases such as social media, movies, and television programs. However, one should be cautious that movies might also propel a negative image of a destination (McCartney et al., 2008). Gartner (1994) anticipated that information source has the ability to alter the cognitive assessment of a tourist destination.

Li et al. (2009) acclaims that external information is considered incompetent in altering the emotional aspect of a tourist destination. While tourists make destination selections, they seek minimal risk, and self-evaluation familiarity enables the degree of feeling secure (Tan & Wu, 2016). Therefore, self-

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evaluation familiarity enables the analysis of the perception of mechanisms that an individual feels and a sense of confidence and resolves perceived risks to a tolerable level (Tan & Wu, 2016). Individual perception of destination safety and security are assessed from two perspectives; firstly, travel destination safety is viewed as a part of destination image, which is also linked to cognitive qualities, and secondly, evaluate risk perception of destination apart from destination image (Fuchs & Reichel, 2011). Similarly, Casali et al. (2021) have found that tourists' assessment of their basic and stereotypical image of a destination is impacted by their level of familiarity, and higher familiarity produces a positive destination image, leading to positive visit intention. Therefore, after scanning the previous literature, we have postulated the following hypothesis:

Ha3: Destination familiarity positively and significantly impacts tourists' intention to visit.

2.4 Tourist travel decision-making process

When it comes to how tourists form their travel decision processes, two approaches of decision-making might be anecdotal from a previous debate on the development of decision theory (Mansfeld, 1992). Firstly, the conventional concept called "economic rational man" suggests that visitors' spatial planning, especially in relation to the selection of travel destination, mirrors their need to augment their travel benefits but within the allocated time and cost (Mansfeld, 1992). However, in reality, the selection of a travel destination, just like any other form of choice and decision-making process, comes with some uncertainty (Mansfeld, 1992). For instance, the essential circumstances, such as weather conditions, destination image and familiarity, housing availability, and quality, host peoples' attitudes, and cultural differences, might be ignored or unknown to tourists during the decision-making process (Mansfeld, 1992). Therefore, the pre-existing sources of information might only act as an image of the probability of obtaining particular utility at a specific probable tourist spot based on the formed image in their cognition (Mansfeld, 1992). From a disbenefit angle of the "normative-rational" process, the approach that is the tourist's behavioural-probabilistic process might be practical to adopt for the exploration of how tourists make their destination choice (Mansfeld, 1992). The behavioral-probabilistic approach, according to Mansfeld (1992, p. 401), also referred to as a "vacation sequence," is mainly dominated by the push and pull motivation factors. At first, the visitors get inspired by push factors such as the mundanity, social needs, and recreational aspects. When tourists indulge in high motivation, they decide by evaluating whether it is beneficial to travel to a

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particular tourist destination or stay at their current residence (Mansfeld, 1992). Sometimes, this decision is also altered by tourists' and their family's restraints and their financial situation (Mansfeld, 1992). According to Williams (2004, p. 127), during periods of financial downturns, tourists often tend to sacrifice their travel plans or prefer to select economical alternatives. This highlights the significant role of financial situations in altering travel decisions. When the travel decision is to go for a vacation, the decision process is networked via different stages of individual decision processes: information collection, revising alternatives, and final selection.

Before probing into the decision-making process, it is crucial to explore what motivates individuals to explore specific destinations as tourists (Pantano et al., 2019; Seyidov & Adomaitienė, 2016; Smallman & Moore, 2010). However, Mansfeld acknowledges a few questions that need to be addressed before understanding the traveler's motivation to travel. Therefore, in the context of tourists' travel decision-making process, questionnaires such as: Does it need specific requirements, which may seem a must factor to be contented? Also, is it considered a basic need or a sophisticated need? When an individual presumes that a traveler is motivated to go for a vacation, how does the motivating factor influence tourists' destination-selection attitude and behavior? And more importantly, is there any causal association between tourists' motivation factors and travel destination selection? These quandaries involve ultimate problems in which tourism researchers explore the behavioral facet of visitors' attitudes and behavior. More importantly, understanding tourists' travel behavior and motivation allows travel and tour operators, tourism entrepreneurs, and destination management organizations (DMOs) to plan their travel services and expectations (Seyidov & Adomaitienė, 2016; Smallman & Moore, 2010). Particularly, comprehension of these aspects is crucial to offering tourist-related products and services in a customized manner that helps to satisfy tourists' expectations and needs. Though it is believed that a growing awareness of the tourists' motivation and travel decision-making processes, only a few research (Correia & Pimpão, 2008; Hung & Petrick, 2012; Karl et al., 2020; Pearce, 2014) have empirically attempted to answer the problems as mentioned above; however in an individualistically. In addition to that, this dissertation also attempts to bring some insights into these less-explored research areas. Before that, a comprehensive conceptual model on how tourist makes their travel decision-making processes; therefore, this dissertation will imply Mansfeld's (1992) travel decision-making processes to understand how tourists form their travel decision process to select their travel destination.

During the 1970s, numerous psychologists initiated their conceptual foundations to explore different types of motivation and their cruciality in forming the selection of travel destinations (Mansfeld,

1992).   These frameworks were based on different niche segments of psychology, including biological, individual self-actualization, perceptions, and intuitive viewpoints (Mansfeld, 1992). Meanwhile, Pearce (1982) proclaims that the accomplishment of psychology in evaluating tourists' motivation to travel is very partial. Firstly, the exploration of tourists' travel motivation is mainly connected to those factors that can be easily demonstrable through a generally implied research approach. Secondly, tourists' travel motivations are extracted by closely witnessing their behaviors instead of inquiring about the tourists via any form of straightforward means (Epperson, 1983; Gray, 1970). Thirdly, travel motivation was characterized either by the motivation type "socio-cultural reasons, personal reasons, recreational reasons, etc." or based on the control action "short or long term" (Clawson, 1963; Pearce, 1982).

As Pearce (1982) claimed, the classification fails to anticipate travelers' attitudes and behavior as these classifications were found to overlap. Two issues were found to avert the accomplishment of a reasonable conceptualization that permits the anticipated tourists' attitudes and behaviors that are peripheries within tourists' travel motivation. One might be because the travel may emerge by a situation that is influenced by single motives, leading factors or motives, and multi-motive conditions. It is believed that the larger the volume of motivators impacting travel attitude and behavior, the more daunting the challenge to extricate each motive. Secondly, it might be the intricate nature of the tourists' travel motivation, as some authors (Goodall, 1988; Pearce, 1982) believe that tourists' travel behavior is mainly influenced by their intrinsic motivation factors depending on the time situation. Meanwhile, others, such as (Matley, 1977; Meinke, 1968) contend that tourists' travel behavior depends on external factors such as tourism offerings, urban facilities, and exciting activities that detox mundanity. The significant perception of tourism may be believed to compensate for individuals' mundane lives by sharing through exploring different destinations and exploring new things (Williams, 2004). When viewing the travel-motivation framework articulated by Gray (1970), two primary motivational factors were found: "wanderlust" and "Sunlust." The wanderlust motivation implies that tourists visit such destinations, which drives them to explore the known and the unknown (Gray, 1970). Meanwhile, the "Sunlust" motivating factors imply that travelers are motivated to explore places that offer unique services or experiences that may not be present or exist in their home locations (Gray, 1970). Some common examples of "Sunlust" activities may include scuba diving, mountaineering in the Himalayas, and hard-adventure activities (Gray, 1970). However, this conceptualization was later criticized for presenting a dilemma between travel motivation, which is either individual-specific attributions or destination-specific attributing factors (Mansfeld, 1992).

These sorts of confusion are still prevalent in post-modern tourism research (Chauke et al., 2022; Divisekera, 2011; Seeler, 2021). Later, Coltman (1989) characterized it into more simplistic factors: motivating factors that are attracted by the tourist destination or not attracted by the destination. After that, more precise and simple motivation factors were started in tourism research, i.e., push motivating factors and pull motivating factors (Kent, 1990).

2.4.1 Gathering information

In the context of gathering travel-related information, several researchers, such as (Dellaert et al., 2014; Karamustafa & Gullu, 2018; Tassiello & Tillotson, 2020), have emerged, which attempted to comprehend the interrelationships of travel information with destination image and spatial behavior; however, from a general perspective. Thus, it might be crucial to understand the paramountcy of information collection during the destination selection time and the considerations that influence travel information collection in travelers' final destination selection process (Dellaert et al., 2014). Arguably, the travelers' information-gathering process comes prior to alternative decisions (Dellaert et al., 2014). However, it is believed that the tourist travel decision-making process might not have the same patterns as many factors that affect their decision processes (Mansfeld, 1992). At first, individuals collect sufficient information to support their allocated time, enjoyment types, and money. Secondly, the alternative options that have been cognitively set come into the plan by reviewing any differences and similarities with the first selected destination (Mansfeld, 1992). Two distinct choices are set that tourists can take during the decision-making process, i.e., the route depending on the individual level and the nature of motivation that was formed in an individual when the decision-making processes commenced (Mansfeld, 1992). Meanwhile, the stimulus factor can motivate a tourist to explore such a destination as an unknown place or a particular place with some preferences and familiarities (Mansfeld, 1992).

Figure 3: Tourists' travel decision planning processes.
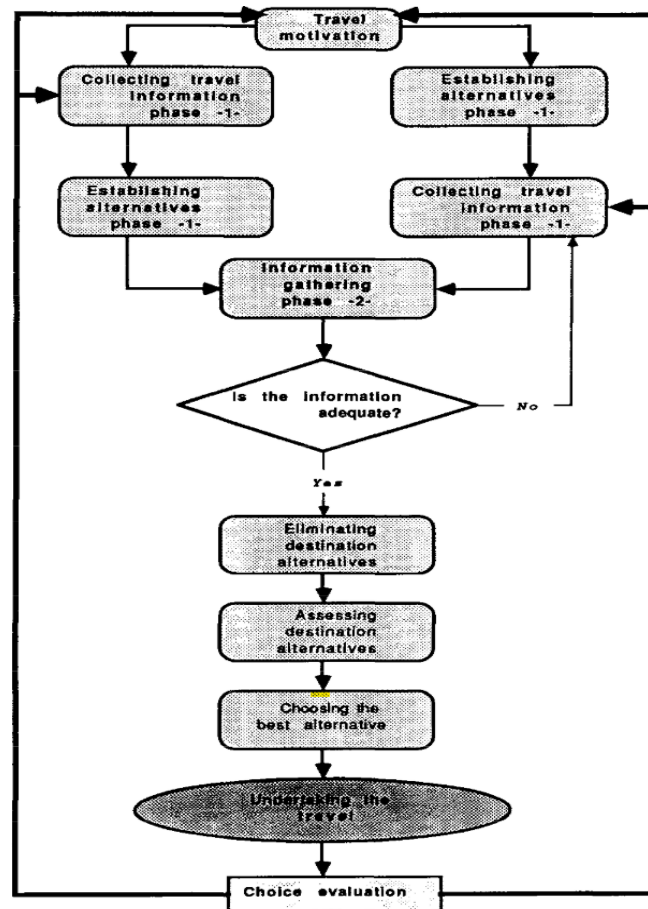
Source: (Mansfeld, 1992)

2.4.2 Selection of the alternative destination

After the travel information collection stage, tourists usually seek alternatives as individuals feel a greater sense of confidence and reasoning to develop several alternatives (Mansfeld, 1992). The level of confidence in selecting alternatives usually emerges after the two-stage information collection course, and the individual, via their collected information, starts to discard alternatives that do not correspond with their travel expectations, financial situations, and other motives (Mansfeld, 1992).

The root cause of destination selection, according to Claxton (1989), links to the perceived utility values provided by the alternative destination, which are also sometimes referred to as the attribution of travel destination. The attributions are articulated in travelers' cognition by matching their travel expectations and needs, restraints to be confronted, and the quality of information gathered during the destination selection process. Thus, each attribution will be assigned as either a favorable or unfavorable utility value (Claxton, 1989). According to Claxton (1989), when the potential tourists set the attributions and utility values, a measurement scale starts to appear in their minds regarding the weight of each attribution utility value. Individuals' preference scale, with their decision criteria, starts to formulate their selection of alternatives (Claxton, 1989). When higher attributes come with greater utility values within a particular alternative, the likelihood of selecting that alternative destination as a preferred destination is high (Claxton, 1989). Meanwhile, Timmermans (1984) has found contradicted assumptions that individuals' probability of choosing their alternative destinations depends on the placement of the choice alternatives but in a subjective way using their subjective-likelihood scale.

2.4.3 Final selection decision

Individuals selecting a final destination usually come through two stages. At first, those chosen destinations that are wholly unfeasible or undesirable are discarded (Bettman, 1979). Secondly, the alternative subsets are further evaluated and analyzed to come to a final choice (Bettmann, 1979). However, to make a final decision, the tourists must form specific decision rules that correspond to their anticipated satisfaction threshold (Mansfeld, 1992). This anticipated threshold helps determine whether to accept or reject the alternative options; for instance, if the individuals' anticipated satisfaction threshold is surpassed, the destinations will be selected otherwise, rejected (Mansfeld, 1992). Claxton (1989) views most decisions regarding the final selection of destination come through a compensatory, "i.e., trade-off" basis. However, the trade-off basis could differ from one person to another as different individuals might have different levels of desires, knowledge, needs, family and financial constraints, and expectations (Claxton, 1989). Also, in the context of individuals' spatial selection, their norms and value systems also play a secondary role in the social reference cluster (Claxton, 1989). Pearce (1982) has found that the factors that attract tourists from similar norms and

social backgrounds to the same sorts of destination selection are influenced mainly by the destinations' social image corresponding with tourists' social norms and cultural backgrounds.

The necessity of exploring the tourist destination selection process has become an essential field of research as it is found to directly correspond to the tourist's demand and their travel motivation (Mansfeld, 1992). As travel growth is increasing, the struggle of destination management organizations, the tourism industry, and other associated sectors to attract more travelers needs more extensive and robust studies (Mansfeld, 1992). More importantly, travelers have become more experienced, and their expectations have intensified, so their attitudes and behavioral aspects toward particular destinations' visit intention are more required, which helps to bring more customized tourism services for better tourism experiences (Mansfeld, 1992).

2.5 The theory of planned behavior

Ajzen (1991) developed the theory of planned behavior, which views individuals' social behaviors as influenced by their intentions and perceived control ability. Intentions towards something are viewed as motivating factors determining a person's willingness and action to accomplish certain behaviors. Ajzen (1991) asserts that individual intentions to do something are dependent on their personal attitudinal factors (positive or negative sentiment towards any objects, experiences, actions, etc.), subjective norms (social appreciation or pressure to do something or refuse it), and perceived behavioral control (how easily or difficult does individual feels to complete a certain behavior). This dissertation thus implied a conceptual framework to reveal how tourists' attitudes and behavioral factors impact their travel intention towards the Kathmandu region.

However, before the theory of planned behavior, theory of reasoned action (TRA) was developed using two factors, "attitude and subjective norms," towards accomplishing certain behaviors. Nevertheless, TRA completely lacks individual volitional factors, which means that a person can better control certain behaviors. Several factors, such as individuals' skills, knowledge, and experience, might influence an individual's controlling abilities in performing a certain behavior. From that perspective, TPB factors are viewed as:

- Attitude: Refers to persons' favorable or unfavorable assessment of certain objects, experiences, or actions while performing a certain behavior. In this case, attitude will be viewed as tourists' sentiment towards Kathmandu as a travel destination. Tourists' attitudes

"positive or negative," towards Kathmandu will be assessed based on their intention to travel to this place.

- Subjective norms: Refers to how a person retaliates towards certain social pressures to act or not to act while performing a certain behavior. In this case, how tourists' friends, families, colleagues, and other social actors recommend or pressurize travel intention towards Kathmandu region.

- Perceived behavior control: This refers to a person's sense of self-controlling activities, or "self-efficacy," that matters when performing certain behaviors. In this case, tourists' self-controlling abilities towards certain travel-related decision-making processes will be assessed in relation to their travel intention to the Kathmandu region.

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) depicts how individuals' behavior towards certain actions and experiences pertains to their intention (Pahrudin et al., 2021). TPB is widely implied in a variety of industrial sectors, including healthcare, marketing and promotion, traveling, and tourism, and it predicts human behavior (Pahrudin et al., 2021). TPB is frequently adopted in sociopsychology to anticipate individuals' intentions and behavior against certain actions (Pahrudin et al., 2021), which was later formulated from the theory of reasoned action (TRA) by Azjen and Fishbein (1977). Since TRA holds only two predicting factors, "attitude" and "subjective norms," to influence certain interventions and later forms of actual behavior. Meanwhile, TPB was later constructed by adding perceived behavioral control, which is considered an external constraint that reflects how individuals perceive ease or strain while behaving in a certain behavior (Ajzen, 2020). While individuals' attitudes are viewed as individuals' "accessible" behavioral beliefs and subjective norms rely on "normative" beliefs, PBC is based on individuals' "accessible control" ability or beliefs where conditions such as level of skills, competence, time, amount, and other resources are taken in consideration (Ajzen, 2020). According to Gurin and Toland (2020), behavioral intention is a primary proximal factor for actual behavior derived from attitude, subjective norms, and PBC. Han and Hyun (2017) found that tourist willingness to visit a destination is affected by their level of attitude and behavior. The concept of attitude comprises an individual assessment of their behavior, which could be favorable or unfavorable against certain actions (Pahrudin et al., 2021). For instance, if a tourist's individual assessment of a certain destination has a positive attitude, then the chances of visiting such

a destination are higher. Similarly, subjective norms pertain to visitors' willingness to do certain actions which inclines them to perform in a certain way that is based on certain social pressures (Pahrudin et al., 2021). It suggests that subjective norms are an individual concept that determines whether or not to behave that are within the social context of behavior (Guerin & Toland, 2020). Lastly, the PBC factor is also referred to as a non-volitional component that impacts individual assessment of their ability to perform certain behavioral tasks (Pahrudin et al., 2021). Since the TPB model is widely adopted by several researchers, as presented in Table 2, it has been adopted to predict tourist destination selection, which also convinced us to adopt this model as our theoretical framework for this dissertation.

Table 2. Prior researchers' findings on destination selection using the TPB model

Scholar	Study	Theory and method	Findings
(Samiei & Reza Jalilvand, 2012)	The impact of -WoM on tourism destination choice	TPB Quantitative Iran	Subjective norms significantly and positively impact travel destination selection compared to attitude and PBC. Additionally, trip quality positively impacts WoM.
(Yuzhanin & Fisher, 2016)	The efficacy of the TPB for predicting travel destination selection	TPB Qualitative (review)	The adequacy of TPB in anticipating travelers' destination choices is debatable.
(Soliman, 2021)	Extending TPB to anticipate destination revisit intention	TPB Quantitative Egypt	e-WoM was found to negatively and significantly impact tourist attitude and

			willingness to revisit the destination, but subjective and PBC were positively and significantly influenced.
(Al Ziadat, 2015)	Using TPB in Jordania tourism	TPB Quantitative Jordan	Attitude and Sub. Norms are found to be positive and significant in tourists' intention to revisit. But PBC impacts insignificantly.
(Özel & Çoban, 2022)	Intention to visit tourist destinations where child rights are exploited	TPB Quantitative Turkey	All three factors are positively impact on tourists' intention to visit the destination
(Juschten et al., 2019)	Assessing metropolitan travelers to visit the proximal alpine area	TPB Quantitative Austria	Subjective norms are strong predictors of travel intention to alpine destinations. Attitude and PBC were found to be weakly impacted
(Pahrudin et al., 2021)	Tourist intention to visit tourist destination "post-Covid-19"	TPB Quantitative Indonesia	Subjective norms were negatively and insignificantly related.

