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Original Research Article

# Promoting Tourism Entrepreneurship: Entrepreneurs' Perceptions of Tourism Development and Knowledge Management Awareness in Kathmandu Valley

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## Abstract

*Tourism plays a pivotal role in the economic and socio-cultural development of developing countries like Nepal, where entrepreneurs serve as key actors in shaping tourism growth, competitiveness, and sustainability. In this context, the objective of this study is to examine the perception of tourism entrepreneurs on tourism development and their awareness level of knowledge management in Kathmandu valley. Explanatory research design is used by taking 350 samples of tourism entrepreneurs in Kathmandu valley through purposive sampling methods. Social Exchange Theory is used. The study reveals that tourism entrepreneurs exhibit moderate awareness of knowledge management, with an overall index of 71.20%. Predominantly, these entrepreneurs are married male youths engaged in handicraft businesses, holding a bachelor's degree, residing in joint families, and possessing less than five years of experience in the tourism sector. Structural analysis indicates that personal benefits from tourism development (β = 0.262, p = 0), perceived positive tourism impacts (β = 0.174, p = 0.001), perceived negative tourism impacts (β = -0.182, p = 0), and overall community satisfaction (β = 0.223, p = 0) exert significant effects on attitudes toward additional tourism development. Among the challenges identified, employees' lack of knowledge management awareness emerges as the most prominent. Managerial interventions, particularly the implementation of knowledge management awareness programs by the organization, are recommended to mitigate these challenges and enhance the effectiveness of knowledge management practices. The findings provide insights for tourism entrepreneurs and relevant stakeholders, including the Nepal Tourism Board and local authorities, to enhance knowledge management and inform policies for tourism development.*

## Introduction

Tourism development is widely recognized as a multidimensional process that depends on the sustainable utilization of natural, cultural, and socio-economic resources to enhance destination competitiveness and long-term growth (Devkota et al., 2020; Shrestha, 2020; Wengel et al., 2021). Destinations endowed with diverse landscapes, favorable climatic conditions, biodiversity, and distinctive cultural heritage are increasingly positioned as attractive tourism markets in the global arena (Wengel et al., 2021). As a result, tourism has

evolved into one of the world's fastest-growing industries, contributing significantly to global economic output, employment generation, and regional development (Camilleri, 2017; Kharel et al., 2020). Nevertheless, the mere existence of tourism resources does not guarantee development; rather, tourism growth is shaped by planning effectiveness, entrepreneurial engagement, institutional support, and the strategic management of knowledge and innovation within tourism enterprises (Lordkipanidze et al., 2005; Camilleri, 2017).

Within the broader tourism discourse, entrepreneurship occupies a central role in translating tourism potential into tangible economic and social outcomes (Lordkipanidze et al., 2005). Tourism entrepreneurs act as catalysts for destination development by introducing innovative products and services, improving service quality, and embedding sustainable practices within their operations (Lordkipanidze et al., 2005; KC et al., 2021). Their perceptions of tourism influence business decisions, investment behavior, and responsiveness to environmental and market changes (Arai & Goto, 2017). In developing economies, tourism entrepreneurship assumes heightened importance, as it contributes to structural transformation, infrastructure improvement, employment creation, and poverty alleviation (Zapata et al., 2011; Arai & Goto, 2017). Consequently, understanding entrepreneurs' perspectives is essential for fostering resilience and inclusive tourism development.

Nepal presents a distinctive context for examining tourism development and entrepreneurship (Shrestha, 2020). The country's exceptional natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and ancient history have positioned it as a prominent destination for trekking, mountaineering, pilgrimage, wildlife tourism, and adventure activities (Shrestha, 2020; Wengel et al., 2021). Prior to recent global disruptions, tourism contributed approximately 6.7% to Nepal's GDP and supported more than one million direct and indirect jobs, underlining its strategic importance to the national economy (Kharel et al., 2020; KC et al., 2021). Tourism has also been identified as a critical mechanism for income generation and poverty reduction, particularly in resource-dependent and rural communities (Zapata et al., 2011; KC et al., 2021). Despite this significance, tourism development in Kathmandu Valley, the primary gateway and hub of Nepal's tourism industry, continues to face persistent challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, weak destination planning, environmental degradation, and limited coordination among stakeholders (Kharel et al., 2020; KC et al., 2021; Nepal, 2000; Rasul & Manandhar, 2009).

