Women’s Access to the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Services and Implications on Tourism Business in Nepal: A Comparative Study of Mustang Region and Nagarkot

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BACKGROUND

With the rapidly advancing technology comes new concepts which make our lives easier. Communication has always been one of the necessities since the very beginning, it is just that over the time the medium has changed, grown and advanced. Centuries ago, communication was done via sending letters using animals and birds whereas slowly it changed to virtually talking to the person over the phone or sending a Short Message Service (SMS). Communication is in fact a general process of flowing information regarding various fields. Communication plays an extremely vital role in tourism specially, where any information can be flown and passed so that any hassle that could be caused can be controlled pre hand.

Internet is a global system of interconnected computer networking that is linked to other related devices world-wide. The origin of Internet dates back to the 1960s in the form of research done in the United States. However, the beginning of the transition to modern internet started in the early 1990s by the linkage of commercial networks and enterprises. The Internet is a mechanism for information dissemination, and a medium for collaboration and interaction between individuals and their devices without regard for geographic location and has at once a world-wide broadcasting capability (Leiner, 1997).

Tourism is considered as one of the largest and fastest developing sectors of the world. Its high growth and development rates bring considerable volumes of the foreign currency inflows, infrastructure development, employment generation, regional development, economic multiplier effects and introduction of the new management and educational experience actively affect various sectors of the economy, which will be positively affected to the social and economic development of the country (Nayomi & Gnanapala, 2015). It has become not only a major force in world trade but also a vital factor in a country's economic, cultural and social development (Sharpley, 2009). Over the last decades, tourism has experienced continued growth and has become one of the fastest economic sectors in the world.

Known as "Land of natural beauty", Nepal is one of the major tourist destinations and the scenic and cultural value that it carries has been a major pull factor for tourists be it domestic or international. Tourism has played a significant role for the conservation of nature and preservation of cultures and mainly as an economical back support for the country. Blessed with 10 of the world's highest 14 peaks in the world, Nepal deserves identity for an ideal mountain tourist destination. This aspect has made tourism one of the most important source of revenue as well as employment in the region. Nepal regularly has also been successful in hosting myriad tourism activities.

Being a landlocked country, Nepal features diverse physiographic and ecological characteristics. Nepal shares it borders with China in the north and India in the east, the west and the south. The country is divided into three broad geographical belts: Terai, hills, and mountains. The cultural and geographical diversity has been one of the major attractions to the tourists and has enticed them to visit the country. Tourism can be both international and domestic travel within the country itself. Tourism can be perceived as an aspect of religion, relaxation, education, culture, pleasure, ethnicity or even health or career related visits. According to The Economist (2017), travel and tourism industry is the world’s largest and most known diverse industry where most of the countries depend on tourism as their primary source for generating revenues, employment opportunities, and infrastructure development.

The women especially are the prominent ones to take care of the business involved for tourism sector
in Nepal, despite not having proper education they have being handling their businesses this far. Historically women were limited to household chores and were not included in so-called money-making occupations. With time these notions changed and women started to work and earn money for themselves and their families slowly giving rise to the idea of women empowerment. The idea of women working in non-traditional women occupations is now gradually being accepted, with more women being educated and more awareness in society in general. However, the acceptance has yet not reached the level that it has to reach and many challenges are still in place, one of those challenges being wage gap. Better understanding of this technology will not just ease the tracking of accounts for these women but in fact have a positive effect on tourism by acting like a bridge via proper communication. If the host; who generally are women, have availability of communication and internet facilities the guests shall find it easy to communicate via phone calls, text messages, information could be passed easily regarding anything thus, it will help boost tourism by motivating more tourist to visit as traveling would be safer and more convenient.

One of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure is to significantly increase access to information and communication technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020. Since the SDGs have been adopted by Nepal, they are being implemented by various governmental and non-governmental institutions. However, in the status particularly is different since it is more centralized around the urban areas and there is weak networking in the rural areas.

**RATIONALE OF THE STUDY**

Despite one of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure is to significantly increase access to information and communication technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020. Since the SDGs have been adopted by Nepal, various government and non-government institutions are keeping into account the SDG goals and indicators while designing programs. However, though the statistics show the number telecommunication subscribers as fairly good, the usability and viability are not great due to poor connection except for in comparatively urban areas. The reach of the internet is even lesser than of the communication facilities in rather rural areas. Though there are many initiatives launched by the governmental organizations as well as non-governmental organization to make the availability, it has not been possible due to various reasons.

The research focuses in understanding the actual difference in access to information and communication facilities in two different areas, the use amongst the women involved in tourism business who have access to these facilities and if the use has had or will have a positive impact on tourism as a whole.
STUDY OBJECTIVES, SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

This study aimed to explore the status of women's access to the information and communication technology (ICT) facilities, and implications on tourism business in Nepal.

Specifically, the study objectives were to:

1. Analyze the difference in women's accessibility to ICT facilities in two of Nepal's popular tourist destinations, Mustang and Nagarkot;
2. Evaluate enhancement in women's tourism business by the use of ICT facilities;
3. Identify the difference in the use of ICT facilities by women in tourism business, and
4. Analyze the causes behind the above differences, if any.

The study majorly focuses on the availability of information and communication facilities and use amongst the women involved in tourism related business. The research will also be looking after the problems and challenges in the aspect of information and communication. I chose Mustang and Nagarkot because as a researcher I feel it will be easier to get data and related information that is necessary for study and the comparison of statuses of women from two different locations will be done so that conclusions can be drawn on the impact of the reach and access to facilities.