(Siddiqui et al., 2023)	Behavioral intention to travel to Nizamuddin destination "in relation to transformational tourism"	TPB Quantitative India	All three factors with additional "travel motivation" were found to be positively impacted.
(Lam & Hsu, 2006)	Visitors' behavioral intention to select a destination	TPB Quantitative Hong Kong	Attitude, PBC, and prior experience of travel were found to be positively related.
(Nowacki et al., 2021)	Environmentally friendly tourist intention on destination selection	TPB Quantitative India	Attitude, sub. Norms and PBC towards the eco-friendly destination are positive and significant

Source: Self-created

2.5.1 Attitude

According to the TPB model, individual behavioral intention explicates their willingness to perform a certain behavior (Soliman, 2021). Prior researchers within the field of tourism researcher, such as (Bianchi et al., 2017; Nowacki et al., 2021) have found attitude as a prime factor that predicts and significantly and positively impacts tourists' intention towards visiting certain destinations. Attitude is favoritism, which is formed by indulging in various forms of information and experiences towards certain actions, which might be positive or negative. Bresciani et al. (2015) found that tourists' attitudes towards the destination and its attribution are determined by their level of perception. The theory of planned behavior (TPB) initiated by Ajzen (1991) is widely implied to predict tourists' attitudes and psychological inclinations towards tourist destinations, products, and other attributions. Since TPB deals with individual behavior-specific aspects that are premeditated to predict human

attitude and behavior in certain settings (Ajzen, 1991), perceived behavioral control (PBC) and intention are viewed as directly related to certain behavioral accomplishments. Additionally, tourists' attitudes toward a destination hinge on the hurdles and advantages they experience while visiting that destination (Reza Jalilvand et al., 2012). Vincent and Thompson (2002) posit three factors: cognitive, affective, and behavioral components to evaluate how tourists analyse destinations. The cognitive factor in the evaluation of tourist destinations is based on the level of information and familiarity (Pereira et al., 2022). Similarly, the affective factor in the evaluation of a tourist destination depends on how tourists feel and emotionally perceive it (Pereira et al., 2022). Lastly, a behavioral component in evaluating tourist destinations depends on visual indications regarding their intention to visit the destination (Pereira et al., 2022). Attitude inclines individuals to act in a particular style or manner (Pereira et al., 2022), and in the context of destination choice, will be evaluated based on how they perceive while visiting tourist destinations based on "favorable or unfavorable", "good or bad", "fun or monotonous", "positive or negative" (Lam & Hsu, 2006).

2.5.2 Subjective norms

Subjective norms, with the theory of planned behavior, explain subjective norms as societal pressures (friends, family, colleagues, and other social member) to behave or not to behave in certain behaviors (Ajzen, 1991). According to Samiei & Reza Jalilvand (2012), subjective norms are normative beliefs or perceptions of their significant referent's views and suggestions about the certain performance of a behavior. Linking the intention to visit a travel destination, subjective norms were found to positively influence tourists' actual traveling behavior and revisit intention (M.-F. Chen & Tung, 2014; Hsu & Huang, 2012; Juschten et al., 2019). Meanwhile, Pahrudin et al. (2021) have found some behavioral changes in tourist's way of selecting their travel destination as the global COVID-19 pandemic might be the moderating reason. Pahrudin et al. (2021) found a relationship between subjective norms and health consciousness negatively associated with their intention to visit a destination. Meanwhile, Han and Kim (2010) have found that all three factors of TPB, including subjective norms, are positively and significantly related to travelers' intention to visit tourist destinations. A study by Soliman (2021) using structural equation modeling has found that subjective norms are strongly and positively correlated with PBC, travel motivation, destination familiarity, and revisit intention. Similarly, Samiei & Reza Jalilvand (2012) found that subjective norms substantially positively impact selecting travel destinations via electronic Word of Mouth.

2.5.3 PBC

PBC refers to "perceived ease or hard-to-perform certain behavior" (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). Furthermore, PBC is presumed to imitate prior experience and present level anticipation based on individual level of control ability by using their skills, experience, and knowledge (Samiei & Reza Jalilvand, 2012). According to Ajzen (1991), PBC is the perception of individual behavior controllability compared to their actual behavior control. The perceived behavioral control within TPB is comparable to Self-efficacy initiated by Bandura (1982). Bandura (1982) found that individual's behavior is shaped by their level of self-assurance in their ability to act on certain behavior and this self-assurance is subjective and differs based on individuals' skills, knowledge, and prior experiences. PBC is embraced with two aspects (Samiei & Reza Jalilvand, 2012). Firstly, individuals' "control beliefs" to self-readiness of skills, knowledge, and opportunities, and secondly, perceived enablement in assessing the significance of such skills, knowledge, and opportunities for the accomplishment of anticipated consequences (Samiei & Reza Jalilvand, 2012). In the context of tourist intention to visit a travel destination, PBC implies visitors' perception of the destination's fulfillment level and prospects and the tourist's control ability to visit a travel destination (Samiei & Reza Jalilvand, 2012). For instance, Soliman (2021) has found that PBC strongly and positively impacts travelers' intentions to visit their selected destination. Pahrudin et al. (2021) have found PBC positive and significantly impacts travelers' intention to visit a destination. Meanwhile, Juschten et al. (2019) PBC is the least predicting factor in tourists' intention to visit a destination. Soliman (2021) found that the relationship between PBC and e-WoM and the intention to visit a destination were both significant and positively related.

2.5.4 Travel intention

According to Mowen (1997), behavioral intention implies a person's anticipated conduct toward certain actions. Travel intention implies tourists' desire to travel to a certain destination. However, numerous factors might influence tourists' intention to visit certain destinations. This dissertation will analyze six factors- attitudes, subjective norms, PBC, travel motivation, destination image, and familiarity- to find tourists' travel intention in visiting the Kathmandu region. According to Bai et al. (2009), travel intention stems from a cognitive process that drives visitors to visit a travel destination.

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Furthermore, positive travel intention has a significant linkage to travel motivation and future visit intention (Bai et al., 2009). According to Makhdoomi and Baba (2019), there has been a very limited study on the impact of tourists' attitudinal and motivational factors on travel intention, particularly research focusing on specializing in certain travel destinations, which is highly limited. Mountinho (1987) states that behavioral intention is a direct influence that causes certain behaviors, which depend on individuals' i) evaluation beliefs, ii) societal factors that enable normative beliefs, and iii) situational circumstances. Mountinho (1987) explained these aforesaid factors based on a theory of reasoned action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), which acknowledges that individuals' behavioral beliefs are the fundamental influencers on personal attitudes towards imitating certain behaviors; meanwhile, normative beliefs affect an individual's subjective norms while performing certain behaviors. Similarly, tourists' travel intention is also behavioral, which can be adopted within the same conceptual framework (Bai et al., 2009). According to Jiang et al. (2022), under normal conditions, individual travel intention toward a certain destination is a summation of visitors' own preferences, anticipations, motivations, and destination marketing and promotions. However, prior researchers frequently overlook some factors, such as "subjective-objective contextual factors." Jiang et al. (2022) found that prior literature approached travel intention by employing singular forms of theory that lack different factors that might impact tourists' travel intention. For instance, Lee and Jan (2018) studied using an integrated framework, using TPB with other theories such as social identity theory, value-belief-norm theory, and technology acceptance model. In a similar fashion, this dissertation will adopt the theory of planned behavior's three factors along with three external factors: travel motivation, destination image, and destination familiarity to evaluate tourist travel intention to visit the Kathmandu region.

2.5.5 Tourists' behaviour

Tourists are inclined by a multitude of aspects that drive their motivation to visit and select their destination, according to Teo et al. (2014, p. 3). Destination image and other associated factors such as travel quality, perceived expectation, real encounter, and destination familiarity directly affect tourists' behaviors. Tourists' behaviors are characterized into typologies as per their travel motivation and level of experiences for vacationing, such as "bubble travelers," "idealistic travelers," "broad-minded travelers," fully engaged travelers or immerses." (Teo et al., 2014). Similarly, McKercher

(2002) She categorized cultural tourists into five types: "fortuitous," "purposeful," "unintentional," "sightseeing," and "causal travelers." As an instantaneous factor of tourists' actual behavior, behavioral intention is viewed as a complex research topic within tourism. Cai et al. (2016, p. 183) asserts that tourists' behavior is a significant predictor of future travel intentions to a certain travel destination. This behavior signifies tourists' anticipation and tendencies toward a specific action in a particular situation; this notion can be executed as the possibility of action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). The two distinct topics within traveler behaviors studies are tourists' destination selection intention (Bai et al., 2009; Bianchi et al., 2017; Samiei & Reza Jalilvand, 2012; Yuzhanin & Fisher, 2016) and after-purchase intention (Hsu & Huang, 2012; Jiang et al., 2022; Kanwel et al., 2019). Several studies on tourists' behavioral intentions have been conducted; however, the majority are linked to destination selection (Bianchi et al., 2017; Samiei & Reza Jalilvand, 2012). These studies are stimulated by the theory of planned behavior, which asserts that behavioral intention is the outcome of individuals' attitudes towards particular objects, products, or experiences but is also controlled by subjective norms and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). However, the role of individual value also comes into perspective towards the formation of behavioral intention toward specific action, but only a few research has been conducted on this standpoint (Liu & McClure, 2001; Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). By implementing Roakeach's value parameter and list of values (LOV), various tourism research has found that individual values have a noticeable association with recreational travel styles (M. Li & Cai, 2012), travel motivation (Lengler & Kim, 2019), and touristic activity predilections (Dabphet, 2022; Teng et al., 2023).

Figure 4. Theory of planned behavior
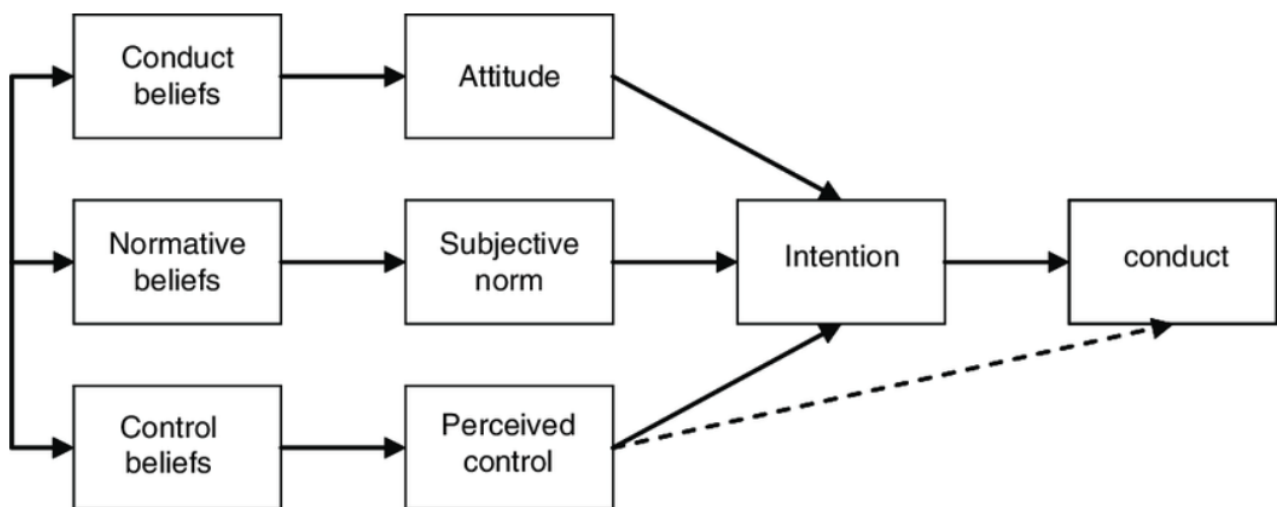
Based on the prior research on TPB constructs linked with tourists' intention to visit a destination, three factors: attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavior have been found crucial to predict. Therefore, based on the previous studies as presented in this dissertation, we have postulated the following hypothesis:

Ha4: Tourist attitude positively and significantly impacts tourists' intention to visit the destination.

Ha5: Subjective norms positively and significantly impact tourists' intention to visit a destination.

Ha6: PBC positively and significantly impacts tourists' intention to visit a destination.

2.6 Conceptual framework

Based on the theoretical context and hypothesis development, this dissertation proposes the following research model for empirical workouts.

Figure 5: Conceptual framework
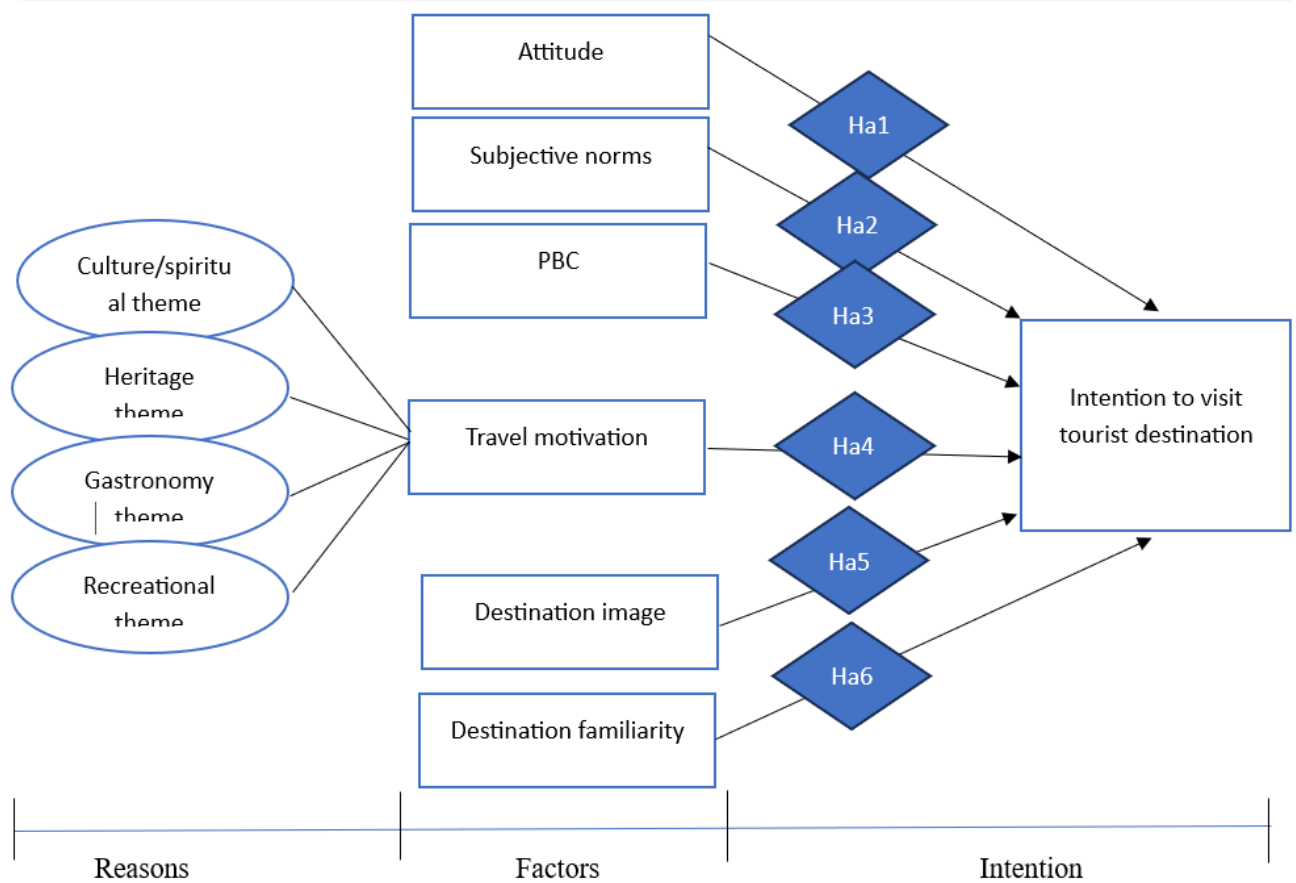
Source: self-made

Chapter 3: Methodology

In this chapter, the researcher will highlight the research philosophy and approach, research design, and sampling techniques adopted in this dissertation. The chapter will supply the necessary justification for selecting each method and explain how it helps produce meaningful outcomes. In addition, this chapter will also discuss the steps taken to produce more reliable and bias-free research findings.

3.1 Introduction

The methodology section of this master dissertation highlights a detailed explanation of the research design along with the research philosophy and approach. This section offers a roadmap for how the researchers will conduct their empirical activities by outlining the process undertaken to collect and analyse data and eventually extract meaningful findings that best suit the research questions and the research nature. By offering a smooth methodological framework, the potential readers might gain valuable insights and maintain the high validity of the research findings by ensuring their credibility and reliability. Therefore, to formulate an effective method and approach, it is imperative to understand the different qualities of different methods and their criteria for selecting the research paper. From that perspective, this dissertation will adopt "Research Onion" presented by Saunders et al. (2019), we will use this to select research methods and approaches in this section. However, we will also imply other researchers' claims and insights as a reference to produce a justifiable selection of each method out of different possible alternatives.

Figure 6. Research Onion
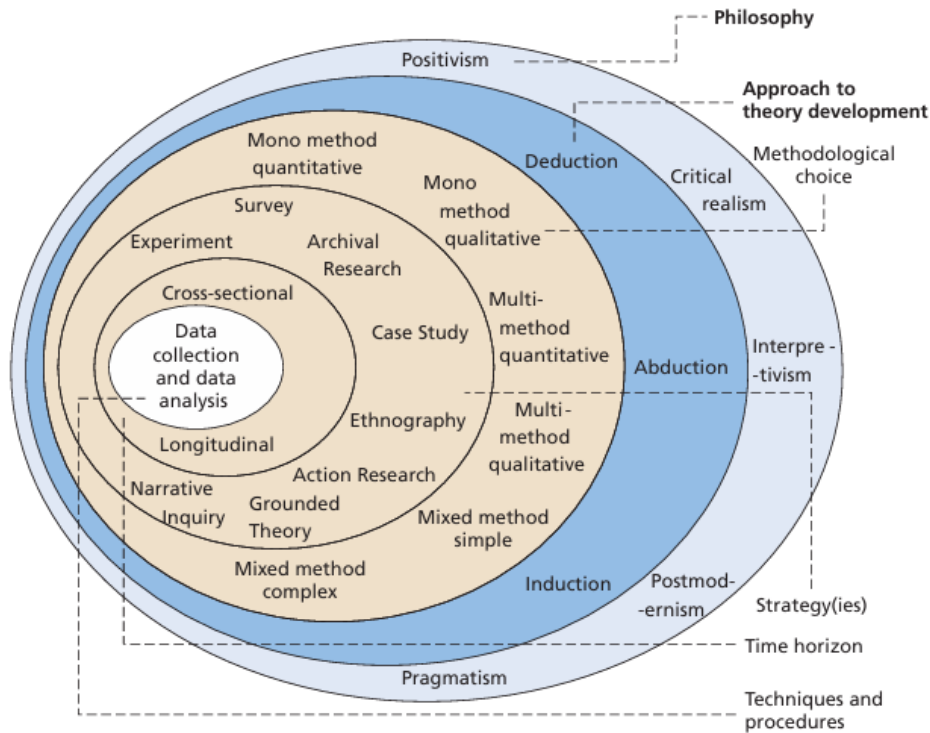
Source: (Saunders et al., 2019)

3.2 Research philosophy and approach

Research philosophy is a belief and assumption that drives researchers to approach their inquiries (Saunders et al., 2019). It provides a structure for understanding the nature of the knowledge, researchers' standpoints, and methodologies adopted to collect and decipher the data (Rashid, 2023). The nature of the research questions' answers comes more effectively via using the objective nature of realities. For instance, "What are the primary motivating reasons that attract travelers to visit

Kathmandu Valley? "What is the influence of tourists' attitudes and behavioural attributes on their intention to visit Kathmandu Valley?"; "How do tourists perceive the image of their destination, impacting their travel intention to visit Kathmandu Valley?" Quantitative data, particularly statistical analysis, provides valuable insights into the relationship and magnitude of these covariates, making it more feasible to get answers to these questions. To produce meaningful answers to these research questions, empirical observation via objective measurement produces a singular reality that occurs independently of human perceptions and beliefs.

