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## **Perception and Motivation of Female Trekking Guide on Tourism**

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### **Abstract**

*Tourism is alive with dynamic growth, new activities, new technology, new markets and rapid changes records numbers of tourists are travelling the globe attracted by an increased variety of term package cruises, adventures and independent itineraries. Tourism has become prime industries in the world that employs in a large scale and generates income. Nowadays, Nepalese women have been involved in many sectors. And certainly, tourism is one of the key industries for developing countries like Nepal. Hereby, being a Female Trekking Guide, it is one of the challenging jobs for them. So, this research focuses on the perception and motivation of Female Trekking Guides towards this profession.*

**Keywords:** Empowerment, sustainable tourism, women participation, motivation

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### **Introduction**

A modern man can live in a modest living but he cannot forsake his habit of travelling and hence, his interest of knowing something new, consequently tourism had developed astronomically throughout the world (Kunwar, 2010). Tourism persists with dynamic growth, new activities, new technology and new markets. Precisely, changes record numbers of tourists are travelling across the world for multiple purposes. According to Agrawal and Upadhyay (2012) express their ideas that for the first time the definition of international tourism was considered in 1937 under the Economic Commission of the League of Nations. The concept of pleasure travel as it existed in the west can be associated with the Roman empire which probably the first pleasure travelers in the world who also travelled during holiday occasions, particularly the famous Olympic games, Spas (Bhatia, 1996).

In today's world, tourism has become a fundamental activity of human beings. Government of all countries are involved in the development of tourism sector. Tourism is considered to be a set of superior and praiseworthy activities of modern man. Tourism has become a medium of economic indicator of country. It is considered an important source of economic balance of any country. According to Satyal (2000), it creates economic resources as well as promotes international understanding. Tourism is such a medium, through which we promotes knowledge with each other and we can create mutual understanding in the people of the whole world. Tourism teaches to respect different beliefs, religions, traditions and customs at the same footing. It inspires religious and cultural harmony and tries to create peaceful relationship among the nations of the world (Chandra, 2006).

Many social scientists and economists who make forecasts concerning the nature of human society in the future seem to indicate that all modern countries are progressing quite rapidly in lifestyles towards which favor the growth and development of tourism. It also promotes cultures and indigenous traditions. International tourism offers a unique opportunity for cultural exchange and dialogues between civilizations (Pathak, 2012). A smokeless industry, tourism has become one of the primary industries in the world employing people directly and indirectly. Nepal has the greatest geographical variation and largest ethnic diversity in the world. Tourism has embraced approximately 10.3% and 7.9% of contribution of GDP in the world and Nepal respectively (NTS, 2019).

From the earliest time, travel has fascinated men however the travel in the beginning was largely unconscious and rather unplanned and simple affair (Sharma 2004). Adventure tourism here dates back to the early attempts to scale the world's highest peaks. Trekking is the name given to travelling on foot. Fun and enjoyment are the two main aspects of trekking which constantly attract youths and make them realize their youthful energy. Meanwhile, trekking is rapidly gaining popularity in western countries where man is becoming a slave of the mechanized mode of life (Ghimire, 2002). People who love natural beauty and enjoy themselves and travel to Himalaya and other parts of Nepal in Thousand.

Nepal is the ultimate destination for the trekking enthusiast, offering a myriad of possibilities from the short and easy to the demanding challenging of the show peaks being called "A trekkers paradise" (Pathak, 2012). In many third world countries, in terms of social, economic and political conditions they women had been compelled to live on their stage of virtual slavery due to the patriarchal society. Charles et al (2012) argue that, many definitions of "tourism" and the "tourist" are based on distance travelled, the length of time spent, and the purpose of trip. And tourism as a smokeless industry, is being one of the major industries in the world as well as it has provided direct as well as indirect employment for Nepali women which is really praiseworthy.