The current COVID-19 pandemic was one of the major limitations for this research as the study was affected and had few changes undergone. The study was limited to the status of access of information and communication to women who are involved in tourism. This study will be only focused on women's access to information and communication facilities. Even though a preliminary round of research had already been collected from Mustang region, that information was not enough for the study. The initial plan was to visit Mustang again for the research but due to the situation created by the pandemic that was not possible. The existing information could not be used as a very accurate representative so, the research was changed to a comparative research between Mustang and Nagarkot and that information was used to compare with the status of women in tourism of Nagarkot. Even though there had been contact with a local of Nagarkot and the situation seemed favorable for the research, after reaching upon the field site it was known that most of the women involved in tourism were not present in the study site because of the pandemic. As a result, only 12 women were interviewed in Nagarkot instead of 13 women, since 13 women had already been interviewed in Mustang region. Field data collection during the time of COVID-19 pandemic to reach the study site and conduct interview was also a big challenge. As per the Ministry of Home Affairs circular, as the odd/even rule was applied on the vehicles, so the stay in the study site had to be planned accordingly, safety measures were adopted such as use of masks, hand sanitizers, gloves and the interviews were taken maintaining social distancing.
**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

**Information and Communication Technology Facilities**

Information and communications technology (ICT) is an extensional term for information technology (IT) that stresses the role of unified communications and the integration of telecommunications, telephone lines and wireless signals. (Murray & James, 2011) The term ICT is also used to refer to the union of audiovisual and telephone networks with computer networks through a single cabling or link system. There are large economic incentives to merge the telephone network with the computer network system using a single unified system of cabling, signal distribution, and management. ICT is an umbrella term that includes any communication device, encompassing radio, television, cell phones, computer and network hardware, satellite systems and so on, as well as the various services and appliances with them such as video conferencing and distance learning. (Kondra & Imaniyal, 2020) ICT is a vast area subject and its concepts are evolving time and again. ICT covers any product that will store, retrieve, manipulate, transmit, or receive information electronically in a digital form (e.g., personal computers, digital television, email, or even robots). Information and Communication Technology is capable of contributing to finest universal access to education, equity in education, the quality delivery of quality learning and teaching, professional development and more efficient education management, governance, and administration. Access, inclusion, and quality of ICT facilities are among the main challenges that need to be addressed.

The Internet has revolutionized the computer and communications world like nothing before. The invention of the telegraph, telephone, radio, and computer set the stage for this unprecedented integration of capabilities. The Internet is at once a worldwide broadcasting capability, a mechanism for information dissemination, and a medium for collaboration and interaction between individuals and their computers without regard for geographic location (Gillies & Cailliau, 2000). The Internet represents one of the most successful examples of the benefits of sustained investment and commitment to research and development of information infrastructure. Beginning with the early research in packet switching, the government, industry and academia have been partners in evolving and deploying this exciting new technology (Couldry, Nick, 2012). There is the social aspect, which resulted in a broad community of Internauts working together to create and evolve the technology. And there is the commercialization aspect, resulting in an extremely effective transition of research results into a broadly deployed and available information infrastructure. The Internet today is a widespread information infrastructure, though its history is complex and involves many aspects; technological, organizational, and community. And its influence reaches not only to the technical fields of computer communications but throughout society as we move toward increasing use of online tools to accomplish electronic commerce, information acquisition, and community operations.

ICT has transformed operation of many sectors, tourism being one of the major ones. The incorporation of ICT in the tourism industry is essential for the success of the tourism enterprise. ICT facilitates any individual to access the information regarding any tourism products from anywhere at any time. Tourism enterprises can also reach the targeted customers across the globe in a single click through immense technologies etc. Increasingly ICT facilities play a critical role for the competitiveness within the tourism business and has become a key determinant of competitiveness. ICT facilities provide a powerful tool that can bring advantages in promoting and strengthening the tourism industry’s strategy and operations.

**Accessibility to ICT Services**

ICT facilities are a broad range of hardware, software, network infrastructure and media that enable the
processing, storage and sharing of information and communication both among humans and computers, locally and globally. ICT is a merger of computing and telecommunication technologies for information acquisition, retrieval, and dissemination (Kharel, 2018). ICT accessibility covers the accessibility of electronic infrastructure and services, which essentially means that it affects every domain of human activity today, be it governance, business, sports and leisure, education, employment or social interaction. It is evident that the whole world faces economic and digital divide among areas within itself. A big focus on upgrading the living standards of population is to deliver ICT facilities in all the areas. One part of the initiative is to deliver and maintain proper ICT infrastructure (e.g. telecommunication services, broadband, among others) and another; even more important part is to create awareness of the opportunities provided by proper ICT infrastructure to facilitate the adoption and daily use of the newly available services (Firdhous Dsman & Suhaidi, 2010). Accessibility of ICT benefits a very large constituency of people with very low bandwidth internet connections and those accessing the internet through hand held devices such as mobile phones. Given that, information and services these days are increasingly communicated over the internet, ensuring the accessibility of this medium becomes very important. In the absence of electronic accessibility, people without the facilities would be excluded from essential services, social interaction and information sources delivered through ICT tools. Government or commercial services or information may be delivered through ICT tools such as TV, computers, mobile phones, tablet PCs, digital interfaces and public information terminals.

Development in ICT forms an important agenda of the Nepalese Government. However, the application of ICT has been relatively slow, the main indicators being poor ICT infrastructure in rural areas, poor ICT awareness among agency officials working in rural areas. ICTs can play a significant role in combating poverty and fostering sustainable development by creating a society that is rich in information and supporting livelihoods. If ICTs are channelized properly and the differential needs of people are given thought of, they can become powerful tools of economic, social and political empowerment for the nation as a whole in various sectors. The issue in rural areas why there is lower living standards and less opportunities, which is mostly due to lower competitiveness that leads to willingness to leave the area for urban places, which way the urban areas become more centralized. The vast majority of poor people in Nepal live in rural areas and they derive their livelihoods directly or indirectly from agriculture or tourism (MOF, 2018).