According to Saunders et al. (2019, p. 145), the nature of the positivist philosophy enables the development of realities of "research answers" in this perspective:

Objective reality and empirical evidence: Positivist-driven research relies on external, in which quantified-based "objective reality" can be explored by focusing on empirical observation and dimensions to support the existing theories.

Scientific approach: Positivist-driven research stresses a systematic, structured approach and focuses on developing a cause-effect relationship between covariates.

Quantified data: The positivist philosophy strives for quantitative data, which confides in statistical analysis that helps to produce a relationship and magnitude between causes and effects.

Research philosophy frameworks the assumptions and values guiding the research designs, data gathering processes, and interpretation of research findings (Saunders et al., 2019). Philosophy is what the investigator observes as the reality and knowledge formulation; however, the research design regarding the appropriate method of inquiry, data collection processes, and analysis must be accompanied by philosophical assumptions (Saunders et al., 2019). In another way, producing a reality or truth is impossible if the philosophical assumptions and research designs are incompatible. At the same time, the understanding of epistemology and ontology is crucial. In the context of positivism philosophy, objectivism takes the standpoint that society is viewed as concrete with a singular reality, which does not change depending on social perspective or researchers' views (Saunders et al., 2019). Meanwhile, subjectivism within interpretivism philosophy considers a multitude of aspects on which realities depend (Saunders et al., 2019). The dilemma is, "Is reality what individuals or society perceive and sense, or can reality be measurable? Interpretivism philosophers take into consideration that reality lies in individuals' perceptions, observations, senses, and feelings (Bryman, 2016). However, the role of theory, model, or frameworks might have less meaning in interpretivist philosophy as it is more related to how researchers produce theories based on the discovered patterns and themes, also referred to as grounded theory. Meanwhile, in the positivist philosophy, usually, theories or concepts are mostly derived based on the existing ones, and the researchers mostly engaged in whether the adopted theories or concepts fit within the research or not (Bryman, 2016). Positivism philosophy believes that reality is in the form of an objective perspective and free from any forms of bias, especially if it is free from researchers; values and beliefs (Saunders et al., 2019). From an ontological perspective, the positivist school of thoughts that social reality rely on facts or evidence that can be either confirmed or refuted; however, the reality is not

related to individuals' personal experiences or justification (Bryman, 2016). For instance, Bryman (2016) found four distinct features of positivism research philosophy.

Phenomenism – where the formation of knowledge is established using the scientific method.

Reasoning – The goal is to postulate a hypothesis based on an existing one that will be tested according to the set premises.

Objectivity – reality is singular, and a scientific method needs to be conducted that is free from bias and personal values.

Empirical approach – assumptions and knowledge formation are developed via a collection of proofs or evidence.

The adopted theory, "theory of planned behavior," in this dissertation and the postulation of the hypothesis based on this theory drive us to select the deductive approach. According to Saunders et al. (2019, p.152), the degree to which the research is aligned with the existing theory and the researcher postulates a hypothesis based on that existing theory, then the deductive approach is appropriate. In simple terms, the deductive approach is appropriate in such conditions when the conclusion is extracted logically using existing theory-derived grounds, in which the conclusion is accepted when the premises are found true. Since this dissertation has adopted the "TPB model" through which the hypothesis has been postulated, it is imperative to test this hypothesis, which is only possible via a deductive research approach. The adoption of a deductive approach enables a generalisability advantage as the findings can be implied as a reference to similar sorts of research fields and geography (Saunders et al., 2019). The deductive approach enables the collection of data to support the evaluation of the hypothesis produced from existing theory, which helps to detect whether the theory is falsified or verified (Saunders et al., 2019). Additionally, the deductive approach allows us to explicate causal relationships between the concepts and covariates. For instance, "tourists' attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control on their intention to travel Kathmandu". It also enables the researcher to find the strengths of implied concepts and covariates (Saunders et al., 2019). In addition, the deductive approach ought to be operationalized to drive facts or evidence to be measured, often quantitatively (Saunders et al., 2019).

In the perspective of inductive-based reasoning, it starts with observations, experiences, and experimentation where patterns or themes are discovered, and then certain theories will be developed to explain the research interpretation or situation (Bryman, 2016). These phenomena might hold a making recurring observations and actions until the investigator feels self-confident that the research

outcomes define the wider circumstances (Bryman, 2016). On the other hand, deductive reasoning assumes making predictions, particularly via hypothesis testing based on the existing theory, where certain premises are met, then the adopted hypothesis will be accepted, otherwise rejected (Bryman, 2016). Deductive-based reasoning research is inclined towards a scientific approach, which is adopted to test the validity of the hypothesis via certain forms of empirical indications and explanations (Saunders et al., 2019). Therefore, the deductive approach commences with a theory or model through which the hypothesis is postulated and later used for validation of that theory (Saunders et al., 2019). This assumption is called a hypothesis, and researchers focus on either accepting or rejecting the theory with scientific-based evidence via certain forms of experimentation (Saunders et al., 2019). During the theory development phase, researchers aim to formulate a theory that supports certain assumptions based on cause-and-effect relationships. In order to validate the postulated hypothesis in a deductive-based approach, it is crucial to collect numerical data, especially via surveys and experimentation. Deductive-based reasoning implies the scientific method to govern whether the collected data supports the postulated hypothesis, if the collected data supports the postulated hypothesis, then the theory will be validated for the research, otherwise, the theory might go for revision (Saunders et al., 2019).

3.3 Research method

Distinguishing between numerical and non-numerical data is a way to differentiate between the methods of qualitative and quantitative research. The systematic gathering and analysis of numerical data, such as statics, graphs, and surveys are the key component of quantitative research. Qualitative research, in contrast, depends on non-numerical data obtained through methods such as interviews and ethnography. This explains to researchers the important data gathering forms required for generating significant outcomes. Since the researcher has adopted a positivist philosophy and deductive approach, the quantitative method of data collection is more appropriate, according to Saunders et al. (2019, p. 176). A quantitative research method aims to discover the association between predictor variables and respondent variables in a certain sample or population.

In this case, the predictor variables "attitudes, subjective norms, PBC, travel motivation, destination image, and familiarity" are aimed at finding the relationship with the intention to visit proximate tourism. Since the quantitative research method encompasses statistics logic and holds an objective stance, it is imperative in this paper to find whether the postulated hypothesis within the

abovementioned variables aligns with the theory or not. In the quantitative method, data are frequently collected using structured instruments rendered to a larger size of the population, which helps to gather standardized forms of data. The findings of the quantitative research method enable us to generalize their findings to similar cases.

Generally, quantitative research methods are referred to gathering and evaluating data that is structured and epitomized in numerical order. Thus, one of the crucial objectives of adopting quantitative data is to develop accurate and consistent designs that enable statistical executions (Saunders et al., 2019). Since quantitative methods of research are more stressed on such data that can be measured to know the relationship between cause and effect, it is very efficacious at responding to "what," "how much," and "how" of specific situations or relationships (Saunders et al., 2019). According to Goertzen (2017), the benefits of adopting a quantitative research method are that outcomes can be used to generalize to similar conditions, responses can be collected with large and standardized data where findings are illustrative of the given population, helps to find the relationship between causes and effects, and standardized technique enables the research to be simulated depending on time frame. However, the quantitative research method also comes with drawbacks as it fails to provide evidence or indication for why samples think, perceive, or experience certain things in a particular manner; some population groups, especially marginalized groups, may be too tough to penetrate, and the quantitative method could sometimes consume more time and demand data collection that takes lengthy time period – especially during the study of longitudinal based study (Goertzen, 2017). Adopting the quantitative research method enables us to find the association between causes and effects – commonly called the relationship between independent and dependent variables (Swanson, 2005). A dependent variable is commonly understood as the study objects or the outcomes of the studied process. Meanwhile, the independent variables are those that affect the dependent variables (Swanson, 2005). In this dissertation, the dependent variables will be the intention to visit the Kathmandu region, and the dependent variables will be the tourists' attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, travel motivation, destination image, and destination familiarity.

3.4 Research Strategy

According to Saunders et al. (2019, p. 178) survey research strategy frequently aligns with quantitative research. In the quantitative method, the survey is normally conducted by rendering a set of questionnaires with a set of given options, which are generally arranged in a structured scale

(Saunders et al., 2019). Bhattacharjee (2019) is more applicable to research that involves individuals as a part of the analysis as it enables researchers to use a desired tool for measuring individual preferences, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours. In addition, a survey strategy is more appropriate for remotely gathering data about such a population, which is too bulky to inspect (Bhattacherjee, 2019) Therefore, the survey strategy best suits this dissertation as it completely fits with the quantitative method of data collection and can be performed remotely as the physical connection between the researcher and the targeted population is overly distant. As a distribution method, social media will be utilized to distribute an online survey questionnaire utilized in this research study.

Survey research strategy is referred to as the gathering of information from a large pool of population "referred to as sample" via their responses to the given questionnaires (Ponto, 2015). According to Saunders et al. (2019), survey research usually supports quantitative-based research, especially when it involves the adoption of closed questionnaires. Survey types of research encompass a large pool of population, the primary goal of which is to explain the features of a large sample of participants and especially to find participants' attitudes, perceptions, and opinions towards certain causes and effects (Ponto, 2015). In recent times, survey-based research has been widely adopted as a rigorous tactic, in which scientific-based methods are implied during the sample representation, distribution of surveys to the participants, and, more importantly, how to avoid and target the true population group for the research (Ponto, 2015).

3.5 Questionnaire construction

This dissertation is going to utilize use of closed-ended survey questionnaires, which consist of a preset of questions or statements aimed to standardize participant responses. Aligning questions into a composite scale that allows statistical analysis to be performed is essential to producing a standardized form of responses (Saunders et al., 2019). More importantly, the questionnaire design needs to be articulated so that it is easy for readers to comprehend and encourages them to participate in the survey project. In that case, a Likert Scale technique will be used to produce participants in a scaling "ordinal" order. As stated by Bischoff (2022). The Likert Scale is a method of assessing

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participants' attitudes, opinions, and behaviours by assigning ratings. It is frequently employed to understand attitudes or feelings about specific items, markets, or brands. This survey project will utilize a 5-point Likert scale, which is commonly used, easy to understand, and usually fits with mobile and other digital screens (Louangrath, 2018). Therefore, the options will be constructed in this way: (strongly agree -5), (agree -4), (neither agree nor disagree -3, disagree – 2), and (strongly disagree – 1). The survey questionnaire will be constructed in two parts: first, participants' census information such as their ages, gender, and educational qualifications will be asked, and second, questions related to participant attitudes and behavioural factors, including their perceived destination image, travel motivations, and destination familiarity will be asked. Eight questionnaires will be provided to extract participants' demographic profiles, and twenty-eight questionnaires will be provided to understand tourists' opinions and perceptions towards different factors "such as attitudes, subjective norms, PBC, travel motivation, destination image, and familiarity" impacting on travel intention to visit Kathmandu region.

. In the first section of the survey questionnaires, demographic information will be provided, which will provide the information about the participants' demographic profile will be attained. In the section, participants' opinions and perceptions towards attitudes and subjective norms, "also referred to as social pressures or appreciation," perceived behavioural control in connecting to participants' intention to visit Kathmandu as a travel destination will be attained. The questionnaires related to these factors have been derived through the theory of planned behaviour. Along with that, three factors have been added to the survey's core questionnaires: travel motivation, destination image, and destination familiarity. The aforementioned six variables, "attitude, subjective norms, perceived behaviour control, travel motivation, destination image, and destination familiarity," are adopted as independent variables. Travelers' intention to visit Kathmandu as a travel destination will be implied as the dependent variable.

3.6 Sampling technique

A survey strategy is usually associated with probabilistic-based sampling methods such as stratified and clustered sampling (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 297). However, this dissertation has adopted snowball sampling, or "non-probabilistic sampling," mainly due to two factors. Firstly, the physical distance between researchers and the targeted population makes it difficult to assess the characteristics of the population, and secondly, the actual population size is difficult to comprehend.

Within snowball sampling, participants are recruited based on recommendations from fellow participants. The conception of snowball sampling begins with a small fraction of participants, which are typically called seeds, and later piles up with more responses due to chain-referral systems, which are referred to by other participants (Naderifar et al., 2017). However, one needs to be cautious as it might give less freedom to control the distribution of survey forms to participants and might have some selection bias (Saunders et al., 2019). To minimize the possible occurrence of selection bias due to snowball sampling, we will adopt the exponential discriminative method. According to Berg (2014), to minimize potential selection bias, respondents are encouraged to recognize several possible participants who fall within certain criteria using the exponential discriminative method of snowball sampling. In this case, referring to those possible participants who have travelled to Kathmandu or have decent travel experience will help to minimize the possibility of selection bias to some extent.

3.7 Kathmandu as a tourist destination – case study

Since the Nepalese government started to lure tourists to visit its country in the middle of the 20th century, its capital region "Kathmandu" has become a hub for international tourism trade, mass tourism, and especially mountain climbing (Bates & Mio, 2015). Nepal holds eight out of the 14th eight-thousand-meter Himalayas, which, in a way, has become Nepal's competitive advantage for earning foreign currency and establishing a global reputation (Bates & Mio, 2015). In recent times, Kathmandu enjoyed worldwide consumer modernity because of its tourism attraction (Bates & Mio, 2015). However, the socio-political conditions still favor a few Nepalese who indulge in such a modern circle. In the context of transnational circulation of tourist products and services, the Kathmandu region is the most unique region functioning as a mediator in the worldwide consumer contemporaneity in Nepal (Bates & Mio, 2015). Many tourists, including domestic and international tourists, visit the Kathmandu region to witness its rich culture, scenic beauties, trekking, business trips, "Bleisure," and tourism-related trade and conferences (Bates & Mio, 2015; Pokharel, 2022a). When tracing back to the 1960s, over sixty percent of Nepal's global tourists were solely from the United States of America (Bates & Mio, 2015). The perceived destination image of Kathmandu Valley, as per Iyer (2010), was beyond Paradise, offering a hippie environment for international tourists, especially Westerners. As per Leichty (2005), the cornerstone for the "Hippie-era"- also referred to as the counter-culture moment –was the year 1973, when the US started linking foreign

donations to the "drug inhibition" campaign and when King "Mahendra" change the rule by making Cannabis consumption as unlawful, which halted the "Hippie-Era". Travelers from Asian countries, such as Japan, started to explore Kathmandu in the 1980s, which was the time when the Nepalese government started making tourism an economic vehicle to uplift the sluggish Nepalese economy and make itself as a pioneer tourist destination in the world (Bates & Mio, 2015). Nevertheless, the democratization of the Nepal regime changed the political framework- the tourist volume escalated, and the Nepalese tourism industry flourished (Bates & Mio, 2015). However, due to low infrastructure and geographical complexities, the far-side region was still out of the radar for tourists to explore (Bates & Mio, 2015). The year 1988 was designed as a visit year to attract more international tourists - "Visit Nepal – Year 1988", where billboards and radio were the primary channels for promotion and marketing (Bates & Mio, 2015). The marketing slogan of "Atitidevo Bhava," meaning "guests are considered as god," was acknowledged positively by international tourists, which, in the same way, built a positive destination image for Kathmandu (Bates & Mio, 2015). The concept of "Atitidevo Bhava" also referred to as "Customer is always right" has a deep meaning in reading customer behaviour, motivation, and Satisfaction- which originated from this region (Bates & Mio, 2015). Despite of these positive changes, the domestic conflict of the "Nepalese civil war" degraded the fame and money accumulated via the tourism sector in Nepal (Bates & Mio, 2015). Not only was it affected in terms of fame and money, but the perceived image of Nepal and destination familiarity was also adversely impacted (Bates & Mio, 2015). However, in the recent scenario, especially the pre-COVID era the growth of the tourism industry was in supreme touch as Nepal started air-linkage directly to several countries, especially to those whose tourist ratio to visit Nepal is high made significant positive changes (Dahal, 2020; Dhakal & Prasad, 2021). Despite these changes in the Nepalese tourism industry and the flow of tourists to Kathmandu, tourists' attitudes and behavioural attribution regarding visit intention to this region are rarely investigated and requires more research on this topic.

Kathmandu, which is Nepal's capital city, has become a popular tourist destination, particularly due to its cultural, architectural, and historical reputation (Nepal, 2022). Kathmandu region is comparatively superior to other destinations in Nepal because of its historical significance, cultural attractions, magnificent landscapes, and natural assets (Nepal, 2022). Several attractions, for instance, Pashupati Nath, Kathandu-Bhaktapur-Patan Durbar Square, Boudhanath Stupa, SwyambhuNath, etc., are recognized on the UNESCO World Heritage list (UNESCO World Heritage, 2024). The

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emblematic and artistic standards portrayed by Kathmandu's architecture, municipal planning, picturesque landscapes, and raw natural beauties are allied with its myths, events, and festivals (UNESCO World Heritage, 2024). Besides, visitors find this destination a recreational site to escape their mundanity (UNESCO World Heritage, 2024). Kathmandu city's architecture, lively markets, and vibrant festivals such as Indra Jatra, Gai Jatra, MachhindraNath Jatra, Yomari Punhi, and Bisket Jatra are a few that are only celebrated only in this destination make it more authentic and novelty experience to its audiences (Subedi, 2022). The natural landscapes surrounding the towering Himalayas have made this valley predominantly with Newari culture, architecture, cuisines, and traditional activities, making this destination a "multifaceted destination" (Maharjan et al., 2022). Tourists' attitude towards Kathmandu as a destination has a positive owing to the rich tapestry of cultural and heritage sites, natural scenery, vibrant markets, and a wide variety of recreational activities such as trekking, hiking, rock climbing, rafting, spiritual activities, local shopping, and taste makes this destination appealing to both local and international customers (Nepal, 2022). The panoramic view of the Kathmandu region is presented in the figure below.