In Addition, women have been down-trodden and relegated to an inferior position in the social set up. This is true not only of developing countries like India but of developed countries as well. It is said that, but true fact, that women, who constitute one-half of humanity, have always been treated as second class citizens and denied even basic rights, in most cases. Men have always dominated and considered them as inferior to them (Sinha, 2006). In 2007, the UNWTO's theme for the World Tourism Day was "Tourism Opens Door for Women". There was also serious question about an equal opportunities for the poor nations, whether tourism can provide benefits to a women or not. However, in order to take a profession of a trekking guide, they have to face many challenges in their work. In case of being trekking guide, undeniably it is one of the challenging jobs for them. In this study, the perception of the female trekking guides is taken where the motivational and obstacles in their profession have been analyzed and described. The main objectives this study is to find out the motivational and perception of the female trekking guide on tourism.

### **Methodology**

The study is related to the perception of the female trekking guide on tourism. According to Nworgu (2006), a descriptive survey design describes a situation or phenomena as it exists naturally without manipulation. For this purpose, descriptive and exploratory research design have been followed whereas, owing to collect data the study is based on the qualitative as well as quantitative data and using the primary and secondary data in this process. Similarly, interviews and case studies have been taken based on the purposive sampling method. Using the purposive non probability methods, 32 respondents had been taken due to uncertainty of the universe.

### **Result and Discussion**

The perception of female trekking guides towards Trekking profession is not same to all participants due to eh different aspects of them such as education, age, duration of involvement, ethnic background etc. And the satisfaction level of there is also varied in terms of the u duration of involvement.

### **Caste/Ethnic Construction of Respondents**

The caste system is still intact today but rules are not rigid as they were in previous time. As shown in table 1, 12 female trekking guides have come from Magar Community that was the highest proportion (37.5%) of the whole population. Similarly, the second position has been taken by Gurung Community (21.9%) and other respondents come from other ethnic group such as 4 respondents (12.5%) for Rai and only 1 respondents (3.1%) is from Sherpa community.

Table 1: Caste/Ethnic Construction

Caste/Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent
Brahmin	4	12.5
Chhetri	1	3.1
Gurung	7	21.9
Magar	12	37.5
Rai	4	12.5
Tamang	2	6.2
Sherpa	1	3.1
Dalit	1	3.1
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

### Age composition of Respondents

Certain works are suitable for only age categories and age plays a vital role for their better performance and better intimacy in their work. The majority of age group which fall in 20-30 years category is the highest proportion, embracing 56.6% as a whole share. Similarly, the age group of 30-40 years has covered 28.1 % and only 3.1 % of total female which have occurred 20-30 and 40-50 years each category.

Table 2: Age Groups of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent
Under 20	1	3.1
20-30	21	65.6
30-40	9	28.1
Above 40	1	3.1
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019

### Education Status

In tourism sector, different people have different educational status and in a matter of FTG, they have also different level of education. Table 3 shows the different educational status of FTG. 14 respondents have a bachelor degree of education, embracing the highest percentage (43.8%), followed by 8 respondents who have taken one quarter (25%) of the total and 9.4% have the SLC level qualification.

Table 3: Age Educational Status of Respondents

Education	Frequency	Percent
Below SLC	7	21.9
SLC Passed	3	9.4
Intermediate or +2 Passed	8	25
Bachelor Degree and above	14	43.8
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

### Family's Major Source of Income

There is no single source of income to all Nepalese people in their life. Table 4 shows that the major source of income FTG is agriculture, hugging more than half percentage (68.8%), followed by 5 respondents (15.6%) preferred to say pension. Likewise, 9.4% female guide eased to say business for their family major source of income.

Table 4: Family's Major Source of Income

Source of Income	Frequency	Percent
Agriculture	22	68.8
Business	3	9.4
Pension	5	15.6
Other	2	6.2
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

### Track Routes of Female Trekking Guide

Being the way to trek in the famous trekking routes of Nepal such as Annapurna, Everest and others, Pokhara is one being one of the important destination for getting trekking. The most preferable destination that female trekking guides engages is Annapurna Trekking Route where 25 respondents had already gone with tourists, occupying almost 87.5% in total share followed by 3 respondents (9.4%) had guided in Everest trail and 3.1% for Langtang.