Increasing the efficiency, productivity and sustainability of small-scale businesses is an area where ICT can make a significant contribution. Business involves risks and uncertainties, with people facing many threats in the business. ICTs can deliver useful information to people regarding their business, utilizing ICT facilities in their business. Moreover, appropriate use of ICTs in the fosters critical, integrative and contextual learning; develops information literacy (the ability to locate, evaluate and use information). Thus, it improves the overall efficiency of the ICT facilities and use of it at the national, state/provincial and community level. The use of ICTs in aims to improve the quality of services and facilities of the business. The ICT has a vital role in connecting to outside world for exchange of information, a basic necessity for economic development. Effective use of ICT can demolish geographical boundaries and can bring rather rural communities closer to global economic systems and be of meaningful help to the underprivileged and capable ones. People in many localities have lack of opportunities or have limited opportunities because they often do not have access to information and communication technology facilities.

**Women in Tourism Business in Nepal**

Contribution to gender equality in the tourism sector, pinpointing challenges and identifying ways to mitigate inequality and harness tourism’s potential to advance gender equality and women’s
empowerment worldwide. The first Global Report on Women in Tourism 2010 published by the UNWTO found that women made up a large proportion of the formal tourism workforce. They were well represented in service and clerical level jobs but poorly represented at professional levels. Women in tourism typically earned 10% to 15% less than their male counterparts. The tourism sector then had almost twice as many women employers as other sectors.

Tourism being one of the major sources of income for the Nepali market carries a lot of importance for sustaining thousands of lives. Nepal has established itself as a travelers and backpacker's destination, exhibiting its breathtaking landscapes, pristine lakes, and rivers, mighty mountains, diverse cultures and traditions affixed by peace and harmony. Tourism has not only helped with the exchange of culture and traditions, ideas and principles, beliefs and ethics among nations but also has helped Nepal with its financial growth and liberty. Tourism is the largest industry in Nepal and its largest source of foreign exchange and revenue. Possessing eight of the ten highest mountains in the world, Nepal is a hot spot destination for mountaineers, rock climbers and people seeking adventure. The Hindu and Buddhist heritage of Nepal and its cool weather are also strong attractions. There are a number of people who entirely are dependent on tourism related businesses. Nepal being a developing country still has various sectors where it lacks in terms of progression and empowerment.

Nepal has a typical patriarchal system where males are the bread owners and decision makers. The status of women in Nepal has varied throughout history. In the early 1990s, like in some other Asian countries, women in Nepal were generally subordinate to men in virtually every aspect of life. Historically, Nepal has predominantly been a patriarchal society where women are generally subordinate to men. This strong bias in favor of sons in society meant that daughters were discriminated against from birth and did not have equal opportunities to achieve all aspects of development. Women were deprived of many privileges, including rights, education, healthcare, parental property rights, social status, last rites of dead parents, and were thought to be other's property and liabilities. Women's thoughts, opinions and potential are considered secondary citizens. Even today, women's contribution does not equate males', and that most of the women work at a lower level get lesser salaries compared to men performing the same task are satisfied with their work and contribution, despite them facing different obstacles that hamper them to move, initiate and run their businesses. This research found that about 59% of women involved in the tourism sector in Pokhara earn less than Rs. 5000 per month, and only around 6% women earn more than a minimal Rs. 10,000. It was also found that 81% of tourism-related business firms had more male employees, 13% had more female employees and only 6% had an equal number of male and female staff (Palikhe, 2018). Women have a lot of capability which are outcasted and with proper guidance and training they not only can uplift themselves but their businesses and the entire country’s economic status can rise as a whole.

Brief description of Mustang region and Nagarkot

Mustang Region: Mustang district falls under Gandaki province, it covers an area of 3,573 km², and it is regarded to be one of the remote areas of Nepal. Yet, Mustang is one of the major tourist attractions of Nepal and in recent years the flow of tourists has been increasing. In fact, according to the ACAP, in 2019, April had the largest flow of 10,229. Mustang’s headquarter is in Jomsom. It was once a forbidden kingdom, it is bordered by the Tibetan Plateau shelters by some of world's tallest peaks, including 8000-meter tall Annapurna and Dhaulagiri. Strict regulations of tourists here have aided in maintaining Tibetan traditions. (David Rengel, 2014) The name "Mustang" is actually derived from a Tibetan word that means, "Plain of Aspiration." Upper Mustang was only opened to foreigners in 1992 (annual quota at present of 1,000 people). It is a popular area at present for trekking. The entire district is included within...
the Annapurna Conservation Area, the largest protected area of Nepal. Development programs, tourism management, and so on are primarily overseen by the Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP), a division of the National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC).

Nagarkot: Nagarkot is a former Village Development Committee which is located 32 km east of Kathmandu, Nepal in Bhaktapur District in Bagmati Pradesh and as of 2015 part of Nagarkot Municipality. At the time of the 2011 census it had a population of 4571. At an elevation of 2,195 meters, it is considered one of the most scenic spots in Bhaktapur District. It is known for a sunrise view of the Himalayas and peaks of the Himalayan range of eastern Nepal. Nagarkot also offers a panoramic view of the Kathmandu Valley. The scenic beauty of the place makes it a very popular hiking route for tourists. It is located approximately 7000 ft (2000 m) above sea level and 28 km from Kathmandu International Airport. (Lonely Planet. 224) Nagarkot is famous as a tourist destination site, tourists mostly make sure to visit Nagarkot and at least stay for a night mainly to experience the mesmerizing sunrise view that is extremely famous. Not just that, Nagarkot is also famous as a hiking trail, nature walk and for paragliding along the surreal view of the mountain ranges.