Parallel to tourism development, knowledge management (KM) has emerged as a central concern in contemporary organizational and entrepreneurial research (Jasimuddin & Zhang, 2011). In an increasingly knowledge-based economy, knowledge is viewed as a strategic asset that enables firms to achieve and sustain competitive advantage (Teece, 2000; Jasimuddin & Zhang, 2011). KM encompasses the systematic processes of acquiring, creating, sharing, storing, and applying knowledge to improve organizational performance and strategic decision-making (Alavi & Leidner, 2001; Choo & Bontis, 2002). Organizations that effectively manage knowledge are better equipped to adapt to environmental uncertainty, innovate continuously, and enhance operational efficiency (Gold et al., 2001; Du Plessis, 2007).

In the tourism and hospitality sector, KM has gained increasing prominence due to its relevance for service innovation, customer experience enhancement, and organizational learning (; Massingham, 2014). Knowledge sharing among entrepreneurs and employees strengthens dynamic capabilities, supports problem-solving, and facilitates the effective implementation of organizational strategies in competitive tourism markets (Liao et al., 2007; Abdelwhab et al., 2019). Advances in digital technologies and information systems have further transformed the nature of knowledge creation and dissemination, enabling rapid communication and learning across organizational boundaries (Alavi & Leidner, 2001). However, tourism enterprises, particularly small and medium-sized firms, often exhibit limited formal KM practices, relying on informal, fragmented, and reactive learning approaches (; Løseth, 2018).

In Nepal, despite the expansion of tourism entrepreneurship and various public and private initiatives aimed at tourism promotion (Sthapit, 2012), empirical evidence on entrepreneurs' perceptions of tourism development and their awareness of KM remains limited. Existing challenges related to skills gaps, undervaluation of systematic knowledge creation, and weak KM implementation continue to constrain the sector's potential (Løseth, 2018; Rasul & Manandhar, 2009). This gap is particularly evident in Kathmandu Valley, where entrepreneurial practices play a decisive role in shaping destination competitiveness and sustainability (Nepal, 2000; KC et al., 2021). Accordingly, this study seeks to examine the perception of tourism entrepreneurs toward tourism development

and assess their level of knowledge management awareness in Kathmandu Valley. The specific objectives are to evaluate entrepreneurs' awareness of KM, identify key factors influencing tourism development, assess challenges in KM implementation, and propose managerial solutions to address these challenges. Further, by integrating tourism development and knowledge management perspectives, this study contributes to the literature on tourism entrepreneurship and offers policy-relevant insights to support sustainable tourism development in Nepal.

## Literature Review

### Theoretical Background

This study draws on multiple theoretical perspectives to explain tourism entrepreneurs' perceptions of tourism development and their awareness of knowledge management (KM). The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) explains behavior through behavioral intentions shaped by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991; Al-Suqri & Al-Kharusi, 2015), helping to understand how entrepreneurs' attitudes toward tourism development and KM, social influences, and resource constraints affect their adoption of knowledge-based practices. Similarly, the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) emphasizes that attitudes and subjective norms influence intentions and subsequent behavior, offering insight into how entrepreneurs' beliefs and social pressures shape engagement in tourism development and KM initiatives (Al-Suqri & Al-Kharusi, 2015). From an organizational perspective, the Organizational Knowledge Creation Theory explains how knowledge emerges through continuous interaction between tacit and explicit knowledge via socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization processes (Nonaka, 1994). This is complemented by the five-stage model of organizational knowledge creation, which highlights structured phases for systematic knowledge development within organizations (Hoon Song et al., 2012).

The primary theoretical basis of this study is Social Exchange Theory, which conceptualizes human behavior as a rational process in which individuals assess the anticipated benefits and costs associated with social and economic interactions (Scholtz & Slabbert, 2016). In the context of tourism development, this theory suggests that tourism entrepreneurs evaluate potential economic gains, business growth, social recognition, and long-term sustainability benefits against perceived risks and costs, such as financial uncertainty, operational challenges, and possible social or environmental impacts (Stafford & Kuiper, 2021). Social Exchange Theory further emphasizes the importance of stakeholder relationships, proposing that positive and mutually beneficial interactions with government bodies, local communities, employees, and tourists enhance entrepreneurs' willingness to support tourism development initiatives and adopt knowledge management practices (Kim et al., 2021). When entrepreneurs perceive that these exchanges are fair and rewarding, they are more likely to invest in tourism development and engage in systematic knowledge creation and sharing; conversely, perceived imbalances or negative exchanges may reduce their commitment. This framework is particularly suitable for examining entrepreneurial perceptions, as it captures how interactions with stakeholders and expected outcomes shape support for tourism development and KM adoption.