Figure 7. Panoramic view of Kathmandu

Source: (Hayden, 2022)

According to Børø (2015), tourists' reason behind visiting Kathmandu is not only limited to escaping from mundanity but also because of learning experiences of cultural, heritage, and architectural activities along with its native traditions and cuisines. Rayamajhi and Khadka (2016) found the Kathmandu region as a sacred place for cultural and spiritual attraction to Hinduism and Buddhism because of its spiritual hubs, such as Pashupati Nath, Swayambhunath (Monkey Temple), and

Boudhanath Temple are primary hubs for pilgrimage tourists. The old trade route between India and China passed via the Kathmandu region, which has made this region equally appealing for tourism and other business-related activities (Stevens, 1988). However, Kathmandu has experienced increased urbanization; some tourists have raised fears about its preservation of authentic cultural fabric, architectural design, and gastronomical palate (Bates & Mio, 2015). Bhattarai et al. (2019) studied Kathmandu as a destination from a disadvantages analysis has found that congestion, effluence, and the potential dilution of its authentic cultural existence due to urbanization and rapid modernity are major issues that need to be addressed to preserve its originality and peculiarity to its potential tourists. Furthermore, the Kathmandu region's designation as a UNESCO world heritage site with seven sites listed on it provides a volume of its cultural heritage, historical, and architectural significance, drawing historic connoisseurs, researchers, and inquisitive stakeholders from all across the world (K. C., 2022). As mentioned, Kathmandu is considered a multifaceted destination; therefore, this paper aims to highlight the different tourist themes Kathmandu has in the following order.

3.7.1 Cultural and spiritual aspects

Kathmandu Valley's cultural and spiritual attractions have intrigued visitors for decades (Karki, 2023). Hindu and Buddhist pilgrimage sites, in particular, have produced an impressive collection of temples, monasteries, and worship sites, each with its own meaning and architectural beauty (Karki, 2023). According to Balen (2022), Kathmandu Valley is a historic city; it is an open museum with intricate wooden architecture and carvings, bustling local marketplaces, and seven UNESCO cultural heritage sites, making it an intriguing destination for cultural and spiritual tourists. Similarly, Dangol (2019) found that visitors perceive Kathmandu region's cultural and spiritual pursuits as highly enlightening and edifying for pilgrimage tours. Similarly, trusts are motivated by a desire for cultural and spiritual entanglement, the opportunity to encounter historical customs and events firsthand, for instance, living goddesses, religious events such as Indra Jatra, Gai Jatra, and Machhindranath Jatra fuels visitors as a pinnacle experience (Kayastha, 2023). Immersive experiences such as Swayambhunath, Boudhanath, and Pashupatinath allure tourists, heighten their spiritual attraction and enable tourists to introspect on the locations' deep spirituality (UNESCO World Heritage, 2024). However, Tiberghien (2020) has found that tourists might perceive a loss of destination authenticity

and commercialization of holy areas because of growing touristic activities and connected business activities.

3.7.2 Architectural aspects

Kathmandu is a tourist destination that is abstracted as a cornerstone of "ancient Asian civilization," which is fuelled by conventional city planning, peculiar architectural and historical significance, and multi-layered socio-cultural aspects (Rayamajhi & Khadka, 2016). Of the ten UNESCO World Heritage sites, the Kathmandu region has seven, each with distinct architecture, wooden carvings, and crafts. Kathmandu region, with its narrow alleys, made neighbourhoods more connected, ensuing a maze of buildings clustered around its courtyards (UNESCO World Heritage, 2024). According to Karuppannan et al. (2018) the finery of Newari towns in the Kathmandu region originates from a sense of artistic value and a natural rhythmic expression of arts accomplished over a long period rather than casually planning space and city design in a sensible way. Such idiosyncratic architecture is intricately made with carved wooden arts, and pagoda-style shrines reflect rich architecture and craftmanship of Newari's' ethnicity and are more appealing to tourists, especially those who familiarise themselves with Hinduism and Buddhist traditions and events (S. Shrestha, 2016).

Figure 8. Kathmandu- World Heritage Sites by UNESCO

Source: (UNESCO World Heritage, 2024)

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3.7.3 Gastronomical aspects

The Kathmandu Valley is a dynamic city with a blend of many cultures, festivals, and traditions (K. Chitrakar et al., 2020). Although the predominant settlement in the Kathmandu region is dominated by Newari ethnicity, its dynamic cultural settings obsessed by many events, occasions, festivals, and traditions significantly stimulate its culinary mores (Maharjan et al., 2022). For instance,

Newari delicacies like "*Yomari, Choila, Samay Bhaji, Lakhamar, Bara,*" etc., are indigenous to this region, which serves as an alluring for visitors, particularly food enthusiasts because of its authentic flavour and cooking practices (K. K. Chitrakar, 2022). In addition, its diverse culinary items, such as Thakali food, Momos, and Sekuwa, are distinct to this region and attract both local and international visitors, offering different gastronomic tastes that enhance this region's culinary repute (Gurung, 2018).

According to Zhang et al. (2019), authentic gastronomic experiences have become a popular feature of tourist activities, as they significantly impact the selection of travel destinations. Nonetheless, the relationship between gastronomic authenticity and its attractiveness to tourist destination choice is categorized by a subtle intricacy (Sims, 2009). It's because the pursuit of authentic experiences could lead to the commercialization of local cuisines, in which traditional meal preparation

practices and skills are modified significantly to cater to the preferences of tourists, resulting in the fading of their authenticity and cultural importance (Sims, 2009). Chitrakar (2022) studied how tourism influences culinary culture, which goes beyond tangible aspects of gastronomy, to merge into intangible ethno-social aspects relating to the indigenous community of Nepal. It found that though tourism activities alter local culinary culture, they also bring realization to the host region to value and promote their culinary traditions and importance (Chitrakar, 2022).

Figure 9. Popular cuisines of Kathmandu Valley

The popular cuisines at Kathmandu's destination are Momos, Yomari, Samay baji, Bara, and Choila (left to right).

Source: (Katwal, 2020)

3.7.4 Recreational aspects

Tourists' vacation purpose is mainly linked to their leisure pursuits; travellers engross themselves in relaxation or self-pleasure to get relief and energize from their mundane routines (Alexander et al., 2010). According to Bates and Mio (2015, p. 310), Kathmandu is considered a tourist hub, serves as an entryway to international audiences because of its modernity, and facilitates the flow of products and people more adequately as compared to other tourist destinations of Nepal. Kathmandu encompasses a wide array of recreational activities, such as visiting historical landmarks, lively art events, local occasions, festivals, and spirituality, offering travellers the desired refreshments (Bates & Mio, 2015). Kathmandu is popular as a budget-friendly destination that offers its backpackers adventure activities such as hiking to the Himalayas, rafting, rock climbing, and simple activities such as local culinary cooking activities (Khadka & Rayamajhi, 2015; Thompson & Linder, 2014). However, in recent times, Kathmandu has faced a sign of cultural displacement as the commercialization of tourists' demand and enjoyment has unintentionally given more emphasis than compared to those of its local communities (Maharjan et al., 2022). Similarly, Dangol (2019) found that leisure pursuits in the Kathmandu region have lured tourists and made this destination a travel epicentre; however, planning and controlling the influence of such touristic activities on local sociocultural and environmental settings is pivotal.

3.8 Sample size

The appropriate sample size is considered as a pumping heart for any research paper (Qualtrics, 2024). Sample size enables us to determine whether the research seeks a broader view or focuses on smaller details. Before rendering surveys to the participants, it is often a puzzle to know how much sample is appropriate. For that, two major conditions are outlined: i) how paramountcy is a statistical workout for the research, and ii) what real-world restraints such as timeline and budget constraints might be. Since the research has formulated a hypothesis based on the theory of planned behaviour and prior

researchers' findings, therefore, it is crucial to have inferential-based statistics to measure each variable's statistical significance. In this dissertation, we imply one of the commonly implied techniques, "sample to item ratio," to measure the sample size, which will be evaluated based on the items or "questionnaire statements" implied in the research (Memon et al., 2020). A favourable ratio is a 5-to-1 ratio, which means five participants for each statement (Gorsuch, 1983; Suhr, 2006). Using this as a reference, this dissertation has adopted six predictor variables: "attitude, subjective norms, perceived behaviour control, travel motivation, destination image, and destination familiarity" and one response variable, "intention to travel to Kathmandu." There are four questionnaire statements in each variable, for a total of 28 items. Therefore, the preferred sample for this dissertation would be the responses of more than 140 participants.

3.9 Obstacles faced while collecting the data

We faced several obstacles in collecting data for this study. At first, the major obstacle was the high physical gap or distance between us and the target study population. Although the researchers currently reside in Denmark, studying Tourism Studies at Aalborg University, the intended study is to explore "Assessing visitors' motivations: An empirical investigation into the attitudes and intentions behind visiting the Kathmandu region." This geographical difference has made it more difficult to comprehensively understand the potential participants' characteristics. The comprehension of recent travel trends and styles and travellers' specific behaviours intending to visit Kathmandu was not possible by directly interacting with the participants. Due to this, we were limited to virtual platforms, especially social media sites. One of the crucial drawbacks of this method was that not every individual within the target population is actively engaged in social media, so a high chance of responses clustered into certain demographic categories is highly likely. In addition, without the possibility to interact face-to-face or via any means of local networks, a sense of low confidence to express their responses was highly observed, due to which response rate was observed to be exceedingly low, which directly affects the diversity and richness of the gathered responses. Furthermore, communication barriers, especially the difference between time zones, made it highly difficult for us to connect with potential participants in real time. On the other hand, the implications of the snowball sampling method have given us less control over the survey project; in addition to that, it was highly difficult for us to verify the authenticity of the participant's responses and guarantee that the gathered responses are transparent and genuine.

3.10 Ethical consideration and researcher position

Ethical considerations are crucial in research in order to protect participants, maintain the credibility of the research process, and ensure the reliability of the findings. The researchers have conducted this dissertation from a positivist-quantitative standpoint. Especially during the online survey questionnaire, several crucial ethical considerations must be considered to maintain high data protection, encourage participants' motivation to participate, and respect their rights and integrity.

At first, Participants were given survey forms with the purpose of the research and the need for their opinions and perceptions. Along with that, participants were encouraged to participate in the survey project; however, full authority was given to them on whether to participate or not. Secondly, participants' responses were assuredly protected with high confidentiality and anonymity. Therefore, rather than mentioning individual information, only aggregate responses arranged in quantitative forms were presented in the dissertation. In addition to that, the storage of participants' data and access to the data were kept highly confidential and intended to be used only for this dissertation. Lastly, the survey questionnaire was designed from a "first-person perspective" so that participants did not feel any hesitation or emotional distress. Therefore, a pilot test was run on a few of the researchers' closest friends to see any inconsistencies and biases.

In the context of the researcher's position in the dissertation, the positivist-deductive-quantitative route enables researchers to remain external in the entire dissertation process. In addition, during the online questionnaire survey, snowball sampling made researchers even more external to the survey project as there was minimal chance of getting involved in the survey campaign. Though it might create some selection bias, leading to unreliable findings as well. However, with minimal involvement of researchers in the dissertation and survey project, the chances of favouritism were completely negligible.

Researchers must uphold transparency and integrity by providing accurate reporting of findings and being truthful about their goals and conflicts of interest while doing the study. In addition to that, researchers choose to remain neutral and objective during the data processing and interpretation time. To preserve the reliability and trustworthiness of the study, conclusions are solely based on the data.

The conclusions were only based on the facts and the evidence from analysis, not on assumptions or intended results. We have carefully tracked the data, letting it direct the findings' narrative without imposing our own opinions or other biases. When doing empirical research, it is essential to ensure the validity and reliability of the data since this ensures that the conclusions are reliable and accurate. We have used uniform administration techniques and standardized survey instruments, among other systematic data collection procedures, to eliminate biases and errors and ensure data reliability.

Chapter 4: Results and Findings

In this chapter, the findings gathered from online survey questionnaires will be analysed and presented in two forms: descriptive statistics and inferential-based statistics. Firstly, results related to participants' demographic profiles will be provided. The second half will provide key trends and patterns, correlation analysis, and inferential statistics between adopted predictor variables and respondent variables. This section will also examine the reliability of the adopted questionnaires.

Utilizing online survey questionnaires, 321 responses were gathered over a period of nine days, which were delivered to Facebook group pages *"Nepal Travel community," "Travel Nepal group," and "Tourism Nepal,"* with 3900, 7800, and 8100 followers respectively as of 4th of May 2024. When evaluating these social media communities in a single frame, the distribution of our online survey questionnaire to the population of 19800 participants ended up with a response rate of 1.424%. These Facebook pages are mainly driven by travel-related content, destination recommendations, itinerary planning, accommodation options, etc. These Facebook groups have more than nineteen thousand followers, making it difficult to assess their nationalities and ethnic backgrounds. Due to instances of incomplete and duplicated responses, it was mandatory to undertake a rigorous filtering process, which resulted in the retention of 282 responses finalized for further empirical analysis.

4.1 Participants' demographic profile

Table 3. illustrates 282 participants' demographic profiles: age, gender, and marital status. The age profile of participants is mostly governed by young adults. Over 60% of the participants are between

20-39 years old, with 20-29 years old accounting for 33% *(n=93)* and 30-39 years old participants accounting for 31.2% *(n=88)*. Similarly, participants between "40-49" and "50-59" years old are comprised of 20.6% and 11% respectively. Meanwhile, only 3.9% of participants *(n=11)* are aged under 20 years old. Lastly, 0.4% of participants *(n=1)* were marginalized participants, "i.e., 60 years of age or above".

In the context of participants' gender profile, female participants were found to be dominant, with 51.8% *(n=146);* meanwhile, male participants were 41.8% *(n=118)*: a ratio of 73:59. Meanwhile, 3.5% *(n=10)* participants preferred to keep their gender identity confidential. Lastly, 2.8% *(n=8)* were identified as other than male or female.

Similarly, we found that over half of the total participants were married, "50.7%, i.e., n=143." Meanwhile, 29.1% and 13.1% were found to be single and divorced, respectively.

Table 3. Participants demographic profile: age, gender, and marital status.

Profile	Segments	Percent	Total
Age profile	Under 20 years old	3.9%	
	20-29 years old	33.0%	
	30-39 years old	31.2%	282
	40-49 years old	20.6%	
	50-59 years old	11.0%	
	60 or above	0.4%	
Gender profile	Male	41.8%	
	Female	51.8%	
	Other	2.8%	282
	Prefer not to say	3.5%	
	Single	29.1%	

	Married	50.7%	
Marital status	Divorced	13.1%	282
	Others	4.6%	
	Prefer not to say	2.5%	

4.2 Participants' educational qualification and income status: Cross-tabulation

Table 4. illustrates 282 participants' educational and income status. Most of the participants were found to be bachelor-passed, i.e., 46% *(n=129)*, followed by master students, 38% *(n=108)*. Out of 129 bachelors who passed, over 54% had an income of over 75,000 Nepalese rupees per month. Similarly, out of 108 participants, 50 of them earned over 1,00,000 NPR per month, i.e., 46%. Additionally, out of 18 doctorate-passed participants, 10 were found to have a monthly income of over 1,00,000 NPR. From another perspective, 35% out of 282 participants were found to have income over 1,00,000 NPR monthly, and the majority of the participants, "i.e., 50," were master passed. The overall cross-tabulation shows that participants had higher educational attainments, earning higher levels of income on a monthly basis.

Table 4. Participants' educational qualification and Income Status: cross-tabulation

	Bachelor level	Master level	PHD level	High school level	School level	Vocational skill	Grand Total	%
Less than 25,000 NPR	8	1	0	3	1	0	13	5%
25,000 – 50,000 NPR	14	5	0	11	1	0	31	11%
50,001- 75,000 NPR	37	27	2	6	0	1	73	26%
75,001 – 10,000 NPR	32	25	6	3	0	0	66	23%
Over 1,00,000	38	50	10	1	0	0	99	35%
Grand Total	129	108	18	24	2	1	282	
%	46%	38%	6%	9%	1%	0%		
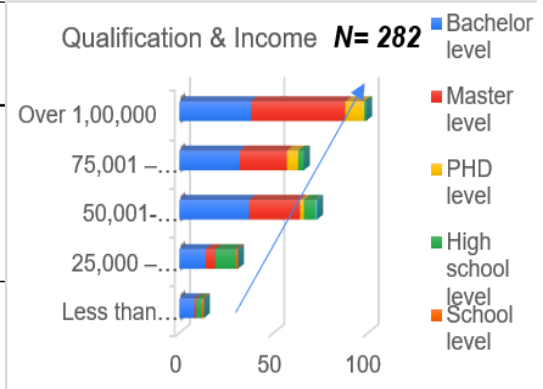
4.3 Participant's frequency of vacation

Chart 1 depicts 282 participants' vacation frequency on an annual basis. Almost half of the participants, 49% *(n=137)*, take two to three vacations annually. Similarly, 23% of participants

(n=64) go on vacation four to six times a year. Meanwhile, 20% *(n=57)* prefer to go on vacation once a year. However, a marginal 9% of participants go on vacation more than six times in a year.

Chart 1. Participant's frequency of vacation
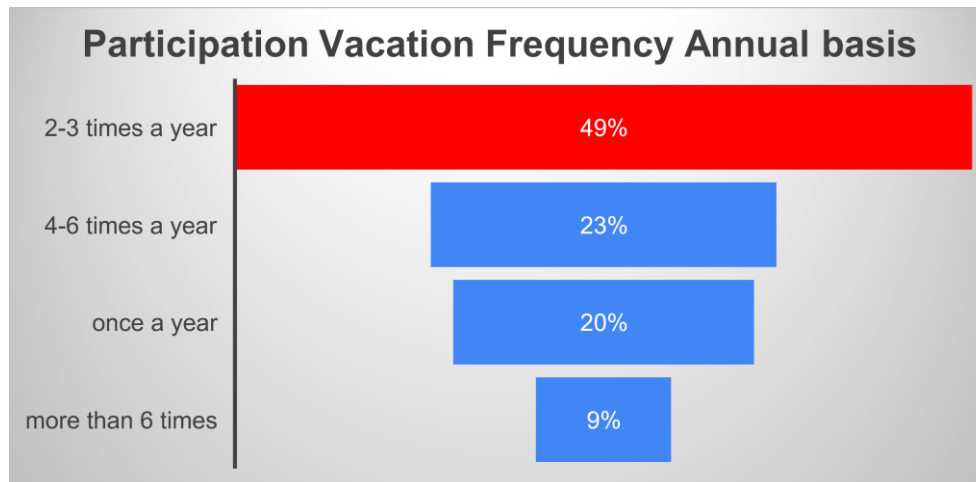
Similarly, participants' marital status was cross-checked against their frequency of vacation to comprehend which cohort is more motivated towards traveling. Table 5, alludes that married individuals were more motivated towards traveling as 51% out of 282 participants were married, in which 29% *(N=83)* travelled 2-3 times in a year, and 9% *(N=26)* traveled 4-6 times a year. Also, 9% *(N=26)* travel more than six times in a year. In another way, out of 51% of married participants, 42% *(N=119)* travelled more than 2 times in a year.