**ICT Facilities in Nepal:**

The public switched telephone network (PSTN) and Post-Paid Charge of Nepal Telecommunications Authority (NTC) is as below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.N.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>PSTN</th>
<th>CDMA C-Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Deposit</td>
<td>Rs. 750.00</td>
<td>Rs. 1500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Installation Charge</td>
<td>Rs. 320.00</td>
<td>Rs. 320.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ownership Charge</td>
<td>Rs. 565.00</td>
<td>Rs. 565.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Rs. 1635.00</td>
<td>Rs. 2385.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Minimum Monthly Rental for Local Telephone (with 175 free calls)</td>
<td>Rs. 200/-</td>
<td>Rs. 200/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>PSTN Phone Place Transfer Charge</td>
<td>Rs. 320.00 (with Tax)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.1: PSTN and Post-Paid Subscription Charge (Basic Telephone Service)

*Source: ntc.net.np/subscription charge*

The below is the charge NTC applies for Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line (ADSL)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Package</th>
<th>Speed Up to</th>
<th>Price (NRs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Month Unlimited</td>
<td>5Mbps</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Months Unlimited</td>
<td>5Mbps</td>
<td>4300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Months Unlimited</td>
<td>5Mbps</td>
<td>8000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.2: ADSL. Unlimited Volume Charge

*Source: ntc.net.np/tariff/ADSL*

The below is the charge Arrow Net takes for providing Internet service and Cable Television Operation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Months</th>
<th>30 Mbps</th>
<th>40 Mbps</th>
<th>60 Mbps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 month</td>
<td>Rs 1,685 with taxes</td>
<td>Rs 2,034 with taxes</td>
<td>Rs 2,430 with taxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>Rs 4,895 with taxes</td>
<td>Rs 5,933 with taxes</td>
<td>Rs 7,063 with taxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>Rs 15,820 with taxes</td>
<td>Rs 18,645 with taxes</td>
<td>Rs 23,730 with taxes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.3: Internet service and Cable Television Charge of Arrow Net
The below is the charge Sky Net takes for providing Internet service and Cable Television Operation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Months</th>
<th>30 Mbps</th>
<th>40 Mbps</th>
<th>60 Mbps</th>
<th>80 Mbps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 month</td>
<td>Rs 1,492</td>
<td>Rs 1,675</td>
<td>Rs 1,833</td>
<td>Rs 1,890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>Rs 3,678</td>
<td>Rs 4,808</td>
<td>Rs 6,013</td>
<td>Rs 5,550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Rs 7,124</td>
<td>Rs 8,528</td>
<td>Rs 10,614</td>
<td>Rs 10,980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>Rs 13,998</td>
<td>Rs 15,245</td>
<td>Rs 19,815</td>
<td>Rs 21,600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.4: Internet service and Cable Television Charge of Sky Net

Source: sky.net.np
STUDY METHODOLOGY

Site Description

Mustang district falls under Gandaki province. Mustang region is also one of the regions where most of the tourism businesses are run by women given that the indigenous community of Thakali, who are the majority of the population in that particular area. Thakali is an indigenous group originated from the Thak Khola region of the Mustang district. Thakali community has always been a matriarchal society which is why most of the businesses in this area is also run by women.

However, due to the situation of the global crisis a revisit to get the remaining information was not possible which is why a study of comparative analysis was done between Mustang region and Nagarkot. Since, visit to the study site had been done pre hand (30th December, 2019 to 4th January, 2020) but only partial data had been collected which wouldn’t have been sufficient for the research study. And the sample size and data collection procedure were changed accordingly. Which is why the other study site, Nagarkot was selected.

Nagarkot falls in the outskirts of the Kathmandu Valley, just 32 km east of the valley. Nagarkot is a former VDC which now is a part of Bhaktapur and Kavre district, meaning some part of Nagarkot falls in Bhaktapur District while some in the Kavre district. At an elevation of 2,195 meters, approximately 7000 ft above sea level, it is considered as one of the most scenic spots. It is extremely known for its sunrise view as Nagarkot commands one of the broadest views of the Himalayas (8 Himalayan ranges of Nepal out of 13).

Data Need Assessment

To conduct this research unstructured scheduling was done. Quantitative as well as qualitative data were collected to gain optimum output. Direct and indirect observation was also conducted with the respondents at Mustang region and Nagarkot.
Data Source
The study was mainly based on primary sources of data, which comprised of response through unstructured questionnaire in direct personal contact with the local households. And the secondary data were obtained through articles, reports, websites, journals, government data and previous research conducted in this topic.

Sample Design
The sample in the research was derived from 13 women of Mustang Region (Marpha, Jomsom, Muktinath) and 12 women of Nagarkot who are involved in tourism business. Convenience sampling was used to collect the information as per the convenience of the researcher and the situation that had been influenced by the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Secondary Data Collection
Collection of secondary data used sources which already existed like Previous research, Official statistics, Government reports and Web information. For the collection of secondary data, extensive desk study was done. Articles, journals, papers and books related to the issue were collected through the means of internet, library and the concerned offices. Literature such as reports and old data related to tourism, women’s status in tourism, accessibility of ICT facilities was also gathered.

Primary Data Collection
A visit to the Mustang region was undertaken to know about the status of women’s access to ICT facilities and implication on tourism business in Nepal. The idea of the research was pretty made up prior to visiting the study area. The visit was endured for 6 days (30th December, 2019 to 4th January, 2020). Total of 13 women who were involved in tourism business were interviewed in Mustang district from Jomsom, Muktinath and Marpha. Likewise, for the comparison study Nagarkot was visited for four days (14th July, 2020 to 18th July, 2020) and 12 women involved in tourism business were interviewed.

Data Collection Tools
Appropriate data collection tools for the collection of data were used depending on the data collection method used in the study. The data collection tool for secondary data in research was mainly research journals, publications, unpublished academic papers and online resources and their findings of researches. A checklist was used for the collection of secondary data. A semi-structured schedule was used for the purpose of primary data collection consisting of questions on the access of ICT facilities of women and the impact it has in their tourism business.

Data Processing and Analysis
After the collection of data, the obtained information were closely studied for the relevant information with respect to the objectives of the study. Quantitative information have been presented in the form of tables and figures and a subjective analysis is done for the qualitative information gathered through survey and interviews. The study has applied both qualitative and quantitative tools that were revolved around the review of literature and objectives of the study. The collected data was coded and entered in Microsoft Excel. The data collected from various sources through different methods was processed and analyzed in the form of tables, graphs, figures and explanations to prove the defined objectives.
STUDY FINDINGS

This chapter provides descriptive analysis of the major findings. The collected data had been entered in Microsoft Excel for the analysis. The data are presented through table, graph and pie chart along with the descriptive discussion on the issues. The results are divided into different sections according to the objective of the study.