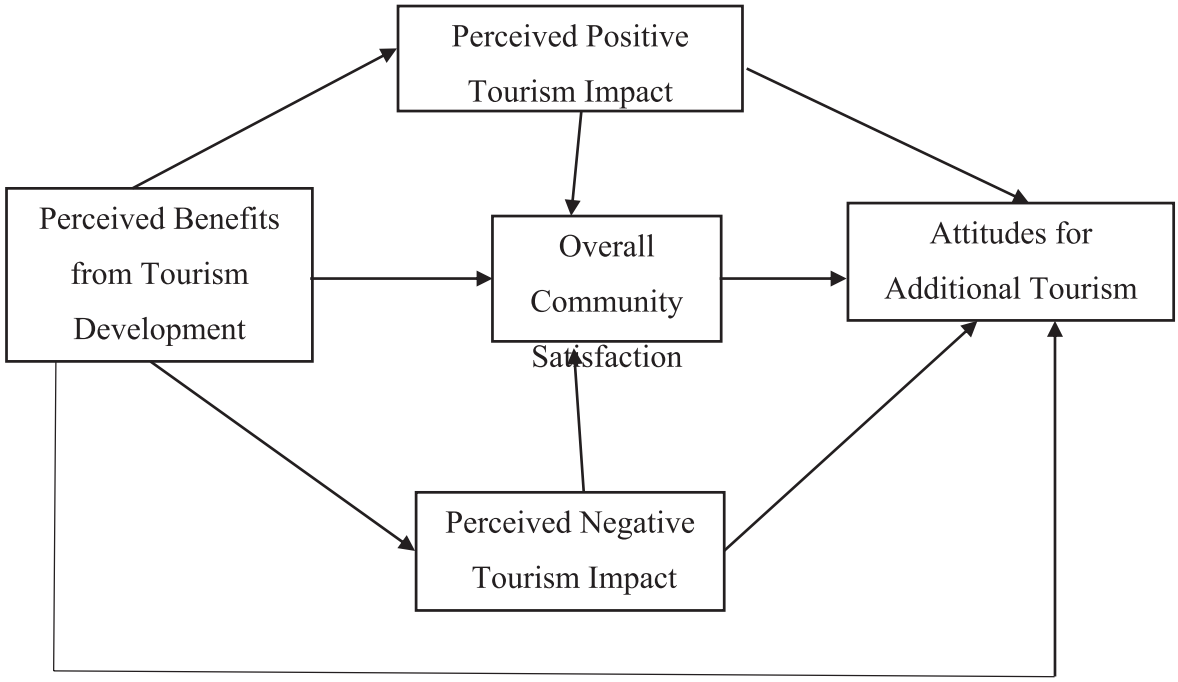


**Figure 1:** *Conceptual Framework*
*Source: Adopted and modified from (Ko & Stewart, 2002)*

## Perceived Benefits from Tourism Development

Perceived benefits from tourism development significantly influence how individuals evaluate tourism and whether they support its continued expansion. When stakeholders experience direct and indirect benefits such as employment opportunities, increased household income, improved infrastructure, and enhanced quality of life, they are more likely to perceive tourism as beneficial to the community and economy (Gursoy & Kendall, 2006). Empirical studies indicate that perceived personal benefits tend to reduce negative perceptions related to environmental degradation, overcrowding, traffic congestion, and disruption of traditional lifestyles (Tsiotsou & Ratten, 2010; Chen & Kong, 2021). Research conducted in Myanmar and Indonesia further demonstrates that perceived personal benefits from tourism development positively influence overall community satisfaction (Htay, 2018;). Moreover, when tourism contributes to cultural preservation, environmental protection, and long-term economic opportunities, it enhances residents' quality of life and strengthens support for sustained tourism development (Byrd & Gustke, 2007; Woo et al., 2015).