Table 5. Participants' travel frequency as compared to marital status

	2-3 times a year	4-6 times a year	Once a year	Over six times	Grand Total	%
Divorced	9	18	6	4	37	13%
Married	83	26	24	10	143	51%
Others	4	3	2	4	13	5%
Prefer not to say	3	3	0	1	7	2%
Single	38	14	25	5	82	29%

Grand Total	137	64	57	24	282	100%
%	49%	23%	20%	9%	100%	

4.4. Participants' Prime Motives for Visiting Kathmandu

Chart 2 illustrates 282 participants' prime motives for visiting the Kathmandu region. Based on the participants' responses, most of the participants, i.e., 25% *(n=71)*, the prime reason for visiting reason is to behold Kathmandu Valley's heritage and architectural sites. Similarly, 18% *(n=52)* of participant's primary reason for visiting Kathmandu Valley was to see cultural events and traditions. Meanwhile, 13% and 11% of participants, out of 282 responses, were found to be their prime motives for visiting Kathmandu due to gastronomical and recreational purposes. Meanwhile, only 10% of participants responded that spiritual purpose was their prime motive for visiting Kathmandu. And lastly, around one quarter, i.e., 23% *(n=64)* participants, responded to other reasons as their prime reason, which was not mentioned in the survey.

Chart 2. Participants' Prime Motives for Visiting Kathmandu
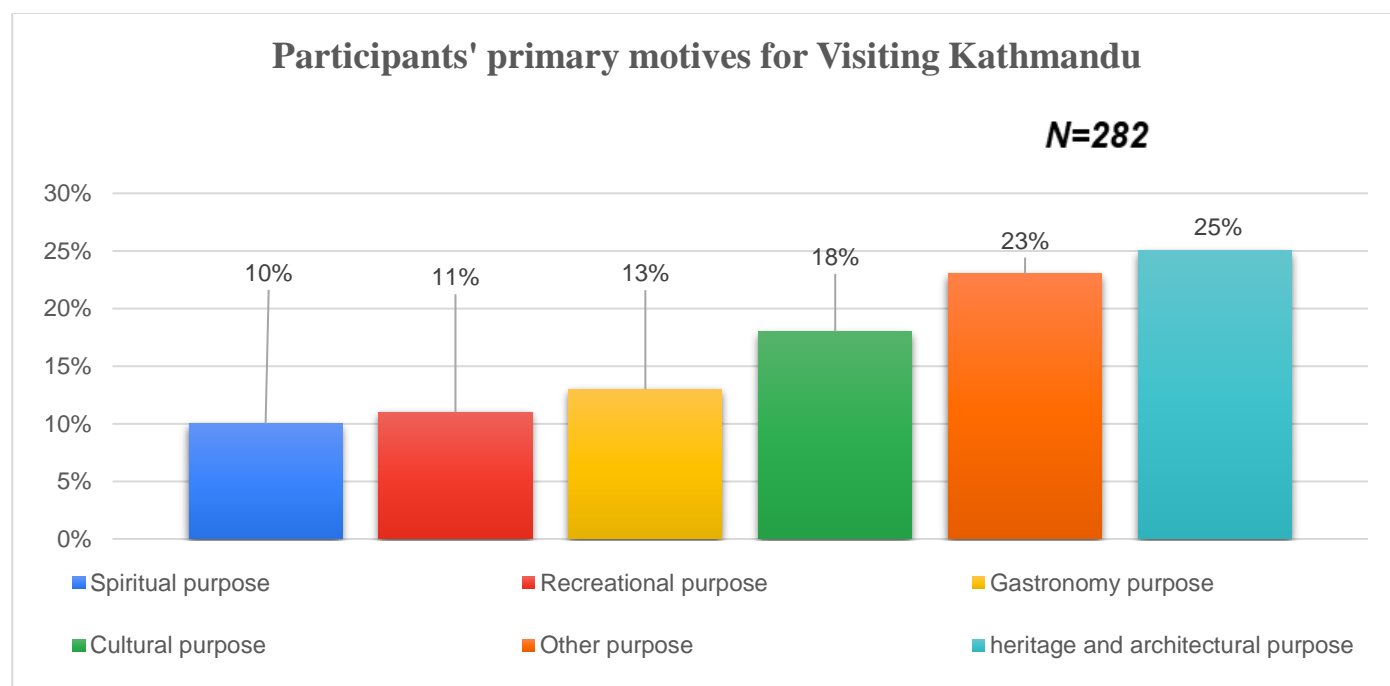
4.5 Participants' preferred channels for travel information

The Chart 3 shows 282 participants' preferred channels for seeking travel-related information. Over 1/3rd of participants, precisely 38% (*n=64),* prefer social media sites to get travel-related information. Similarly, 21% of participants preferred online travel sites, and 15% preferred word-of-mouth channels from their friends and family. Meanwhile, 10% (*n=29)* preferred another source than mentioned in the survey questionnaires' option.

Chart 3. Participants' preferred channels for travel information
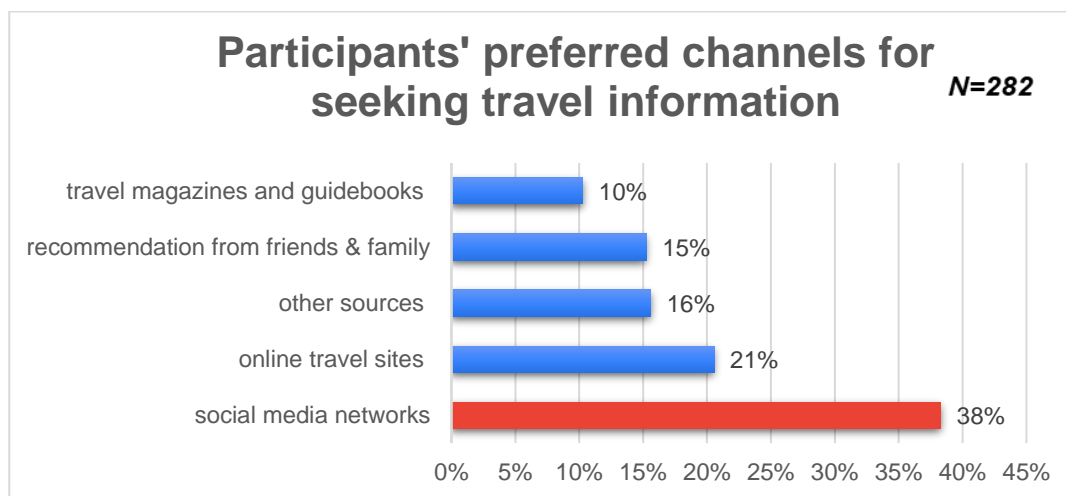
4.6 Summary of Survey Questionnaire Metrics

Table 5 shows the overall responses of 282 participants using mean, median, and standard deviation. The survey was carried out using the 5-Likert scale technique, where options were arranged in descending order from "strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1)." The mean value of 282 responses for each statement was observed above 3.5, indicating that, on average, all participants are tilted towards agreeableness. This suggests that the response is left (negatively skewed), implying that responses are more clustered close to the fourth response on a 5- Likert scale, "i.e., agree". Similarly, the observed media value also hints at similar meanings; 50% of responses by 282 participants responded either "agree -4" or "strongly agree -5". Likewise, the observed standard deviation on each statement from 282 participants' responses suggests that responses are narrowly spread out within their respective mean values. However, some statements, such as *"I feel that most of those close to me would support my choice to visit Kathmandu",* observed comparatively wide spread-out of responses from the mean, i.e., (+ - 1.01 standard deviation) from the mean value of 3.81. Apart from this, all other statements' responses were scattered within one-scale range in a 5-Likert scale measurement.

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Table 5, Summary of Survey Questionnaire Metrics

Factors	Statements	x̄	Q2	σ	α
Attittude	I am delighted and eager about the prospect of visiting Kathmandu.	3.56	4	0.92	
	I feel that visiting Kathmandu would be both entertaining and gratifying.	3.69	4	0.93	
	I believe that visiting Kathmandu will give me invaluable experiences and memories.	3.80	4	0.97	
	I see Kathmandu as an intriguing and worthwhile location.	3.81	4	1.00	
S.norms	My friends and family think that visiting Kathmandu is a fantastic idea.	3.88	4	0.92	
	People whose opinions I appreciate have encouraged me to visit Kathmandu.	3.78	4	0.96	0.83
	Others close to me would agree with my decision to visit Kathmandu.	3.79	4	0.99	
	I feel that most of those close to me would support my choice to visit Kathmandu.	3.81	4	1.01	
PBC	I'm confident in my ability to arrange a vacation in Kathmandu.	3.82	4	0.92	
	I feel in control of the variables that may impact my decision to visit Kathmandu.	3.78	4	0.96	0.82

	I am convinced that I will be able to overcome any difficulties in visiting Kathmandu.	3.73	4	0.99
	I see going to Kathmandu as something I can manage.	3.82	4	0.97
T.motivation	I'm excited to visit Kathmandu and learn about different cultures and traditions.	3.89	4	0.95
	I'm fascinated by Kathmandu's natural beauty and scenery.	3.87	4	0.98	0.84
	My motivation for visiting Kathmandu stems mainly from a desire to experience adventure and excitement.	3.82	4	0.95
	Interacting with people and immersing oneself in the local culture inspires me to visit Kathmandu.	3.79	4	1.00
D.Image	When I think of Kathmandu, I visualize vibrant streets, cultural sites, and rich history & architecture.	3.81	4	1.00
	The photos and tales I've seen or heard about Kathmandu entice me to visit the city.	3.95	4	0.88	0.85
	Kathmandu offers unique and authentic experiences that will improve the overall pleasure of my vacation.	3.91	4	0.95
	I believe that the rewards and experiences acquired by visiting Kathmandu will outweigh the price.	3.79	4	0.93

D.familarity	I investigated and learned about Kathmandu's many sights and activities, and I am familiar with my nature.	3.88	4	0.93	
	I've been to comparable places, so the prospect of going to Kathmandu comforts me.	3.74	4	0.93	0.84
	I understand what to expect regarding Kathmandu's culture, cuisine, and lifestyle.	3.92	4	0.92	
	My prior travel experiences with similar places have contributed to my familiarity with Kathmandu.	3.85	4	0.94	
Visit intention	I plan to visit Kathmandu shortly.	3.92	4	0.96	
	I strongly desire to experience Kathmandu's authentic cultural, architectural, and local cuisines soon.	3.84	4	0.91	0.85
	I'm strongly contemplating visiting Kathmandu on my next vacation.	3.88	4	0.90	
	I'm positive to recommend to closest ones to make plans to visit Kathmandu shortly.	3.85	4	0.93	

Note: these questionnaires were retrieved and modified from prior researchers' findings – "see Appendix 1.3".

4.7 Correlation matrix

Table 6 shows a correlation matrix between seven variables in which "intention to visit" was portrayed as the respondent variable, and the rest of the variables were implied as predictor variables. Based on the correlation results, we found two factors, "destination image" and "destination familiarity," have a strong and positive correlation with the intention to visit: 0.82 and 0.80, respectively. Similarly, subjective norms and PBC were found to be positive and strongly correlated with intention to visit; however, attitude was found to be moderately but positively correlated with visit intention.

Similarly, travel motivation was also found positively and strongly correlated to attitude (0.73), meaning that as an individual starts to develop a positive attitude towards "Kathmandu destination," the chances of increasing their travel motivation are high. Likewise, travel motivation was found to be positively and strongly correlated with the destination's image (0.80). This implies that participants who cognitively develop positive destination images come with increased travel motivation. Overall, all factors were found to be positively and strongly correlated with each other except "destination familiarity with attitude and subjective norms" and "intention to visit and attitude".

Table 6, Correlation matrix

	Attitude	Subjective norms	PBC	Travel motivation	Destination image	Destination familiarity	Intention to visit
Attitude	1						
Subjective norms	0.78	1					
PBC	0.71	0.76	1				
Travel motivation	0.73	0.75	0.77	1			
Destination image	0.70	0.74	0.76	0.80	1		
Destination familiarity	0.69	0.69	0.72	0.78	0.80	1	
Intention to visit	0.69	0.75	0.76	0.76	0.82	0.80	1

- *Correlation values between 0-1 to 0.39 = weakly correlated, 0.4 to 0.69 = moderately correlated, 0.7 to 0.89 strongly correlated, and 0.9 to 1 is viewed as very strongly correlated (Schober et al., 2018, p. 1765)*
- *(+ve = positively correlated, -ve = negatively correlated.*
- *Meanwhile, 1 indicates perfectly correlated.*

4.8 Regression- summary statistics

This dissertation has adopted multiple linear regression (MLR) analysis to determine the linear association of predictor variables "attitude, subjective norms, PBC, travel motivation, destination image, and destination familiarity" on response variable "intention to visit". Multiple linear regression is one of the potent regression techniques that is specifically implied to measure linearity when a single response variable and multiple predictor variables (Whitfield, 2023)More importantly, MLR enables two primary tenacities: comprehending the association between predictor-response variables and predicting the magnitude (Whitfield, 2023). Additionally, it is one of the oldest regression techniques widely implied in real-world situations (Whitfield, 2023). Since the aim of this dissertation is to accomplish "empirical investigation into the attitudes, motivations, and intentions behind visiting Kathmandu region", it is imperative to understand different potential attitudinal and behavioral factors of tourists impacting their visit intention, which is possible to study by such regression technique that incorporates multiple factors and have linear properties. From that perspective, MLR is more applicable to this dissertation's empirical exercises. Within the research on "tourists' attitudinal and behavioral factors influencing travel visits", several researchers have implied multiple linear regression analysis. For instance,(2022) Nazarudin and Syad (2022) studied TPB to predict tourist intention to visit Lembata destination during the Covid-19 period. Ng and Thong (2023) studied TPB and tourists' intention to visit Pangkor- Malaysia on Millennials using multiple linear regression as an analytical tool. Na et al. (2016) studied the intention of international tourists to travel to Malaysia for health care treatment. These international tourists' attitudes and behavioral reasoning were evaluated based on the theory of planned behavior and later analyzed statistically via using multiple linear regression. Similarly, Wu et al. (2023) studied Generation Z's travel intention toward cultural heritage sites using TPB as a theoretical framework and multiple linear regression as a statistical analysis tool. Since numerous researchers have used the TPB model to analyze tourists' attitudes and behaviors to predict their travel intentions, these researchers have consistently adopted multiple linear regression analysis (MLR) as a quantitative – statistical analysis tool to interpret their findings. Therefore, it was evident that MLR was a statistical analysis tool for this dissertation.

Table 7 shows summary statistics of multiple linear regression. The observation of 282 participants' responses against six variables leads to a degree of freedom of 275. The observed R-squared value of (0.76) shows that the adopted predictor variables have a strong predictive power on intention to visit. It indicates that 76% of changes of variance in the response variable, "i.e., intention to visit," is explained by the adopted predictor variables. In another way, only 24% of fluctuations of variance in

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"intention to visit" factors are explained by external factors, "i.e., other than those mentioned here". Thus, the MLR model implied in this dissertation has a strong predictive power. The observed F-stat value (144.24) shows that the adopted MLR model explains a significant level of variability in the response variable when compared to the variability that happens by a fluke. Thus, the MLR model provides a good fit for the data. Lastly, the model's P value (0.00), which is significantly lower than the significance level, suggests that the MLR model is statistically significant. In practical terms, this dissertation's association between the predictor and response variable has significant meaning, which did not happen with random data fluctuations.

Table 7. Regression- summary statistics

Multiple R	0.87
R Square	0.76
Adjusted R Square	0.75
Standard Error	0.38
Observations	282

ANOVA					
	df	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*S.F*
Regression	6	125.04	20.84	144.24	0.00
Residual	275	39.73	0.14		
Total	281	164.78			

4.9 Regression- coefficient analysis

Table 8. shows the MLR coefficient analysis. A significance level of 0.05, which is a widely implied threshold, was adopted for this dissertation. The attitude factor (β = -0.00, T= -0.07, P= 0.94) was found to be negatively and insignificantly associated with the intention to visit Kathmandu. Meanwhile, subjective norms (β = 0.17, T= 3.08, P= 0.00) and perceived behavior control (β = 0.16, T= 3.00, P= 0.00) were found positively and significantly related to visit intention to Kathmandu. Similarly, the destination image (β = 0.30, T= 5.07, P= 0.00) was found to be positively and significantly related to the intention to visit Kathmandu. Meanwhile, travel motivation (β = 0.04, T= 0.67, P= 0.50) was found to be insignificantly but positively impactful on travel intention to Kathmandu. Lastly, destination familiarity was found to positively and significantly impact travelers' visit intention to Kathmandu, "i.e., (β = 0.30, T= 5.37, P= 0.00)." However, the intercept "slope" value of 0.22 is indicated as an autonomic value even if all the adopted predictor variables are zero, and the P.value of "0.10" states that the intercept is not statistically significant.

Table 8. Regression- coefficient analysis

	β	St. Err.	t Stat	P-value	Low 95%	Upp 95%
Intercept	0.22	0.13	1.67	0.10	-0.04	0.47
Attitude	-0.00	0.05	-0.07	0.94	-0.11	0.10
Subjective norms	0.17	0.05	3.08	0.00	0.06	0.27
PBC	0.16	0.05	3.00	0.00	0.06	0.27
Travel Motivation	0.04	0.06	0.67	0.50	-0.08	0.15
Destination image	0.30	0.06	5.07	0.00	0.18	0.41
Destination familiarity	0.30	0.05	5.37	0.00	0.19	0.40

Note: Significance level – measured at 5%. Respondent variable – intention to visit Kathmandu.

4.10 Reliability test

Table 9. illustrates the Cronbach alpha test to measure the internal consistency "reliability test" of the adopted survey questionnaires for this dissertation. According to Tavakol and Dennick (2011) Cronbach alpha measures the reliability of questionnaire items implied in a research survey in which it will determine how effectively the items in a scale measure consistent forms of characteristics. Simplistically, it is imperative to measure the internal consistencies of Likert Scale surveys as a higher reliability score predicts the research findings with higher validity (Chan & Idris, 2017). Based on the results, questions implied for "attitude" variables were found to be below par compared to other variables. Though the Cronbach's alpha value of "0.79" according to Tavakol and Dennick (2011) states as acceptable, but this might be the reason this factor was found negatively and insignificantly related to travel intention (β = -0.00, T= -0.07, P= 0.94). Apart from this, all other questions implied for each variable were found reliable as it lies between the periphery of ".7 to 0.8", which is good.

Table 9. Reliability test

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Decision	Cronbach 's alpha

Attitude	0.79	Acceptable	$\alpha > .9$ Excellent
Subjective norms	0.83	Good	$\alpha > .8$ Good
PBC	0.82	Good	$\alpha > .7$ Acceptable
Travel Motivation	0.84	Good	$\alpha > .6$ Questionable
Destination image	0.85	Good	$\alpha > .5$ Poor
Destination familiarity	0.84	Good	$\alpha < .5$ Unacceptable
Intention to visit	0.85	Good	

The significance level was measured at 5%.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This chapter will explicitly interpret and conceptualize the dissertation's overall findings on tourists' motivations and attitudinal and behavioral factors impacting visitors' intention to visit the Kathmandu region. It will also compare the existing literature findings with these dissertation findings and highlight any similarities and discrepancies. This chapter will end by providing the results of the hypothesis testing.