Tourists Visiting Nepal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDICATORS</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Tourists visiting Mustang</td>
<td>11,73,072</td>
<td>11,97,191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6,24,928</td>
<td>6,26,866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5,48,144</td>
<td>5,70,325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-30 years</td>
<td>2,69,648</td>
<td>2,54,399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-45 years</td>
<td>3,60,237</td>
<td>3,83,155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-60 years</td>
<td>3,03,452</td>
<td>3,05,651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61+ years</td>
<td>1,73,299</td>
<td>1,76,872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top 5 Countries of Nationality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank 1</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank 2</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank 3</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank 4</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank 5</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of Visit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday/ Pleasure</td>
<td>7,03,843</td>
<td>7,78,173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilgrimage</td>
<td>1,87,692</td>
<td>1,97,786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trekking &amp; Mountaineering</td>
<td>1,69,180</td>
<td>1,71,937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1,12,357</td>
<td>49,301</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1: Number of Tourists Visiting Nepal in 2018 and 2019

Source: NEPAL TOURISM STATISTICS, 2019

The data presented in Table 4.1 shows that the total number of foreign countries visiting Nepal has increased from 11,73,072 in 2018 to 11,97,191 in 2019 which is 24,119 people which converted into percentage is 2.2%. Likewise, we can see that the male visitors are more than the female visitors, people of the age group of 31-45 years old visit the most, the most visitors are of Indian nationality and most tourists visit with the purpose of holiday or pleasure.
As per Figure 4.1, the number of tourists visiting Nepal has been increasing every year except for 2015 when Nepal was badly affected by an earthquake.

**Telecommunication and Internet in Nepal**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.N.</th>
<th>Services</th>
<th>Finalized Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Telephone Subscribers</td>
<td>4,25,56,966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Broadband Subscribers</td>
<td>2,11,07,590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Internet Subscribers</td>
<td>9,75,252</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2: Nepal’s Telecommunication and Internet Subscribers up till 2019

*Source: NTA-MIS REPORT 2019*

The numbers in Table 4.2 show that the total number of telecommunication and internet users in Nepal up till 2019, but based on the elaboration of the latest United Nations data, the current population of Nepal is 2,92,09,425 as of 2020. Which surely indicates that the number of telephone subscribers is more than the total population as many people tend to have numbers of services subscribed under various network providers. However, there are people to whom telecom facilities have been accessible to nook and corner of the country, let alone the quality of services.
Demographic Information

Site Area

Figure 4.2: Study Site

Figure 4.2 shows that 13 respondents were from Mustang region while 12 were from Nagarkot.

Age Composition

Questioning the scenario, most of the respondents of Mustang region said that majority of the youths of the area were mostly in foreign countries mostly men were enrolled in army. Even respondents of Nagarkot said that majority of the youths of the area were mostly in Kathmandu or abroad for studies and job purpose.

Figure 4.3: Age Composition of Mustang region and Nagarkot
Marital Status

The above figure shows the marital status of the respondents. Out of 13 respondents from Mustang Region, 9 are married, 3 are single and 1 respondent is widowed. Whereas, out of 12 respondents from Nagarkot, 6 are married, 6 are single.

Figure 4.4: Marital Status on respondents

Number of family members

The above figure shows the marital status of the respondents. Out of 13 respondents from Mustang Region, 9 are married, 3 are single and 1 respondent is widowed. Whereas, out of 12 respondents from Nagarkot, 6 are married, 6 are single.

Figure 4.5: Number of Family Members

Educational Levels and Technical Access

Figure 4.6.1: Educational Attainment: Mustang region  Figure 4.6.2: Educational Attainment: Nagarkot
Figure 4.6.1 shows the educational attainment of the respondents of Mustang region. Out of 13 people, 62% have educational attainment, 23% do not have educational attainment and 15% respondents have at least a little education.

Figure 4.6.2 shows the educational attainment of the respondents of Nagarkot. Out of 12 people, 64% have educational attainment, 27% do not have educational attainment and 9% respondents have at least a little education.

**Educational Level**

![Educational Level of Respondents of Mustang Region and Nagarkot](image)

From the above figure 4.7, we can say that there is a slight difference in the education attainment levels between the two study sites. However, it was found that majority of the people go to nearby towns to acquire better education.

**Availability of Telephone**

![Respondents having Landline phones in Mustang Region](image)

![Respondents having Landline phones in Nagarkot](image)

As seen in the figure 4.8.1 and 4.8.2, we can derive that Mustang region despite of being a comparatively rural area than Nagarkot, 69% of the respondents out of total 13 from Mustang region had a landline phone and out of 12 respondents from Nagarkot 58% had landline phones.
Use of Smartphones

![Figure 4.9.1: Respondents using Smartphones in Mustang region](image1)

![Figure 4.9.2: Respondents using Smartphones in Nagarkot](image2)

Figure 4.9.1 shows the respondents that use smartphone in Mustang region and majority of the respondents 84.5% out of 12 respondents use smartphone while 15.5% do not use smartphone. Similarly, figure 4.9.2 also shows that majority of the respondents i.e. 75% out of 12 respondents from Nagarkot use smartphone, while rest 25% do not. It can be derived that the use of smartphone is more in Mustang region than that of Nagarkot.

Use of Internet

![Figure 4.10.1: Use of Internet in Mustang region](image3)

![Figure 4.10.2: Use of Internet in Nagarkot](image4)

Figure 4.10.1 and 4.10.2 suggest that the same percentage of respondents in Mustang region as well as Nagarkot i.e. 62% use Wi-fi connection. However, 23% respondents in Mustang region use Mobile data and 15% do not use internet as such. Whereas, 15% respondents use mobile data and 23% do not use internet. So, collectively 85% respondents in Mustang region use internet but only 77% respondents in Nagarkot use internet.
### Internet Service Provider

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Name of Service Provider</th>
<th>Do not use Wi-fi or Internet</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ADSL</td>
<td>Arrow Net</td>
<td>Sky Net</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mustang Area</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagarkot</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3: Internet Service Providers of the Respondents

Table 4.3 shows that the only service providers of respondents in Mustang area is Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line (ADSL) by the Nepal Telecommunication Authority (NTC). 8 respondents have ADSL as their Wi-fi service provider in Mustang Region while rest 5 out of 13 respondents do not use Wi-fi. Whereas, out of 12 respondents of Nagarkot, 5 do not use Wi-fi, 2 use NTC's ADSL, 3 use Arrow Net and 2 use Sky Net. Through this we can determine that the options in Mustang region are less than of Nagarkot.