*H1: There is a significant relationship between personal benefits from tourism development and perceived positive tourism impact.*

*H2: There is a significant relationship between personal benefits from tourism development and perceived negative tourism impact.*

*H3: There is a significant relationship between personal benefits from tourism development and overall community satisfaction.*

*H4: There is a significant relationship between personal benefits from tourism development and attitudes toward additional tourism development.*

## Perceived Positive Tourism Impact

Perceived positive tourism impacts, including economic growth, enhanced service quality, cultural preservation, and improved infrastructure, play a critical role in shaping community support for tourism development. Tourism enterprises that prioritize quality management, customer satisfaction, sustainable resource use, and social responsibility create tangible and intangible benefits that enhance the well-being of local communities (Martín & Rodríguez, 2008). Such positive outcomes increase residents' attachment to their community, foster trust in

tourism stakeholders, and strengthen support for further tourism initiatives (Gursoy & Dyer, 2010). Additionally, perceived economic opportunities, such as job creation and increased business income, alongside social and cultural benefits, enhance community pride and satisfaction, promoting long-term sustainable development and proactive engagement with tourism planning (Htay, 2018; Woo et al., 2015). Communities perceiving these benefits are also more likely to participate in collaborative governance and tourism-related decision-making processes, reinforcing positive attitudes toward industry expansion ().

*H5: There is a significant relationship between perceived positive tourism impact and overall community satisfaction.*

*H6: There is a significant relationship between perceived positive tourism impact and attitudes toward additional tourism development.*

## Overall Community Satisfaction

Overall community satisfaction is a key factor influencing support for tourism development. Residents who are satisfied with the social, economic, and cultural benefits derived from tourism are more likely to endorse further development initiatives. Although strong community attachment can heighten awareness of potential negative impacts, such as environmental degradation or overcrowding, satisfied community members tend to adopt a balanced perspective, supporting tourism while promoting measures to mitigate adverse effects. This engagement fosters a cooperative environment where communities actively participate in sustainable tourism planning and decision-making, ensuring that tourism growth aligns with local needs and long-term well-being (Choi & Murray, 2010).

*H7: There is a significant relationship between overall community satisfaction and attitudes toward additional tourism development.*

## Perceived Negative Tourism Impact

Perceived negative tourism impacts, such as environmental pollution, overcrowding, excessive commercialization, and strain on local resources, can lead to unfavorable attitudes toward tourism development, especially among long-term residents (Var et al., 2005; Gursoy et al., 2019). These adverse perceptions may lower overall community satisfaction and reduce willingness to support further tourism initiatives. Effective management and mitigation strategies are essential to address these concerns, ensuring that tourism development remains sustainable and continues to generate community support.

*H8: There is a significant relationship between perceived negative tourism impact and attitudes toward additional tourism development.*

*H9: There is a significant relationship between perceived negative tourism impact and overall community satisfaction.*

**Table 1:** *Variables and its Definitions*

| Construct | Observed Variable | Variable Id | Explanation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Personal benefits from tourism development | Personal job | pbftd_1* | Tourism and personal job are interrelated (Ko & Stewart, 2002) . |
| | Family Job | pbftd_2* | Tourism and family job is interrelated (Ko & Stewart, 2002). |
| | Promotion campaign | pbftd_3 | Organization is expecting significant benefits from the promotion campaign (Dieke, 2003). |
| | Quality of life | pbftd_4 | Tourism development enhances the quality of life (Kharel et al., 2022). |
| | Investment opportunities. | pbftd_5 | Tourism development increases the investment opportunities (Kharel et al., 2022). |