The aim of this master dissertation is to explore the motivations of travellers and the attitudinal and behavioural factors impacting their intention to visit the Kathmandu region of Nepal. To accomplish this aim, a quantitative research method was applied to this dissertation, which also aligns with the theory of planned behaviour (TPB). This theory facilitated the adoption of positivist research philosophy and deductive-based reasoning, which allowed us to test the postulated hypothesis and generalize the findings to similar fields and regions. The adoption of the quantitative data collection method was influenced by the nature of the research objectives, which demand the collection of numerical forms of data to test the postulated hypothesis derived from the theory of planned

behaviour. In addition, the application of prior researcher findings along with the TPB model enables us to develop a structured approach to comprehend the factors impacting travel intentions towards the Kathmandu region of Nepal. Therefore, an online survey questionnaire was found promising because it is usually associated with quantitative research. Secondly, it enables the gathering of numerical forms of data via utilizing scaling techniques such as the Likert-Scale. Thus, a 5-Likert scale technique was utilized to understand participants' attitudinal and behavioural factors in an ordinal order from strongly agree to strongly disagree, in which strongly agree was denoted by 5 and strongly disagree was denoted by 1. Since the researcher's physical presence in the targeted region and the population was not possible due to the difficulty of penetrating the samples, a snowball sampling was found evident for this dissertation. A total of 282 participants' responses were collected, distributed to three Facebook Group pages: Nepal Travel Community, Travel Group Nepal, and Tourism Nepal. These Facebook communities were deemed for travel and tourism related activities and information-sharing communities; thus, these group members were perfectly within this dissertation participation selection criteria.

Firstly, descriptive statistics were used to gain insights into participants' demographic profiles, which were found to be diverse. From the age distribution, it was evident that most participants were between 20-39 years old, accounting for a significant 64.2% or 181 participants. However, it's worth noting that only one participant was above 60, making up a mere "0.4%". This age profile, skewed towards young adults, aligns with their trends and travel behaviours, suggesting that younger adults are more inclined towards adventurous and exploratory travel. Regarding gender, the responses were balanced, with slightly more female participants engaging in the survey project than males. Of the 282 responses, 51.8% came from females, against 41.8% of males. This gender parity reflects the broader pattern in travel research, indicating women's increasing interest in travel related activities.

Similarly, the marital status was found to vary among participants, in which a significant portion "50.7%" were married. Meanwhile, 29.1% were found single. This demographic profile, especially marital status, accentuates the relevancy of comprehending traveller motivations and intentions to visit in both single and married individuals. This dissertation has found that married participants are more engaged in travel and tourism-related activities, which might be because couples find better bonding through traveling, or married couples are financially stable and have better resource affordability than their counterparts. However, it might be a bias to interpret this way as the targeted population may have a

proportion of married persons compared to single ones. Still researching travel motivations and intention to visit on married and single travelers is a legitimate option for future researchers.

The educational profile of participants was mostly dominated by bachelor and master holders, jointly accounting for 84%. In addition to this, 6% *(N=18)* were P.H.D holders. This may indicate that individuals with higher educational qualifications are engaged in traveling activities, which might be part of their academic activities or might be to get refreshments from their mundane routines. When assessing participants' educational qualifications and monthly income generation, we found that individuals with better educational qualifications could generate more monthly income than those who are just in school or high school. Thus, researching travellers' motivations and attitudes by focusing on high and low-earning groups might bring different motivating factors and constraints related to their travel intentions.

This dissertation has found that Kathmandu as a destination encompasses several themes of attraction; however, most of the participants' motives for traveling were to seek "heritage and architectural sites". One-quarter of participants responded with their prime motives for visiting the Kathmandu region for the above reasons. It seems convincing as Kathmandu has procured seven UNESCO World Heritage sites; therefore, tourists' motivation to visit these sites fascinates and offers a new exploration as they are popular and have a rich tapestry of history and architectural significance. Nevertheless, Kathmandu is also popular for other activities, as tourists with cultural exploration purposes, gastronomy, and recreational or leisure purposes are motivated to this destination. However, tourists with spiritual purposes were found to be less motivated for this reason, despite Hindu and Buddhist religions considering this destination a holy region. There might be a potential bias in assessing the low motivation of travellers towards visiting for spiritual purposes because the sample selection may not have been widely spread out, or there may be low motivation among young adults to visit for such purposes. Thus, further research on similar topics but with evenly spread-out participants' age profiles might provide a clearer picture of these aspects.

Likewise, social media has become a significant channel for acquiring travel-related information. This dissertation found that over one-third of respondents found social media

channels to be their preferred channels for seeking travel-related information. Growing traveling habits, affordability, and the increase in travel influencers might have made this channel more popular among travellers. However, it is crucial to grasp that social media is more popular among young adults, which might be the reason this dissertation has found social media sites more preferred, as the sample contains almost 2/3rd participants between the ages of 20 and 39.

Travelers' attitude has a positive and strong correlation towards travel motivation. Individuals who hold a positive attitude toward a destination have a strong and positive impact on their travel motivation. However, this research fails to detect whether it is due to pull or push motivating factors. Besides, this research has found a positive and strong correlation between travellers' perceived behaviour control and travel motivation, indicated by a correlation value of "0.77". This indicates that travellers' perceived ability to plan and execute their travel plans and decision-making enables them to develop positive travel motivation. The high correlation infers that motivated travellers feel more determined, confident, and in control of their travel arrangements, which lessens perceived barriers and enhances the likelihood of travel. Correspondingly, the correlation between travel motivation and subjective norms implies a substantial impact of social norms and practices on travel motivations. It suggests that highly motivated travellers are also substantially influenced by the suggestions, recommendations, and behaviours of their closest ones. The positive correlation between these variables indicates that social approval and the urge to adapt to social expectations has a crucial role in navigating individuals' travel motivation. However, an individual's attitude factor has a comparatively weaker influence on developing positive travel motivation.

When assessing individuals' motivation with the travel intention to visit the Kathmandu region, it was found that higher travel motivation leads to positive and higher travel intention. However, other factors such as destination image and familiarity matter travel intention to visit. Both destination image and familiarity were found to be positively and significantly correlated to the traveller's intention to visit. Individuals perceive the image of a destination as subjective, as it encompasses several aspects, such as physical appearance, mental visualization, and knowledge about the destination. However, the aggregate positive destination image perceived by the travellers has a favourable relationship with their visit intention. Aligning with this, individuals with a high degree of

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familiarity with the destination have a positive and strong correlation with their intention to visit that destination. The understanding of the destination's social and cultural connections, experience from prior visits, research, and information about the destination collectively enables the develop a sense of familiarity with the destination, and when this familiarity level grows, the chances to visit the destination are high. In addition, individuals who have a high degree of familiarity with the destination also possess a positive and strong correlation with the destination image.

The impact of destination image and familiarity were found to be most significant and positively impactful on individual intention to travel to Kathmandu. In fact, when travellers' perceived image of their destination and familiarity increases by one unit, their intention to visit goes up by 0.30 times. Similarly, an individual who has a better ability to control their travel plans, execution, and decision-making process increases their intention to visit positively and significantly, as improving one's aptitude to control their travel decisions when compared to before increases their travel intention by 0.16 times. In addition to that, societal approval and expectation also play a significant and positive role in bringing positive travel intention. Veritably, as individuals perceive positive social pressure and apprehension, their travel intention increases by 0.20 times. Interestingly, individuals' attitudes have adverse and insignificant impacts on travellers' travel intentions. It was found that attitude has a negligible and statistically insignificant influence on the intention to visit

Kathmandu. In practical terms, individuals' attitude towards Kathmandu as a travel destination does not implicitly impact their travel decision to visit the city. A negative relationship was detected, but very marginally. In addition, the high p-value implied that the outcome was not statistically significant and was likely to happen due to a random chance. These findings might be intriguing as they challenge common anticipations in tourism literature where individuals' positive attitudes towards travel destinations are typically predictable to enhance travel intention. However, this dissertation has found that attitudes have no "very negligible adverse" impact that drives the decision-making processes for traveling to the Kathmandu region.

Lastly, the implied survey questionnaires were found highly reliable as all variables Cronbach's alpha value was over 80%, except travellers' attitudes towards the Kathmandu destination. Though questionnaires related to attitudes were marginally short to become

"good reliable"; however, its value of 0.79 indicates the questionnaires were acceptable. The comparative low Cronbach alpha value of attitude could hint at the consequences of attitude having a negative and insignificant impact on travellers' intention to visit Kathmandu. Eventually, the evaluation of the adoption of predictor and respondent variables revealed a significant impact on this study. Specifically, 76% of the changes in variance in "travel intention to Kathmandu" were determined by the adopted six variables. Which gives enough evidence that the model has a high predictive power. Despite this significance, some portion, "i.e., 24%" is still captured by the error term, which is external factors. Therefore, further study on the same topic but with the inclusion of more variables might lower that error term.

5.1 Hypothesis testing

It is already evident that this dissertation has followed a positivist-deductive-quantitative path; therefore, it is apparent to implies existing theory and test it using some sets of hypotheses, unlike observing certain aspects and building a theory based on that pattern in the interpretive-inductivequalitative path. Via using the theory of planned behaviour and prior researchers' claims and findings, this dissertation has postulated six hypotheses to find prime motivating factors that drive travellers to visit Kathmandu Valley. Hypothesis testing was possible via multiple linear regression analysis, in which the individual variables' coefficients and P. Value were taken as a reference to measure the significance of the adopted variables. The overall decision of the hypothesis testing is presented in the table below.

Table 10. Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Statement	Result	Decision
Ha1	Travel motivation positively and significantly impacts tourists' intention to visit a destination.	$(\beta = 0.04, T= 0.67, P= 0.50)$	Rejected

Ha2	Destination image positively and significantly impacts tourists' intention to visit a destination.	(β = 0.30, T= 5.07, P= 0.00)	Accepted
Ha3	Destination familiarity has a positive and significant impact on tourists' intention to visit.	(β = 0.30, T= 5.37, P= 0.00)	Accepted
Ha4	Tourist attitude positively and significantly impacts tourists' intention to visit destination.	(β = -0.00, T= -0.07, P= 0.94)	Rejected
Ha5	Subjective norms positively and significantly impact tourists' intention to visit a destination.	(β = 0.17, T= 3.08, P= 0.00)	Accepted
Ha6	PBC positively and significantly impacts tourists' intention to visit a destination.	(β = 0.16, T= 3.00, P= 0.00)	Accepted

5.2 Comparison with prior researcher findings

This section interprets this dissertation's findings in relation to the existing literature and prior research on travellers' visit intentions. This dissertation has provided many insights, especially into the factors that impact travellers' travel intention, including "attitude, subjective norms, perceived behaviour control, travel motivation, destination image, and destination familiarity." Therefore, by analysing this dissertation's empirical results with prior researchers' findings, we aim to conceptualize our research findings, measure consistencies and discrepancies, and enable further areas for exploration.

This study supports the findings of Yan & Halpenny (2019). Yan and Halpenny studied using secondary data using 24,692 samples retrieved from the Destination Canada database. A hierarchical regression analysis was utilized to understand how travel motivation, and cultural differences impact travellers' visit intention. It was found that travel motivation significantly impacts visitors' travel intention. Since this research has found similar findings, "i.e., travel motivation has a positive and significant impact on

travel intention to visit Kathmandu"; therefore, this dissertation's findings align with Yan and Halpenny's findings. However, Yan and Halphenny's research was more about the role of travel motivation and variance in a culture impacts travel intention, in which they found that Asian Canadians were more motivated towards visiting festival events and ethnic activities than Anglo-Canadians. Additionally, Yan and Halpenny (2019) found that travellers who are interested in cultural festivals and art exhibitions were mainly motivated to travel due to their knowledge and aptitude.

In the context of destination image and travellers' intention to visit a destination, Phillips Jang (2007) studied using cognitive and emotional destination images as predictor variables on travellers' visit intention. A total of 387 samples were collected from Midwestern university students from the United States. The targeted destination in this study was the New York study. It was found that travel motivation does not control the association between cognitive image and travellers' visit intention. Similarly, travel motivation strongly moderates the emotional image of the destination and their travel intention. In other words, individuals who find an arousing image of the destination bring higher visiting intention, and this occurrence becomes even more robust when travellers find their travel destination with novelty and excitement. Phillips and Jang (2007) studied destination image using many factors, such as cognitive and emotional aspects, as well as subsidiary factors, such as destination physical environment, infrastructure available, novelty, and excitement. Since we studied destination images mainly from destination cognitive and emotional images but in a collective way, we found that destination images have a positive and significant impact on travellers' intention to visit Kathmandu. Meanwhile, Phillips and Jang (2007) found that an emotional aspect of destination image significantly impacts travel intention, but cognitive image fails to become significantly impactful; therefore, this dissertation partially agrees with Phillips and

Jang's findings.

Similarly, Bianchi et al. (2017) studied travellers' intentions toward short and long-haul travel destinations using Chile as a case study. A total of 1600 responses were collected via online survey questionnaires. In the context of short-haul travel locations, destination familiarity and travellers' intentions were negatively and insignificantly

impacted; meanwhile, destination familiarity and travel intention in long-haul travel locations were positively and significantly impacted. When assessing these two factors, "short-haul and long-haul," in a single case, it was found that destination familiarity has a positive but insignificant impact on travel intention. Since our research findings have found destination familiarity has a positive and significant impact on travel intention, in fact, it was the most impactful variable on travel intention. Meanwhile, Bianchi et al.'s findings, though found positive but insignificantly; thus, we partially support to these findings.

5.3 Comparative analysis of TPB factors Impacting travel intention

In this part, we delve into a comparison of previous researchers' results on travel intention using the TPB's factors: attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. Juxtaposing our research findings with those researchers' findings who studied similar topics but within different geographical contexts enables us to comprehend how the consistencies and discrepancies of our findings go with theirs. In addition to that, this comparison will also enable us to understand the role of these three factors in a holistic way. As mentioned in the literature section 2.5, the prior researchers within the TPB model compared with this dissertation's findings and the overall decisions are presented in the table below.

Table 11. Comparative analysis of TPB factors impacting travel intention

Scholar	Study	Theory and method	Findings	Comparison with our findings	Decision

(Samiei & Reza Jalilvand, 2012)	The impact of WoM on tourism destination choice	TPB Quantitative Iran	Subjective norms significantly and positively impact travel destination selection compared to attitude and PBC. Additionally, trip quality positively impacts WoM.	Subjective norms and PBC were found positively and significantly impactful on travellers' intention to visit Kathmandu. But the attitude was negatively and insignificantly impactful	Subjective norms – supported PBC-supported Attitude-contradicts
(Yuzhanin & Fisher, 2016)	The efficacy of the TPB for predicting travel destination selection	TPB Qualitative (review)	The adequacy of TPB in anticipating travellers' destination choices is debatable.	Since we studied from an objective standpoint; therefore, it is difficult to be on the same ground.	N/A
(Soliman, 2021)	Extending TPB to anticipate destination revisit intention	TPB Quantitative Egypt	e-WoM was found to negatively and significantly impact tourist attitude and willingness to revisit the	Attitude has a negative but insignificant impact on tourists' intention to visit. However, subjective and PBC	Completely supported

			destination, but subjective and PBC were positively and significantly influenced.	do positively and substantially.	
(Al Ziadat, 2015)	Using TPB in Jordania tourism	TPB Quantitative Jordan	Attitude and Sub. Norms are found to be positive and significant in tourists' intention to revisit. But PBC impacts insignificantly.	Subjective norms and PBC were found positive and significant, but attitude was adversely and negatively	Attitude – contradicts Subjective norms – supported PBC – partially supported
(Özel & Çoban, 2022)	Intention to visit tourist destination where child rights are exploited	TPB Quantitative Turkey	All three factors are positively impact on tourists' intention to visit the destination	We found only subjective norms and PBC positively and significantly impacting travel intention.	Attitude – contradicts Subjective norms – supported PBC – supported

(Juschten et al., 2019)	Assessing metropolitan travellers to visit the proximal alpine area	TPB Quantitative Austria	Subjective norms are strong predictors of travel intention to alpine destinations. Attitude and PBC were found to be weakly impacted	We also found subjective norms to be a strong predictor, followed by PBC. But attitude does adversely and insignificantly	Attitude – contradicts Subjective norms – supported PBC - supported
(Pahrudin et al., 2021)	Tourist intention to visit tourist destination "post-Covid-19"	TPB Quantitative Indonesia	Subjective norms were negatively and insignificantly related.	N/A	N/A
(Siddiqui et al., 2023)	Behavioural intention to travel to Nizamuddin destination "in relation to transformational tourism"	TPB Quantitative India	All three factors with additional "travel motivation" were found to be positively impacted.	We found only subjective norms and PBC positively and significantly impacting travel intention.	Attitude – contradicts Subjective norms – supported PBC – supported

(Lam & Hsu, 2006)	Visitors' behavioural intention to select the destination	TPB Quantitative Hong Kong	Subjective norms, PBC, and prior experience of travel were found to be positively and significantly related, but attitude was found insignificant.	Attitude was found negative and statistically insignificant. But subjective, and PBC has a substantial positive impact	Attitude – contradicts Subjective norms – supported PBC – supported
(Nowacki et al., 2021)	Environmentally friendly tourist intention on destination selection	TPB Quantitative India	Attitude, sub. Norms and PBC towards the ecofriendly destination are positive and significant	Subjective norms and PBC were found positive and significant, but the attitude were adversely and negatively	Attitude – contradicts Subjective norms – supported PBC – supported

We have discovered the following consistencies and discrepancies when assessing the overall comparison of our findings with these researchers' findings.

Figure 9. Comparison Conclusion
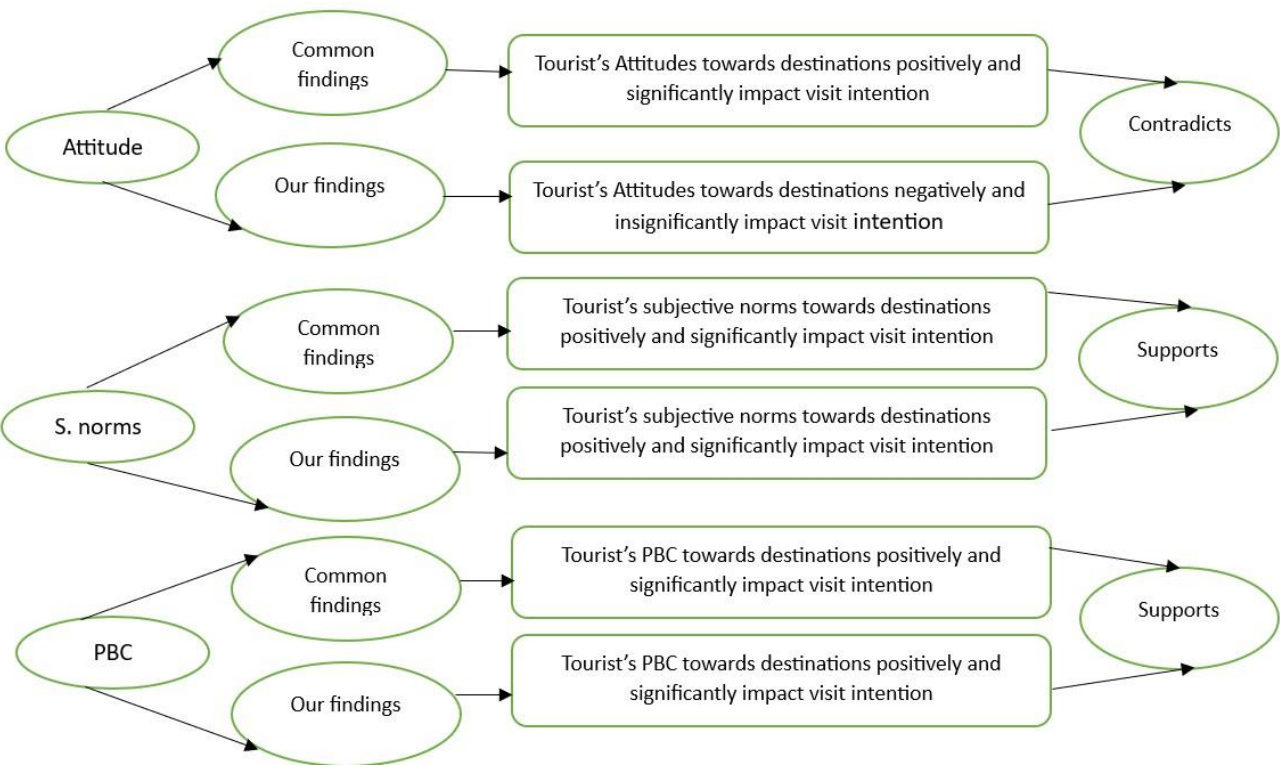
5.4 Contradictory tourist's attitude towards Kathmandu

It is evident that this dissertation has adversely affected tourists' attitudes towards Kathmandu as a travel destination, which could be possible for different practical reasons. These contradictory findings have enabled a new window for research on "tourists' attitude and destination image of Kathmandu." One possible reason might be adverse perceptions of Kathmandu in terms of safety and security, cleanliness, and public infrastructure facilities. On the other hand, media reports and social media anecdotes related to issues such as pollution, congestion, and unsystematic urban growth. This prediction is supported by the recent survey report of the "Swiss group – Air Quality Index (AQI)," which found an AQI of 265, which is 34 times worsening

as compared to the World Health Organization (WHO) yearly air quality evaluation (The Kathmandu Post, 2024). The recent situation of Kathmandu region's air quality is presented in the "Figure 5.4.1" below. To minimize tourists' adverse sentiment towards Kathmandu as a travel destination, it is imperative to ensure the cleanliness of the city and maintain better air quality. Meanwhile, engaging in an active dialogue with local authorities and tourists with prior visit experience of the Kathmandu region would provide more nuanced findings on tourists' negative attitude towards this city.