### Internet Speed

![Internet Speed Rate, Mustang](image1)

![Internet Speed Rate, Nagarkot](image2)

Figure 4.11.1: Internet Speed Rate, Mustang region

Figure 4.11.2: Internet Speed Rate, Nagarkot

Figure 4.11.1 shows that out of 10 respondents of Mustang region who use internet, 60% said that their internet connection is slow and 40% said that it is medium. Whereas, no respondents said that the internet connection is fast. Figure 4.11.2 shows that out of 9 respondents of Nagarkot who use internet, 67% said that their internet connection is slow and 33% said that it is medium. Whereas, no respondents said that the internet connection is fast. So, we can derive that the internet connectivity in both the areas are slow and no respondents said that their internet connectivity is fast. However, comparing Mustang region and Nagarkot 7% more people in Nagarkot say that their internet connection is slow.
Distance of Internet Service Provider

![Distance of the IPS Office Mustang region and Nagarkot](image)

**Figure 4.12: Distance of IPS Office, Mustang and Nagarkot**

Figure 4.12 shows the distance of the IPS office of total 25 respondents. It denotes that out of 7 respondents of Mustang region who use internet, 3 said that their IPS office is between 1000m to 5000m, 3 respondents said that it is farther than 5000m. And, 1 respondent said that the IPS office is between the distance of 500-1000m. It also shows that out of 7 respondents of Nagarkot who use internet, 4 said that their IPS office is between 500m to 1000m, 2 respondents said that it is between 1000m-5000m. And, 1 respondent said that the IPS office is farther than 5000m. So, we can derive that the distance of IPS office comparing Mustang region and Nagarkot is that the IPS office is Nagarkot is less distance than the IPS office of Mustang.

Distance of Mobile Network Tower

![Distance of Mobile Network Tower](image)

**Figure 4.13: Distance of Mobile Network Tower**

The above figure shows the difference in the distance of mobile network towers between Mustang region and Nagarkot. It can be seen that mobile network towers in Nagarkot are comparatively nearer than that of in Mustang region.
Awareness of Introduction to Internet

When the respondents were asked if they were aware since when has internet facilities been introduced in their area, respondents in Mustang mostly said that it was available in recent years compared to respondents from Nagarkot. The ratio can be seen leaning higher towards Nagarkot. Furthermore, one respondent from Mustang was not sure when the internet services were introduced in the area.

Occupational Background

Nature of Engagement in Tourism Industry

Among the respondents engaged in tourism industry, out of 13 respondents from Mustang region 3 were involved in accommodation, 4 had shops or any such business and 6 were involved in restaurant business. And out of 12 respondents from Nagarkot, 9 were involved in accommodation, 2 had shops or any such business and 4 were involved in restaurant business.
## Occupational Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Working Years</th>
<th>Business Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mustang Region</td>
<td>Teacher and Hotel manager</td>
<td>Managerial Level</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>Family Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Restaurant Manager</td>
<td>Managerial Level</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Family Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Restaurant Service</td>
<td>Operational Level</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>Family Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Restaurant Owner</td>
<td>Owner, Managerial Level</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>Self-owned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Restaurant worker</td>
<td>Operational Level</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>Working under someone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shopkeeper</td>
<td>Managerial Level, Operational Level</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Family Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shopkeeper</td>
<td>Operational Level</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Family Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Restaurant owner</td>
<td>Managerial Level</td>
<td>12 years</td>
<td>Family Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shopkeeper</td>
<td>Managerial Level</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>Working under someone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hotelier</td>
<td>Managerial Level</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>Family Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Restaurant Owner</td>
<td>Operational Level</td>
<td>20 years</td>
<td>Family Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hotelier</td>
<td>Operational Level</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Working under someone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Apple farming and sales of products</td>
<td>Owner, Managerial Level</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>Family Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagarkot</td>
<td>Hotel Housekeeper</td>
<td>Operational Level</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>Working under someone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hotel Housekeeper</td>
<td>Operational Level</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>Working under someone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Restaurant worker</td>
<td>Managerial Level, Operational Level</td>
<td>12 years</td>
<td>Family Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hotelier</td>
<td>Owner, Managerial Level</td>
<td>12 years</td>
<td>Family Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shopkeeper</td>
<td>Owner, Managerial Level</td>
<td>21 years</td>
<td>Family Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hotelier</td>
<td>Managerial Level</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>Family Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hotelier</td>
<td>Operational Level</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>Family Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hotelier</td>
<td>Operational Level</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>Family Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shopkeeper</td>
<td>Managerial Level</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>Family Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hotelier</td>
<td>Managerial Level</td>
<td>16 years</td>
<td>Working under someone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hotelier</td>
<td>Operational Level</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>Working under someone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hotelier</td>
<td>Operational Level</td>
<td>18 years</td>
<td>Working under someone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4: Occupational Details of the Respondents
The above table shows the occupational details of the respondents of Mustang Region and Nagarkot. Comparing these two sites, Mustang region had more respondents that have family business (i.e. 9), 3 respondents work under someone else and only 1 respondent has self-owned business. Whereas, 7 respondents of Nagarkot have family business, 5 work under someone and there were none who one any business solely. In Mustang region, 5 respondents worked in managerial level, 5 in operational level, 2 respondents worked in both owner level and managerial level and 1 in both managerial and operational level. In Nagarkot, 3 respondents worked in managerial level, 6 in operational level, 2 respondents worked in both owner level and managerial level and 1 in both managerial and operational level. So, comparatively the respondents that worked in operational level were more in Nagarkot than in Mustang.