| Construct | Observed Variable | Variable Id | Explanation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Positive perceived tourism impacts | National economy | ppti_1 | Organization impacts positively on the national economy (Ko & Stewart, 2002).. |
| | Environmental awareness | ppti_2 | Tourism development has increased environmental awareness |
| | Restore historical buildings. | ppti_3* | Tourism has encouraged local governments to restore historical buildings (Kharel et al., 2022). |
| | Public facilities | ppti_4* | The organization is happy to share public facilities with tourists. |
| | Socio-cultural values | ppti_5* | The organization impacts positively on socio-cultural values (Ko & Stewart, 2002). |
| Negative perceived tourism impacts | Traffic congestion, noise, and pollution | npti_1 | Tourism has caused traffic congestion, noise, and pollution in the area |
| | Social problems | npti_2 | Tourism results in an increase in social problems (Kharel et al., 2022). |
| | Socio-cultural values | npti_3 | Tourism is deteriorating the socio-cultural values |
| | Drug abuse | npti_4 | The visitors exhibit drug abuse (Kharel et al., 2022). |
| | Sex tourism | npti_5 | The visitors exhibit sex tourism (Kharel et al., 2022). |
| | Traditional cultures | npti_6 | Tourism causes changes in traditional cultures (Kharel et al., 2022). |
| Overall community satisfaction | Ethnic values | ocs_1* | The organization helps to maintain ethnic values (Ko & Stewart, 2002). |
| | Quality of infrastructure. | ocs_2 | Tourism development has improved the quality of infrastructure. |
| | Environmental satisfaction | ocs_3 | The organization helps to maintain environmental satisfaction (Ko & Stewart, 2002). |
| | Recreational satisfaction | ocs_4* | The organization helps to facilitate recreational satisfaction (Ko & Stewart, 2002). |
| | Community development | ocs_5 | The organization involves citizens to enhance community development (Kharel et al., 2022). |
| Attitudes for additional tourism development | National policies | afatd_1* | The organization supports the devising of national policies (Ko & Stewart, 2002). |
| | Living community | afatd_2 | The organization supports the increment in living community (Ko & Stewart, 2002). |
| | Promotion campaign | afatd_3 | The promotion campaign will increase the tourism attraction (Dieke, 2003). |
| | Community growth | afatd_4 | Additional tourism would help the community grow in the right direction (Lin et al., 2019). |
| | Promotion | afatd_5* | The organization should do more to promote tourism (Kharel et al., 2022). |

*Note: To achieve an AVE value of 0.5 or higher, items pbftd_1 and pbftd_2 from Personal Benefits from Tourism Development, ppti_3, ppti_4, and ppti_5 from Perceived Positive Tourism Impact, ocs_1 and ocs_4 from Overall Community Satisfaction, and afatd_1 and afatd_5 from Attitudes for Additional Tourism Development were removed due to their low factor loadings.*

## Research Methods

This study is grounded in positivist philosophy, which assumes the existence of an objective and singular reality that can be observed, measured, and tested using empirical and scientific methods. Furthermore, the study adopts

both descriptive and explanatory research designs to systematically describe the phenomena under investigation and to examine the causal relationships among variables (Mahato et al., 2023). This study was conducted in the Kathmandu Valley, encompassing Kathmandu, Lalitpur, and Bhaktapur districts in Bagmati Province (Thapa et al., 2021). The valley is Nepal's primary tourism hub, hosting Tribhuvan International Airport, the country's only international airport (Thapa et al., 2021; KC et al., 2021). The targeted population comprised tourism entrepreneurs operating within the valley, selected due to the high concentration of tourism enterprises and rich cultural and historical sites. Their perspectives on tourism development, sustainable practices, and knowledge management provide critical insights into the region's tourism growth and sustainability.

This study employed a non-probability sampling technique, specifically purposive sampling (Lawaju et al., 2024), to select tourism entrepreneurs in the Kathmandu Valley. Purposive sampling was chosen because it enables the researcher to target respondents with relevant knowledge and experience in tourism development and knowledge management, ensuring meaningful and accurate data (Singh, 2007). The sample size was determined using Cochran's formula for an unknown population (Naing, 2003): $n= z^2pq/e^2$ (Lawaju et al., 2024), where z=1.96 at 5% significance, p=0.5, q=1−p=0., and allowable error e=0.05 (5%). Substituting these values, $n= (1.96)^2x0.5x0.5/ (0.05)^2=384.16$. Additionally, accounting for a 5% non-response rate, 384.16×0.05=19.23384.16, thus, the final sample size was 403. Due to time constraints, however, only 350 valid responses were collected for analysis.

### Research Instrument, Data Collection and Data Analysis

The primary research instrument for this study was a structured questionnaire, administered through KOBO Toolbox to efficiently collect primary data from tourism entrepreneurs in Kathmandu Valley. The questionnaire was carefully designed to address the study objectives, incorporating both open- and close-ended questions written in clear and simple language. Its sequencing and arrangement were optimized for clarity, and a pilot test was conducted on a small sample to ensure consistency, validity, and reliability of the instrument. Permission to collect data was obtained from relevant authorities. For data analysis, both descriptive and inferential techniques were employed to organize, interpret, and draw meaningful conclusions (Bengtsson, 2016). Descriptive analysis utilized charts, tables, and figures to summarize data, while inferential analysis, including structural equation modeling (SEM), examined relationships among latent constructs. Data entry and tabulation were performed using Microsoft Excel, whereas KOBO Toolbox facilitated data collection, and SmartPLS 4.0 was employed for Structured Equation Modelling (SEM) analysis due to its robustness in handling latent variables and complex modeling.