Figure 10 – Visual image of air quality of Kathmandu – inspection period

Source: The Kathmandu Post (2024)

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This chapter will provide an overall summary of the key findings of the dissertation on travellers' motivation, attitudes, and behavioural factors impacting their intention to visit the Kathmandu region. It will also provide the answer to the research question as allocated in the introduction section. Lastly, this dissertation will end by providing research limitations and managerial implications.

This master's dissertation aims to explore travellers' motivations and how their attitudinal and behavioural factors impact their intention to visit the Kathmandu region. A quantitative research method was adopted mainly due to the implication of the existing theory, the "theory of planned behaviour," and the nature of the research questions. The nature of the research question demands that we explore prime motivating factors, including attitudinal and behavioural factors, that drive tourists to visit the Kathmandu Valley. These factors made positivist philosophy and deductive approach appropriate, which go hand-in-hand with the quantitative research method. A total of 282 participants' responses were collected using online survey questionnaires.

The outcomes of this dissertation found that the theory of planned behaviour used a conceptual framework has a high degree of predictability of travellers' attitudes and behavioural factors towards intention to visit a travel destination. Firstly, this dissertation aims to explore "*prime motivating factors that drive tourists to visit Kathmandu Valley.*" firstly, we found the prime motivating factor for visiting Kathmandu Valley is its heritage and architectural attraction; in fact, one in four visitors' visiting the Kathmandu region was motivated to travel due to its heritage and architectural sites. It seems fairly convincing as Kathmandu has procured seven UNESCO World Heritage sites; therefore, it fascinates and offers novelty and excitement as they are popular and have a rich tapestry of history and architectural

significance.   Beyond this, individuals' primary motivating reason for visiting Kathmandu Valley was to explore cultural events and traditions, followed by culinary and spiritual driving factors. From an inferential statistics standpoint, travel motivation has a marginal and statistically insignificant impact on visitors' intention to visit

Kathmandu. Secondly, this dissertation aims to answer the question: "*How do tourists' attitudes and behavioural attributes impact travel intention to visit Kathmandu Valley?*". To resolve this research question, three factors, "attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control" from the theory of planned behaviour theory, were adopted, which is a widely used theory to predict customers' attitudes and behaviours, including visitors' travel intentions. Interestingly, this dissertation has found that attitude has an adverse and insignificant impact on travellers' intention to visit the Kathmandu region.

Despite prior scholars who emphasize the significant positive influence of attitude on tourist travel intention, this dissertation has discovered inconsistent outcomes, showing an adverse, highly insignificant association between individuals' attitudes about a travel destination and their intention to travel. Lastly, this dissertation answered to: "How do tourists perceive the image of their destination, impacting their travel intention to visit Kathmandu Valley?" It was found that both destination image and familiarity were found highly impactful on tourists' intention to visit

Kathmandu region. when travelers' perceived image of their destination and familiarity increases by one unit, their intention to visit goes up by 30%. In another way, tourists have found Kathmandu

Valley's perceived image and familiarity to substantially influence creating a positive intention to travel to Kathmandu Valley.

6.1 Research limitation

"Every bean has its black"; that is, every research study has some limitations, no matter how hard a researcher tries to make it limitation-free. Though we tried to make this

dissertation as perfect as possible, we could make it so that there are some limitations. Firstly, this dissertation was driven by objective-based realities in which positivist philosophy was implied, which led to the adoption of the quantitative method. In another way, this paper lacks a qualitative perspective, as interviewing tourists' perspectives about Kathmandu and their willingness to visit might have produced more in depth and nuanced findings. In order to overcome these drawbacks, mixed methods approach incorporating qualitative techniques, such as focus groups and interviews would have offered deeper understandings and explanations that may be lacking from quantitative data alone. The study would have been enhanced by qualitative data since it provides in-depth explanations, examines causation, and identifies variables that quantitative measurements could miss. This would have allowed us to improve validity, triangulate results, and provide a more thorough knowledge of social phenomena with this combination. A mixed study would have made this dissertation more meaningful as it holds tourists' objective and subjective realities. Since the physical distance between the researchers' current residence and the target population was highly distant, due to qualitative research, especially via "interviewing" tourists, was less feasible. Though it could have been done virtually via social media channels, not every potential tourist is equally active, so we have to compromise with those with active social media users. Additionally, it is a daunting challenge to find appropriate participants for interview sessions when the physical distance between us and the participants is very high. Secondly, this dissertation has implied the snowball sampling method, which follows a chain-referral system where earlier participants request their fellow friends and closest ones to fill out the survey. It was evident because it was difficult for us to penetrate the targeted population. However, it comes with a comparatively higher probability of selection bias as investigators have minimal control over the survey project. This might be the reason this dissertation's survey project is highly dominated by young adults, especially those between 20 and 39 years old.

6.2 Managerial implications

This adoption of the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) in this dissertation to study tourists' motivations and behavioural factors impacting travel intention to Kathmandu Valley. The adoption of TPB in this paper has produced several key managerial implications. Firstly, tourism operators, destination management organizations, and local communities could leverage the substantial influence of subjective norms by creating strategies that bring positive social influence, which will cause more positive word-of-mouth to start to disperse to potential tourists. Along with that, simplifying travel-related difficulties, such as platforms for information about destinations, logistics, and better infrastructure, could make individuals perceive behavioural control more robust and positive. In this context, PBC positively and significantly impacts visitors' intention to visit the Kathmandu region. Tailoring different forms of marketing messages and social media content highlighting Kathmandu's heritage and architectural sites will bring a more positive sense of travel intention because the direct motivation factor was found weak in this paper. For that, leveraging social media as a marketing channel can offer more perks, as this dissertation has found social media sites to be a significant channel for seeking travel-related information and decision-making processes. However, this dissertation has produced inconsistent results when concerned with attitudinal factors, as tourists' attitudes towards Kathmandu as a destination have a negative and insignificant impact on travel intention. Therefore, more research is needed on why tourists have such an adverse impression of the Kathmandu region. Identifying the root cause of adverse and insignificant attitudes towards Kathmandu as a destination allows Kathmandu metropolitan and DMOs to rectify their possible faults and regulate adequate strategies to ameliorate a positive impression.

6.3 Further study recommendation

This dissertation has made significant strides in the field of travel motivation and tourist behaviour, providing unique insights into the factors influencing tourists' intention to visit the Kathmandu region. It has also delved into the impact of

destination image and familiarity on travel intention. While the findings mostly align with previous studies, there are still areas that warrant further exploration to enhance the robustness of the findings and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding.

At first, this dissertation was only dependent on TPB theory, and the predictors of behavioural intention, "i.e., attitudes, subjective norms, and PBC," were all derived from this theory. Though TPB is considered a widely implied theory to predict consumer behaviours and travellers' intentions and behaviours (Hsu & Huang, 2012; Nazarudin & Sayd, 2022), integrating other theoretical frameworks would have made dissertation findings more robust and reliable. Further research is suggested using an integrated framework to predict travel intention. Though this dissertation has added two factors, destination image and destination familiarity, these predictors are not dependent on specific theories. More importantly, the R-squared value of "0.76" also suggests further study recommendations by adding more predictors. Though the adopted predictor variables have a 76% influence on the variance changes in a respondent variable (i.e., intention to visit the Kathmandu region), 24% is captured by external factors, which is still unknown; thus, it requires further exploration.

Secondly, studying comparative analysis would have made this dissertation more robust. This dissertation has studied Kathmandu as a singular case study; however, learning by incorporating other popular destinations of Nepal would have produced strengths and weaknesses of each destination. A more comprehensive understanding of tourist development and management techniques would be provided by comparing analysis across other Nepalese destinations. Every location in Nepal has its own distinct historical, natural, and cultural features that draw in a variety of tourists. Researchers can better understand what motivates tourism in Nepal by looking at patterns in visitor preferences, behavior, and satisfaction levels across a variety of sites. This method not only identifies each destination's advantages and disadvantages, but it also offers a foundation for evaluation and best practices in tourist management for the whole of Nepal. Therefore, we feel exploring by incorporating other destinations is a valid approach.

In addition, conducting cross-culture studies could have produced more insights into how cultural differences impact travel intentions and shape tourists' behaviours.

Comparisons of tourists from different cultural backgrounds would have made it easier to understand which specific culturally based tourists have more significant influence and which don't. Incorporating cross-cultural research would also offer a deeper understanding of how cultural variations influence travellers' decision-making and behaviour. Destination Management Organization (DMO) and tourism operators may better customize their offers to satisfy the varied requirements and expectations of both domestic and foreign tourists by having a deeper understanding of these cultural influences. For instance, contrasting travelers from Western nations, South Asian neighbors, and other international locations might show different traveller motivations, activity preferences, spending patterns, and opinions about the quality of services. These kinds of information are extremely helpful in creating marketing efforts that are specifically targeted, creating culturally appropriate tourism offerings, and cultivating satisfying visitor experiences that encourage return business and favorable word-of-mouth advertising. Exploration of tourists' intention to visit the Kathmandu region by comparing different cultural backgrounds would have made it easier for DMOs and operators to target specific tourists.

6.4 The role of qualitative studies in this study

This dissertation could have used a mixed-method approach by adding in-depth interviews or focus groups. The mixed method might have produced more nuanced findings for this dissertation as it holds both subjective and objective realities. However, some factors made it too difficult for the researchers to incorporate a qualitative approach in this dissertation. Firstly, the physical distance between researchers- and – the study region was too far, making it difficult to penetrate the study population. Though it could have been possible via online channels such as social media, the quantitative results, with almost 2/3rd participants being young adults, make it an even more daunting challenge to find participants with diverse age backgrounds for in-depth interview sessions. Secondly, incorporating these young participants in interview sessions would have made this dissertation more dominated towards young adults, which, in a way, produced more biased results. This dissertation

has found that tourists' attitudes towards the Kathmandu region are adversely and insignificantly; therefore, interviewing social media influencers, especially those whose specialization is traveling, would help to find the underlying reason for such anomalies. However, we tried to input the role of social media sites for tourists in travel-related decision making but surfacy. However, further research exploring the impact of social media platforms on visit intention towards Kathmandu would produce valuable insights. This way, DMOs and tour operators can attract more tourists to the Kathmandu region through effective social media influencer marketing. As the world has seen an increase in online reviews, ratings, and feedback, social media influencers, such as qualitative research using in-depth interviews with social media travel influencers might produce more nuanced findings on the impact of social media sites on travel intention. It was impossible for us because it was difficult for us to access suitable candidates for interviews. After all, we have been physically out of the study region for more than 3 to 4 years, so it was too difficult for us to convince participants to participate in interview sessions virtually.

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Appendix

1.1 Demographic profile

I belong to the age group of:
320 responses

- Under 20 years old
- 20-29 years old
- 30-39 years old
- 40-49 years old
- 50-59 years old
- 60-69 years old
- 70 years old or above

20.6%
31.3%
10.3%
34.1%
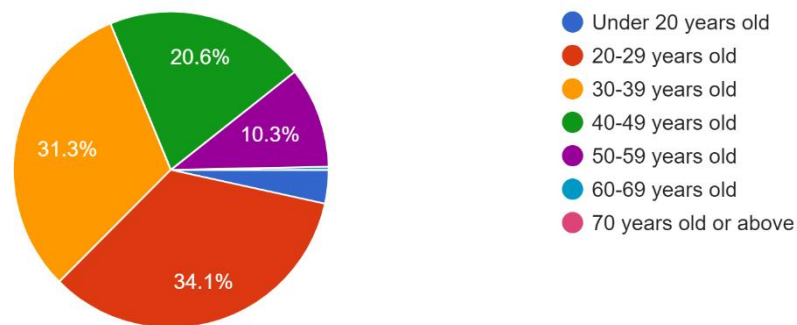
My gender identity is:

320 responses
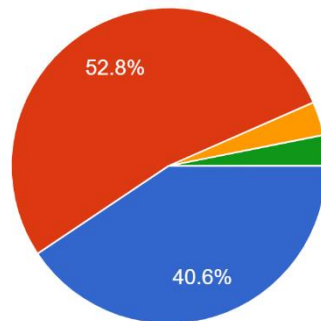
- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say
- Other

52.8%

40.6%

My educational qualification is:

319 responses
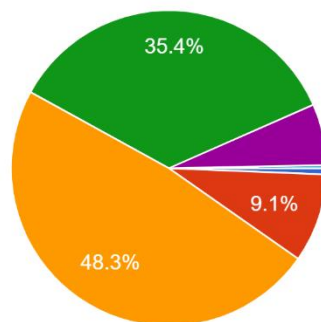
- School level
- High school level
- Bachelor level
- Master level
- Doctorate level
- Vocational education

35.4%

9.1%

48.3%

My present marital status is:

318 responses
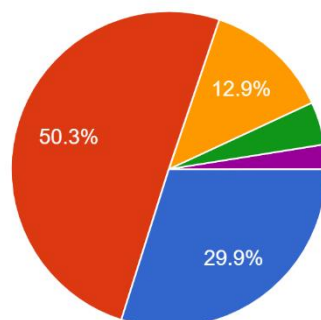
- Single
- Married
- Divorced
- Others
- Prefer not to say

12.9%

50.3%

29.9%

My approximate monthly income after tax is:
321 responses

Legend:
- Less than 25,000 NPR
- 25,000 – 50,000 NPR
- 50,001- 75,000 NPR
- 75,001 – 10,000 NPR
- Over 1,00,000

- 32.7%
- 10.9%
- 26.8%
- 24.9%
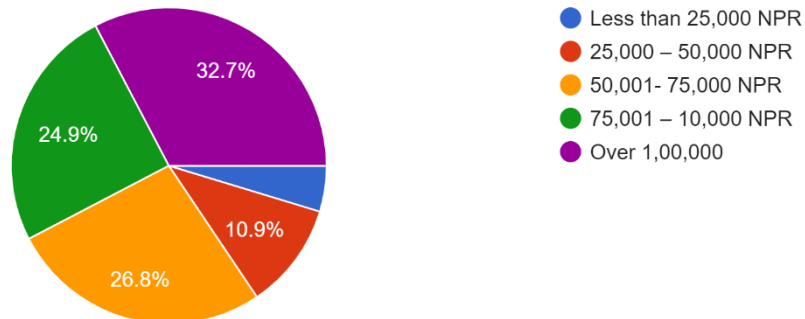
How often do you go for vacation purposes in a year?
321 responses

Legend:
- Once a year
- 2-3 times a year
- 4-6 times a year
- Over six times
- Never

- 23.4%
- 9%
- 48.3%
- 19%
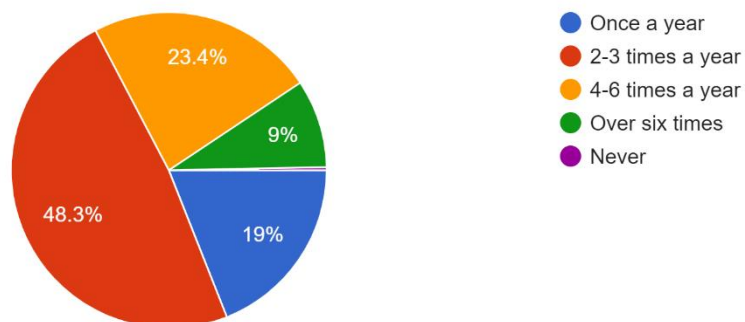
What primary reason motivated me to visit Kathmandu Valley as a tourist?
319 responses

Legend:
- Cultural reason
- Spiritual reason
- Heritage and architecture reason
- Gastronomy reason
- Recreational reason
- Others

- 10%
- 24.1%
- 12.5%
- 17.6%
- 26%
- 9.7%
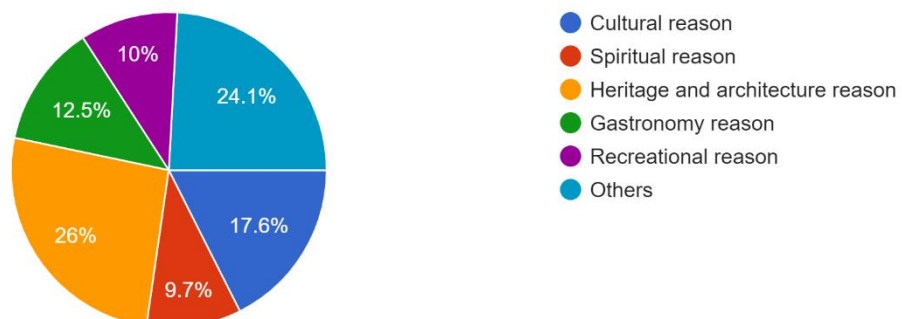
How do you usually access travel-related information, reviews, and ratings about tourist destinations?