Nature of Business

The above figure shows the nature of business of the respondents from Mustang Region and Nagarkot. Out of 12 respondents from Mustang; 9 had family business, 2 were working for someone else and 2 had self-owned business. While in Nagarkot, 7 respondents had family business, 5 were working for someone else and none had self-owned businesses.

![Nature of Business](image)

**Figure 4.16: Nature of Business**

Income Details and Decision-Making Practices

Monthly Income of Respondents

Out of 13 respondents of Mustang region, 4 respondents get a monthly salary amongst them too only 1 respondent who had a family business got her salary and 2 respondents who worked for someone else and 1 respondent who had her own business are mentioned above. 2 respondents get their salary within the range of Rs 10,000-20,000, 1 had her salary of Rs 20,000-30,000 range and 1 had Rs 30,000-50,000 range. While, out of 12 respondents of Nagarkot 5 respondents get a monthly salary and all work for someone and their salary is within the range of Rs 10,000-20,000.

![Monthly Income](image)

**Figure 4.17: Monthly Income of Respondents**
Annual Family Income

The above figure denotes the Annual total income of the family of Mustang Region and Nagarkot. It shows that out of 13 respondents from the Mustang Region, 3 respondents’ family’s annual income was below Rs 5,00,000, 4 respondents had their family’s total annual income in the range of Rs 5,00,000 to 10,00,00, 2 respondents had their family’s total annual income in the range of Rs 10,00,000 to 15,00,00, 3 respondents had their family’s total annual income in the range of Rs 15,00,000 to 20,00,000, and 1 respondent had her family’s total annual income of above 20,00,000.

Whereas, out of 12 respondents from the Mustang Region, 3 respondents’ family annual income was below Rs 5,00,000, 2 respondents had their family’s total annual income in the range of Rs 5,00,000 to 10,00,00, 4 respondents had their family’s total annual income in the range of Rs 10,00,000 to 15,00,00. One respondent had her family’s total annual income in the range of Rs 15,00,000 to 20,00,000 and no respondent had their family’s total annual income of above 20,00,000. Likewise, 2 respondents of the same family; mother-daughter, from Nagarkot did not have any idea about their annual income since it was all managed by the husband.

Accounts and Finance Handling

In Mustang region, the accounts and finance of the respondents were handled mostly collectively i.e. 5 respondents, 3 respondents accounts were handled by themselves and 3 respondents were handled by their husbands, while 1 respondents’ accounts and finances were handled by elders and 1’s by knowledgeable ones. Whereas, in Nagarkot, the accounts and finance of the respondents were handled mostly by elders i.e. 4 respondents, 3 respondents accounts were handled by themselves and 2 respondents’ accounts and finances were handled collectively and 1’s by knowledgeable ones.

Figure 4.18: Annual Family Income

Figure 4.19: Accounts and Finance handling
Use of Bank Account

Out of 13 total respondents from Mustang Region, 8 respondents had a bank account but only 6 respondents used their bank accounts. While, out of 12 respondents from Nagarkot, 10 respondents had bank account and 7 respondents used it as well.

Figure 4.20: Use of Bank Account

Depositing Income in Bank

Out of the 6 respondents who used bank accounts in Mustang region, 2 deposit their entire income amount in bank, 3 respondents deposit partial certain amount, while, 1 respondent deposited only occasionally. While, out of the 7 respondents who used bank accounts in Nagarkot, 3 deposit their entire income amount in bank, 3 respondents deposit partial certain amount, while, 1 respondent deposited only occasionally. It can be derived that respondents in Nagarkot used Bank accounts more than the respondents of Mustang Region.

Figure 4.21: Depositing Income in Bank

Money Allocation Decision

Out of the 13 respondents form Mustang region, 4 respondents take the money allocation decision themselves, 6 respondents take the money allocation decision collectively with the family, 1 respondent’s money allocation decision is taken by elders, while, 2 respondents’ money allocation decision was taken by their husbands.

Figure 4.22: Money Allocation Decision
While, out of the 12 respondents form Nagarkot, 2 respondents take the money allocation decision themselves, 2 respondents take the money allocation decision collectively with the family, 3 respondents’ money allocation decision is taken by elders, while, 5 respondents’ money allocation decision was taken by their husbands. It can be derived that respondents from Mustang Region are more involved in decision-making.

**Knowledge and Implication of Technology**

Internet as Communication Medium

![Internet as Communication Medium](image)

Out of total 13 respondents from Mustang region, 5 use Internet mostly as a communication medium while rest 8 use network service providers, which is 38% and 62% respectively. While, in Nagarkot, out of total 12 respondents, 7 use Internet mostly as a communication medium while rest 5 use network service providers, which is 58% and 42% respectively. Here, we can determine that respondents from Nagarkot use more internet than the respondents of whole Mustang region.

Use of Mobile Application

Out of total 13 respondents from Mustang region, 4 respondents only know how to make or receive calls, 3 know how to receive/make calls and check/reply to SMS, 2 respondents also know how to use basic phone applications like clock calendar, calculator etc., and 4 know how to use the other basic applications as well as social media.

![USE OF MOBILE APPLICATION](image)

Out of total 12 respondents from Nagarkot, 2 respondents only know how to make or receive calls, 1 know how to receive/make calls and check/reply to SMS, 3 respondents also know how to use basic phone applications like clock calendar, calculator etc., and 6 know how to use the other basic applications as well as social media. Here, we can determine that respondents from Nagarkot are more familiar and have knowledge about technology and internet.
Income accounts are managed mostly manually even in the current context where there is large presence of advanced technology. In Mustang region, 3 out of 13 respondents used digital method of income management and 10 respondents used manual method in the businesses.

Whereas, in Nagarkot, 5 out of 12 respondents used digital method of income management and 7 respondents used manual method in the businesses.