Table 5: Track Routes of FTG

Regions	Frequency	Percent
Annapurna	28	87.5
Everest	3	9.4
Langtang	1	3.1
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

### Motivational Factors of Trekking

In case of a Trekking Guide, there is not one specific single factor for being a female trekking guide. Table 6 depicts the various motivational factors of trekking. In multiple response questions, 17 respondents prefer to say entertainment as factor of attraction for them followed by 13 respondents (22.4%) who have engaged in this profession for tour opportunities. The satisfaction of respondents also depends upon the wages obtained in trekking period hereby, 17.2% respondents have strongly insisted to better income for motivational factors in trekking.

Table 6: Motivation to Trekking

(Multiple Response Answers)

Factors that Attracts to be Tourist Guide	Responses	
	N	Percentage
Better income	10	17.2
Entertainment	17	29.3
Tour Opportunities	13	22.4
Leisure Time Use	6	10.3

Chances for women empowerment	12	20.7
Total	58	99.9

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

### Challenges of Female Trekking Guide

Despite some positive aspects of tourism, many trekking guides have to face the challenges during the trekking period. Table 7 shows the major challenging factors of Female FTG. The respondents who opined that the society does not have a positive attitude towards the female worker were 31.2 %. Similarly, 4 respondents (12.5%) chose hard to work out because of being housewife and 9.4 % insisted on the cause of gender (hard to work outside a female). However, 46.9% female trekking guides focused on other issues of problems. So the profession of female trekking guides is not as easy job we consider.

Table 7: Major Challenges

Challenges	Frequency	Percent
Hard to work out because of being housewife	4	12.5
Society does not have positive attitude	10	31.2
Hard to work outside as female	3	9.4
Other	15	46.9
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

### Knowledge of Code of Ethics

It is also important to know about the tourism ethics in every aspect of life. Its importance depicts not only for tourists, trekking agencies and stakeholders but also for the trekking guides and host society. Table 8 divulges that out of total respondents, the response for knowing the code of ethics in trekking is incredibly high. All the female trekking guides introduced themselves for knowing about ethics of tourism.

Table 8: Understanding of Ethics on Tourism

Knowledge of code of ethics for trekking and tour		
Response	Frequency	Percent

Sufficient Knowledge	21	65.6
Little bit knowledge	11	34.4
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

### Difficulties in Trekking Sector

Trekking is not easy for trekkers and also for guides who frequently visit the trekking routes with tourists. Table 9 says about the difficulties of FTG while in the trekking. Out of 32 respondents, 50% respondents express their difficulties for being hard to make decision followed by 34.4% said it is taxing because of the complexities to hold the flow of tourists.

Table 9: Difficulties in Trekking

Difficulties	Frequency	Percent
Unable to hold the flow of tourists	11	34.4
Higher demands	4	12.5
Hard to make decision	16	50
Other	1	3.1
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

### Conclusion/ Implication

This article examined the perception of Female trekking guide in terms of different variables such as age, education, caste, family background and duration of involvement et al.. Actually, in case of some women they choose the profession of female trekking guides because of the entertainment, excitement and chance to visit new places which are the luring factors of this profession. However, majority of the women choose this job because of the intimacy and physical capabilities. In order to be a trekking guide one has to fit mentally as well as physically to walk a long journey with tourists carrying bags. Because of the patriarchy nature of Nepalese society, it is not easy to all Nepalese women to engage in Trekking. Because society does not have a positive attitude towards female workers, being housewife, engage in trekking guide is the main challenges for female. Although most of females have above SLC level education, they all focus to the

importance of education for various purposes. And after taking the training of female trekking guide from institution, they have more chance to get trips with tourists compared with other jobs which is one of the factors to attract more women in this profession.

Because of the patriarchal nature of society women have been dominated in our Nepalese society. Linking with the sociological perspective, women have not obtained their rights as male counterparts in the sector of tourism. Feminism in the third world always raises the issue of equal rights and opportunity as first world European countries. And the condition of Nepalese women is not also exceptional case. The social and cultural factors are being major sources of hindrance for Nepalese women. Nowadays, however, trekking is a temporary profession for guides in Nepal, majority of the women is satisfied with their profession. So tourism is such a medium which transcend the poor economic condition of Nepalese people through the participation in trekking sector and female's participation in trekking has really proved this aspect in Nepal.

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