315 responses

- Online travel sites (such as TripAdvisor, Booking.com, etc)
- Social media networks
- Recommendations from the closest ones
- Travel magazines and guidebooks
- others

10.5% / 15.9% / 16.2% / 36.5% / 21%
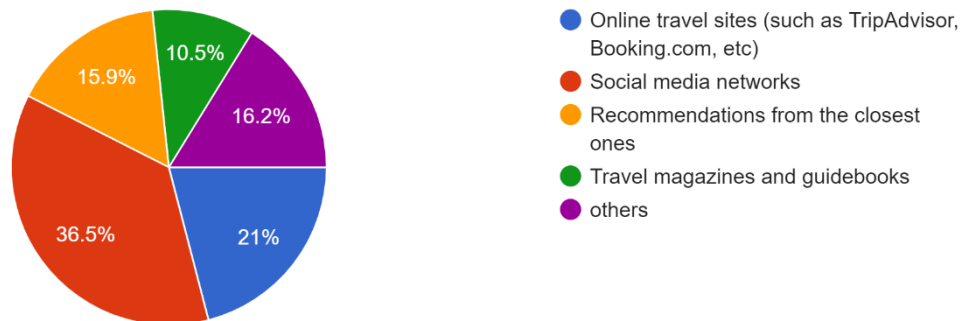
1.2 Participants' responses – core questionnaires

attitude	subjective norms	PBC	Travel motivation	Destination image	Destination familarity	Intention to visit
4.25	4	3.75	4	4	4	4
4.5	3	4.25	4.25	4	4	3.75
5	5	5	5	4.5	5	5
1.75	2.25	4	3	4.25	4	4
5	5	5	5	4.75	4.25	4.5
4.5	4	2.75	5	5	4.5	3.5
4.25	3.25	3.5	4	4	4	3.25
4.75	5	4.5	4.75	4.25	4.75	4.5
4	5	4	5	5	5	5
3.25	3	4	4.5	4.5	3.75	4.25

4.5	3.5	4.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75
3	3.25	3.5	2.5	2.5	1.25	1.75
4.75	5	3.75	3.75	3.75	4	4.5
5	5	4.75	5	4.75	5	5
5	4.75	5	5	5	5	4.5
4.5	3.75	3.75	3.5	4.25	4.25	3
4.5	4	3.5	4	4	3.5	4.5
4	3.75	4	4.25	5	3.5	4
3.5	4.25	3.75	4	4.75	4.25	5
2	1.75	1.5	2.5	2.75	2.25	2
2.5	2.5	2.75	4	2.5	2	3
3.75	4	4	4.75	4.25	3.75	4.5
3.5	3.25	2.75	3.25	3	3	3
4.5	4.5	4.5	5	4.5	4.5	4.5
2.75	2.5	3	2.5	3.25	3	3.5
3.5	4.25	4	4	3.75	3.75	4.25
4	4.5	4.25	4.75	4.5	4.5	3.75
4.5	4.25	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.5
1.75	2	1.75	1.25	1.25	1.75	1.25
3.25	3.75	4	4.25	4.5	4.75	4.25

3.5	3.5	4.5	4	5	4.5	4.5
3.75	4.25	3.75	4.5	4.75	5	4.75
4	4	5	4	4.5	3.25	4.25
5	5	5	4.25	4.75	4.25	5
4.25	4	3.75	4.25	3.75	4	2.5
4.75	4	4	4.5	4.5	4.75	4.5
5	5	5	5	5	5	5
5	5	4	5	4.75	5	5
4.25	4.5	4.5	4.25	4.75	4.5	4.75
5	5	5	5	5	5	5
4.5	3.5	4.5	4	4.5	3.75	4
4.25	4	4.25	4.75	4.75	4.5	4.25
2	2	2.25	1.75	2	2	2
4	3.75	4.5	4	4.25	3.5	4.25
4	3.5	4.75	4.25	4.5	4.75	4.25
2.75	2.25	2.5	3	3	2.5	3.25
3	3	2.5	3.25	2	2.75	3.75
2	1.5	2.75	1.75	2.25	2.75	2.75
4.25	3.75	4	4.5	3.75	4	4.75
3.5	3.5	3.5	4.25	4.25	4.25	3.75

3.5	3.5	4.25	3.75	4.5	4	4
4	4.25	4.5	4.75	4.25	4	4
3.5	4	4	4.75	4.5	4.25	4.25
4	4.5	3.75	4.25	4.25	4	3.5
2.75	2.25	1.5	2.75	2	2	2
4.25	4.25	4	4	4.75	4.25	4.25
3.25	3.75	3	3.25	3.5	3.5	3.5
4	3.75	4.75	4.25	3.75	3.5	3.5
4	4	3.5	3.5	4	4	4
3.25	4	3.5	3.75	3.75	4	3.75
3.25	3.75	4	4	3.5	3.75	4.25
1.75	1.75	2.25	2	2	2	2
3.5	3.5	3.25	3.75	4	4.25	3.75
3.75	4	3.75	3.75	3.25	3.75	3.5
3.75	3.5	3.75	3.5	3.75	3.75	3.5
4.25	4.25	3.5	3.75	4	4	4.25
3	4	4.25	4	3.5	3.5	3.25
3.5	3.75	3.75	4	3.75	4.5	3.75
3.25	3.5	3.25	3.5	4.25	3.75	3.75
3.5	4.25	4.75	4	4	4.5	3.5

4	4.25	3.75	4.25	4	3.75	3.75
1.75	1.75	1.75	1.75	1.75	1.5	1.25
2.5	2.5	2.5	2.25	2	2.25	2.5
3.75	4	4	4.5	4	4.25	4
4	4.25	4.5	3.5	4.5	3.5	4
3.5	4.25	4.25	3.5	4.25	3.5	4.25
4.25	3.25	3.5	3.75	4	3.75	3.5
2.5	1.5	2	1.5	2	2.5	2
3.75	4.5	4.25	3.5	3.75	3.75	4
3.5	3.5	3.25	3.5	4	3.5	3.25
3.5	4	3.25	3.75	3.25	3.75	3.75
3.5	4	3.75	3	3.5	3.75	3
4.5	3.75	4.5	4	4	3.5	4
3.75	3.5	3.5	3.25	3	3.25	3
3.75	3.75	4	3.75	3.75	4.5	4
4	3.75	3.25	4.25	4	5	3.75
4.5	4.25	4	4	3.75	4.25	3.75
2.25	2	1.75	2.5	2.5	2.75	2.5
3.5	3.75	3.25	4	4	3.5	4
4	4	3.5	3.75	3.5	4.25	4

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5	5	5	5	5	5	5
4	3.25	4.25	4.5	4.25	3.5	3.75
4	4	4	3.75	3.75	3.5	3.25
4	4	3.75	3.25	3.75	4.5	4.25
4	4.25	4.25	3.75	4.5	3.75	4.25
4	4	4	4	4	3.75	3.75
2	2	2.25	2.25	2	2.25	1.5
4.25	4.5	4.75	5	5	5	5
4.25	3.75	4	4.75	4.5	4.25	4.25
5	5	5	4.25	4.5	4.25	4.5
3.5	4.25	4.75	4.25	4.75	4	4
4	4.5	4.25	3.75	4.25	4	4.75
2	1.75	2.25	1.75	1.75	2.25	2
3.5	4.5	4.5	4.25	4	4	4
3.5	4.5	4	4	4.5	4.25	4.5
4	3.5	4.5	4.25	4.75	4.75	5
4	4.25	4.25	4.75	4	4.5	4.25
3.25	4	3.75	5	4.25	4.75	3.75
5	5	5	4	3.75	3.75	4
4	4.25	4	3.5	4	4.25	4

1.5	2.5	2.5	2.75	2.5	1.75	2.5
3	3.75	3.5	3.75	4.25	4.25	4
3	3.5	3.75	4	4.5	3.75	3.75
3.75	4.25	4.25	5	4	4.5	4.5
3.5	4	3.25	4	4.75	4.75	3.75
4.25	4.75	3.5	4.25	4.5	4.5	3.75
4.25	4	3	3.75	4.5	3.5	3.75
4	4.75	4.5	4.75	4.25	4.25	4.5
4	3.75	4.5	4.5	4.25	4.5	4.25
3.25	3	3.25	3.75	3.25	3.5	3.5
3.25	4.5	4	4	3.5	4.25	4
4	4.75	4.75	4	3.5	3.5	3.5
2.5	1.5	2.5	1.5	2	2.25	1.75
4.25	4.25	4	4.5	4.25	4.5	3.75
4.25	4	4.5	4	4	3.75	4.75
4.25	4.5	4.5	4.25	4.25	4	4.5
3.5	4	4.75	3.75	4.25	4	4
3.25	3	2.75	3	3	5	4.5
3.75	4.25	4	4.5	4.5	4.75	4.25
4	4	4.5	3.75	4	4	4.5

4	3.5	4	4.25	4.5	4	4.75
3.75	4.25	4.25	4.5	4	4	4.25
3.75	3.5	3.25	3.75	3.75	4.25	3.5
3.5	3.75	4.25	4.5	4	4.25	4.25
3	2.75	3	3	3	3	4.25
3.5	3	3	3	3	3.5	3.5
3.5	3	3	3.25	3	3	3.25
4.5	4.25	3.75	4.25	3.75	4.25	3.75
4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.75
4.25	4.5	3.75	4.25	4.25	3.5	4
3.5	4	4	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5
3.5	3.75	4.25	4.5	4.5	4.25	4
2.25	2.25	1.5	1.25	1.75	2.25	1.75
4	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.25	4.25
3.5	4.25	4.25	3.75	3.5	3.75	4.75
3.75	4.25	3.5	4.5	4.25	4.5	4
4.25	4	4.5	4.5	4.25	4.75	4.5
4.75	4.25	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.75
4	4.5	4.75	4.25	4.25	4.75	4.25
4.25	4.5	4.5	4.25	4.25	4.75	4.5

4.25	4	4.75	4.5	4.5	4.25	4
4.25	3.5	4.25	4.25	3.5	4.5	4.25
4.5	4.5	4.5	4.25	4.75	3.75	4.25
4	3.75	4.25	4.5	4	4.5	4.5
4.25	4.5	4	4	4.25	3.75	4
4	4	4.25	4.25	4	4.5	4.25
4.5	4.5	4.75	4.5	4	4.25	4.5
4.25	4.5	4.75	3.75	4	4.25	4.5
4.25	4.75	4.25	4.5	3.5	3.5	4.25
4.5	4.5	3.75	4.5	4	3.5	4.25
4.25	4.25	3.5	4	4.5	3.75	4.75
3.5	3.5	3.25	4	4.25	4.25	4
3.5	4	4	4.25	4	3.75	3.75
3.5	4.25	4.25	4	4.25	4.25	4
4.25	4.5	4.25	4.25	3.75	4	4.5
4.25	4.75	3.75	4	3.75	4.25	4.25
4.25	4.25	4	4.25	3.5	3.75	4
4	3.5	3.5	3.25	3.5	3.5	3.25
3.5	4.5	4.5	4	4.75	4.25	4.75
1.5	1.5	1.75	2	2.25	2	2

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1.5	1.5	1.75	2	2	1.75	2
3.25	3.75	4	3.5	3.75	4	4.25
5	5	5	5	5	5	4.5
3.75	4.75	4.75	4.25	4.75	4.25	5
4.25	4	3.75	4	4.75	4.5	4.5
4.5	3.75	4.25	4.75	5	4.5	4.75
4	4	4.5	4.75	4.5	4	4.75
4.5	4.5	4.25	4.5	4.5	4.75	4.25
4.5	4.25	4.5	4.75	4.25	4.75	4
4.75	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.75	4.75	4.5
4.75	4.5	4.25	4.5	4.5	4.75	4.75
4.25	3.25	4	3.75	4	4.25	4.25
4.25	4.5	3	5	4.75	4	5
3.75	4.25	4.25	4	4.5	4.75	4.25
4.25	4.5	4.25	4.5	4.5	4	4.5
3.75	4.25	3.5	2.25	4.75	4.25	4.75
4	4.75	4.5	4.5	4	3	3.25
3	3.5	3.75	3.5	2.5	4	4
4	4	2.75	3	3	3	3
2.5	2	2	2	2	2	2.5

4.25	5	4.75	5	5	4.75	5
3.5	4.25	4	4	2.5	3.5	3.5
3	4	4.25	3.75	3.5	4	4.5
3.75	3.75	2.75	2.5	3.25	3.5	3.75
3.25	3.5	4	5	4.25	5	4.5
4.25	4.5	4.5	4	4.25	3.75	4.5
3.75	3.25	3.5	3	3.75	4	4
4	4.25	3.5	4.25	4.25	4.5	3.25
3.25	4	4	3.75	4	3.75	4
3.5	4	4	4	4.5	3.75	4
3.75	4	4	4.5	4	4.5	4
4.5	3.25	3.75	4.25	4	4	4.5
4	4.75	3.5	2.25	3	3.25	3.25
3.75	3.75	4.25	3.75	3.75	3.25	4
3	3.5	3.25	4	4	3.75	3.5
4.25	3.5	3.25	4	3.75	4	4.25
4.25	3.5	4.25	3.75	4	4	4
3.5	3.75	3	4	4	3.25	4.25
4.25	4.75	2.5	3	3	3.5	4
3.75	4.25	3.75	3.5	4.25	2.75	4.25

2.25	3	4.25	3.25	3.5	5	3.25
4	3	3.5	3.75	4	4	4
3	4.25	3.5	3.5	4	3.75	3.75
4	3.75	4.5	3.25	3.75	4.25	4.75
3.5	2.75	3.75	3.75	3	4	4
3.5	3.5	3.5	3.75	3.5	3.75	3.25
3.25	4	3.5	3.5	3.75	3.25	3.5
3.5	3.5	3.25	3.5	3.75	3.25	3.5
3.75	3.75	4	4.25	3.5	3.75	4
2.75	4	3.5	3.5	4.25	3.5	4
3.25	3	3	3	3.25	3.5	3.25
4	3.5	4	4	4	3.75	3.75
3.75	3.75	3.5	3.25	3.75	3.25	3.75
3.75	4	3.75	4	4.5	4	3.75
3.5	4	3.75	4.25	4	4	4
3.25	3.5	3.5	4	4.25	4.25	4.25
3.5	3.75	4	4.25	3.75	4	4
3.25	3.75	4	3.75	4.25	4	4.75
2.5	3.25	4	4.25	3.25	4	3.75
3.25	3.25	3.75	4.25	4	4.25	3.75

3.5	4.5	4	3.75	3.75	3.5	4.25
3	3.75	4.25	3.75	4	3.75	4.5
3.5	4.5	3.75	3.5	3.75	4.25	4.5
4.5	3.75	4.25	4	4.25	4	4
4	3.75	3.5	3.5	3.75	4.25	4
4	4	4	3.5	3.75	4	3.5
3	3.75	3	3.5	3.25	3.5	4
4.25	3.75	3.5	4	3.5	4	3.75
3	4.5	3.75	4.25	4.25	3.5	4
1.5	1.75	1.5	2	2	2	1.5
4	3.5	3.75	4.5	3.5	4.25	3.75
4	4	4.25	4.25	4	3.5	3.25
2	2	1.5	1.5	1.75	1.75	1.75
3.5	3.75	4	3.75	4	4	4
4.25	3.5	3.5	4	3.25	4	3.75
3.5	3.25	4.25	4.25	4	4	4.25
3.5	3.5	4	4	3.25	3	3
3.5	4	4.5	4.25	4	4	4.25
2.5	4	4.25	3.25	4.5	4.25	4.25
4	4.25	4.5	3.75	4.5	4.25	4

3.5	4	3.75	3.5	4	3.5	3.5
3.75	4.5	4	3.75	3.75	4	4
4.25	4	3.75	4	3.5	3.75	4
4	4.25	4.75	4.25	4.25	3.75	4.25
4.25	3.25	3.5	3.75	3.75	4.25	3
1.75	2	2	1.5	2	1.75	2
3.75	5	4.5	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25
3.25	4.25	3.75	4	3	3	3.25
3.75	4.75	4	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.5
4.5	4.25	4.5	4.25	4.25	3.75	4
3.75	4.5	3.25	4.25	4	4	4
4.25	3.5	3.75	4	3.5	4	3.75
3.75	4	4	4	5	5	5
4	4	3.75	3.75	4.25	3.75	4
4.5	4.25	3.75	4	4.75	4.25	4.25
3.5	3.75	4.25	4.25	3	4.75	4
4.25	4.5	3.75	4	4.25	4	3.5
3.25	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.75	3.25	3.5
4.25	3.5	3.75	3.75	4.25	4.25	4
4.25	4	3.75	3.5	4	3.75	3.5

3.75	3.75	3.5	4	4.5	4.5	4
1.75	1.75	1.75	1.75	1.75	1.75	2
1.75	1.75	2	1.5	2	2	2
3.75	3.75	3.75	4.75	4.75	4.25	4.5
3.5	3.75	3.25	3.25	4	3.5	4.25
4.5	4.5	4	4.5	3.75	4	4
3.5	3.25	4	3.75	3	3	3
3.75	4.75	3.75	3.25	4	3.75	4.25
4.25	4.25	3.75	4.5	3.5	4	3.75
2.25	2.25	1.75	2	2	1.75	2.25
4.5	4	3.75	3.75	4.25	4	3.75
4	4.25	3.5	4	4.25	4	4

1.3 Questionnaire formation

Factors	Statements	
	I am delighted and eager about the prospect of visiting Kathmandu.	
Attittude	I feel that visiting Kathmandu would be both entertaining and gratifying.	(Al Ziadat, 2015; Soliman, 2021)

	I believe that visiting Kathmandu will give me invaluable experiences and memories.	
	I see Kathmandu as an intriguing and worthwhile location.	
S.norms	My friends and family think that visiting Kathmandu is a fantastic idea.	(Al Ziadat, 2015; Soliman, 2021)
	People whose opinions I appreciate have encouraged me to visit Kathmandu.	
	Others close to me would agree with my decision to visit Kathmandu.	
	I feel that most of those close to me would support my choice to visit Kathmandu.	
PBC	I'm confident in my ability to arrange a vacation in Kathmandu.	(Al Ziadat, 2015; Hsu & Huang, 2012; Soliman, 2021)
	I feel in control of the variables that may impact my decision to visit Kathmandu.	

	I am convinced that I will be able to overcome any difficulties in visiting Kathmandu.	
	I see going to Kathmandu as something I can manage.	
T.motivation	I'm excited to visit Kathmandu and learn about different cultures and traditions.	(K. Kim, 2007; Lee, 2009; Soliman, 2021)
	I'm fascinated by Kathmandu's natural beauty and scenery.	
	My motivation for visiting Kathmandu stems mainly from a desire to experience adventure and excitement.	
	Interacting with people and immersing oneself in the local culture inspires me to visit Kathmandu.	
D.Image	When I think of Kathmandu, I visualize vibrant streets, cultural sites, and rich history & architecture.	(Phillips & Jang, 2007; Tan & Wu, 2016)
	The photos and tales I've seen or heard about Kathmandu entice me to visit the city.	

	Kathmandu offers unique and authentic experiences that will improve the overall pleasure of my vacation.	
	I believe that the rewards and experiences acquired by visiting Kathmandu will outweigh the price.	
D.familarity	I investigated and learned about Kathmandu's many sights and activities, and I am familiar with my nature.	(Tan & Wu, 2016)
	I've been to comparable places, so the prospect of going to Kathmandu comforts me.	
	I understand what to expect regarding Kathmandu's culture, cuisine, and lifestyle.	
	My prior travel experiences with similar places have contributed to my familiarity with Kathmandu.	
Visit intention	I plan to visit Kathmandu shortly.	(Al Ziadat, 2015; Soliman, 2021; Tan & Wu, 2016)
	I strongly desire to experience Kathmandu's authentic cultural, architectural, and local cuisines soon.	
	I'm strongly contemplating visiting Kathmandu on my next vacation.	

	I'm positive to recommend to closest ones to make plans to visit Kathmandu shortly.	