Figure 4.25: Income Account Management

Awareness to Digital Payments and its Use

Both in Mustang region and Nagarkot, 10 respondents were aware about mobile banking or digital payments out of 13 and 12 respondents, respectively. And out of which 4 respondents from Mustang Region and 5 respondents from Nagarkot have used mobile banking or any digital payments. Which determines that there is awareness but the use of digital payments in low.

Figure 4.26: Awareness and Use of Digital Payments

Mode of Payment in Business
The above figure shows the mode of payment used in business in Mustang Region and Nagarkot. Out of 13 respondents from Mustang region, 5 accepted only Cash in their business, 5 accepted Cash and Card, and 3 accepted Cash, Card and Digital Payments in their businesses as the mode of payment. Out of 12 respondents from Nagarkot, 3 accepted only Cash in their business, 4 accepted Cash and Card, and 5 accepted Cash, Card and Digital Payments in their businesses as the mode of payment. It can be derived that respondents of Nagarkot are aware and have access to technical facilities than the respondents of Mustang Region.

Figure 4.27: Mode of Payment in Business

Business Marketing

The above figure shows the marketing approach done for the business. From Mustang region, 2 respondents didn’t have their business much marketed considering it was a shop and a small restaurant, 6 respondents’ business was marketed with traditional approach and 5 respondents’ business were marketed with modern marketing approach (aggregator websites, own website, social media).

In Nagarkot, 2 respondents didn’t have their business much marketed considering it was a shop and a small restaurant, 4 respondents’ business was marketed with traditional approach and 6 respondents’ business were marketed with modern marketing approach (aggregator websites, own website, social media).

Figure 4.28: Marketing of the Business
Internet facilities is believed to have positive impact on tourism business and so do the respondents of Mustang region believe so. Most respondents in both Mustang region as well as Nagarkot believe that Internet has had a significant impact on tourism business and many believe that internet facilities can be very much beneficial in future as well.

Figure 4.29: Impact of Internet Facilities on Tourism Business
CONCLUSION and RECOMMENDATIONS

This research takes an effort to identify the difference in the status of access of information and communication technology facilities in overall tourism development with special reference to Mustang region and Nagarkot. The study could identify the aspects of ICT facilities in tourism and the difference of the factors in two locations. Some of the identified differentiating factors are awareness, use, acceptance and access to ICT facilities. Furthermore, in terms of decision making and involvement respondents of Mustang region were significantly involved comparing with Nagarkot, one of the major reasons for that being Mustang region is mostly populated with Thakali community and matriarchy is practiced there. The major factors that are different in Mustang region and Nagarkot with regards to access to ICT facilities, it’s use among women involved tourism and overall tourism sector have been summarized in Figure 5.1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Mustang Region</th>
<th>Nagarkot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Involvement in Tourism Business</td>
<td>More respondents of Mustang region had family business but two even had self-owned business. Occupational level was a little different, respondents working in Managerial Level was more in Mustang region.</td>
<td>Respondents of Nagarkot also had family business but it was lesser, and none had self-owned business. Occupational level was a little different, respondents working in Operational Level was more in Nagarkot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge about ICT facilities</td>
<td>Respondents had good knowledge about ICT facilities.</td>
<td>Respondents had good knowledge about ICT facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to ICT facilities</td>
<td>Less access in terms of service options, offices, distance of network towers in Mustang region</td>
<td>Better access in terms of service options, offices, distance of network towers in this area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of ICT facilities</td>
<td>Less use of ICT facilities by respondents in Mustang area.</td>
<td>More use of ICT facilities by respondents in Nagarkot area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge about Banking and its use</td>
<td>8 out of 13 respondents had a bank account but 6 respondents used it.</td>
<td>10 out of 12 respondents had a bank account but only 7 respondents only used it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>More respondents made decisions themselves or collectively with the family.</td>
<td>More respondents had their decisions made by their husband in the case of married, or by their parents who were unmarried.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode of Payment</td>
<td>Mostly cash is used in this region.</td>
<td>Cash and Card is used and online payment is also accepted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Account Management</td>
<td>Most businesses had their income managed manually.</td>
<td>More businesses had their income managed digitally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of ICT facilities on Tourism</td>
<td>Most respondents said that ICT facilities have had a significance impact on tourism sector.</td>
<td>Equal respondents said that ICT facilities have had and in future shall have a significance impact on tourism sector.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1 Comparison of status of ICT facilities between Mustang region and Nagarkot
Overall, this research has identified that there is quite knowledge about ICT facilities but the reach is quite less and so is the optimum use of ICT facilities in tourism business, but comparatively, there are better infrastructures and facilities in Nagarkot than in Mustang. The level of occupation is higher; more work in managerial level in Mustang than in Nagarkot, so is the decision making, which is done mostly by themselves or jointly in the family, one of the reasons being Mustang region is the home to Thakali community which practices matriarchy.

Tourism industry has a major potential in a country like Nepal, places like Mustang Region and Nagarkot are in fact the major touristic sites but they still lack behind in technological advancements. These technological advancements can help in sketching an easier, faster and swift procedure to enhance the tourism practices and overall help tourism flourish.

The following recommendations have been made in reference to the study findings.

1. More reach of ICT facilities needs to be there considering the difficulties and disturbances that are present in the current context, like more network towers, more ISP options.
2. The already available ICT services also need to be upgraded and maintained regularly.
3. The charge of the ICT services needs to be fairly minimum in order to encourage the usability of ICT services.
4. Feedback and suggestions regarding the quality and the effectiveness of the ICT services should be taken on a regular basis and concerns made by the locals need to be addressed in a timely manner.
5. Women engaged in tourism business need to be more aware of the ICT facilities, provided with adequate knowledge about how the advantages of ICT usage, not just helping to ease their business activities and make things simpler, but also increasing viability of their own businesses and tourism sector as a whole.
6. Skills enhancement trainings and workshops to women engaged in tourism business need to be given on an occasional basis for the women entrepreneurs to make optimum use of the available technology.
REFERENCES


Tamrakar, A. (2018). Barriers to Internet and Mobile Payment System in Nepal.