## Results

Personal and Socio-Demographic Information

**Table 2:** *Personal and Socio-Demographic Information*

| Title | Category | Number | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Male | 260 | 74.29 |
| | Female | 90 | 25.71 |
| Location | Kathmandu | 156 | 44.57 |
| | Lalitpur | 102 | 29.14 |
| | Bhaktapur | 92 | 26.29 |
| Age | 10-20 | 8 | 2.29 |
| | 20-30 | 159 | 45.43 |
| | 30-40 | 104 | 29.71 |
| | 40-50 | 56 | 16 |
| | Above 50 | 23 | 6.57 |

| Title | Category | Number | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| Education Level | Primary | 12 | 3.43 |
| | Secondary | 22 | 6.29 |
| | Up to SEE | 34 | 9.71 |
| | 10+2 | 101 | 28.86 |
| | Bachelors | 144 | 41.14 |
| | Masters | 35 | 10 |
| | Above Masters | 2 | 0.57 |
| Marital Status | Married | 198 | 56.57 |
| | Unmarried | 151 | 43.14 |
| | Widow | 1 | 0.29 |
| Family | Nuclear | 154 | 44 |
| | Joint | 196 | 56 |
| Involvement Sector | Hotel | 39 | 11.14 |
| | Restaurant/Cafes | 81 | 23.14 |
| | Tour Operators | 5 | 1.46 |
| | Travel Agencies | 13 | 3.71 |
| | Souvenir Shops | 45 | 12.86 |
| | Thanka | 29 | 8.29 |
| | Handicraft | 107 | 30.57 |
| | Others | 31 | 8.86 |
| Years of Experience in this Sector | Below 5 years | 121 | 34.57 |
| | 5-10 years | 99 | 28.29 |
| | 10-15 years | 49 | 14 |
| | 15-20 years | 26 | 7.43 |
| | 20-25 years | 16 | 4.57 |
| | Above 25 years | 39 | 11.14 |
| Level of Income per Month in NPR | Below 20000 | 48 | 13.71 |
| | 20000-40000 | 99 | 28.29 |
| | 40000-60000 | 58 | 16.57 |
| | 60000-80000 | 63 | 18 |
| | 80000-100000 | 34 | 9.71 |
| | Above 100000 | 48 | 13.71 |

Table 2 shows the socio-demographic features of the respondents. Out of 350 respondents, 74.29% of tourism entrepreneurs were male, while 25.71% were female, indicating a gender imbalance in the tourism sector. This aligns with McGehee et al. (2007), who reported that women represented less than half (43%) of tourism enterprise owners. Regarding age distribution, the majority of respondents were young entrepreneurs aged 20–30 years (45.43%), followed by 30–40 years (29.71%), 40–50 years (16%), above 50 years (6.57%), and 10–20 years (2.29%), suggesting that youth participation in tourism businesses is substantial. This contrasts with Lee and Hallak (2020), who found that 85% of business owners were aged 40 years and above. In terms of educational qualifications, most respondents held a bachelor's degree (41.14%), followed by 10+2 level (28.86%), master's degree (10%), SEE (9.71%), secondary education (6.29%), primary education (3.43%), and above master's degree (0.57%), indicating a generally high level of education among tourism entrepreneurs. Regarding marital status, 56.57% were married, 43.14% unmarried, and 0.29% widowed, reflecting the tendency of married individuals to engage in entrepreneurship due to family financial responsibilities. Family structure showed that 44% belonged to nuclear families and 56% to joint families. Tourism entrepreneurs were primarily engaged in handicraft businesses (30.57%), followed by restaurants/cafés (23.14%), souvenir shops (12.86%), hotels (11.14%), other businesses (8.86%), thanka (8.29%), travel agencies (3.71%), and tour operators (1.46%),

indicating a preference for handicraft enterprises, which contrasts with Lee and Hallak (2020), who reported a dominance of accommodation businesses. Regarding experience, most respondents were in the early stages of their business, with less than five years (34.57%) and 5–10 years (28.29%), while those with 10–15 years (14%), 15–20 years (7.43%), 20–25 years (4.57%), and above 25 years (11.14%) were fewer. Monthly income levels were predominantly NPR 20,000–40,000, with a minority earning NPR 80,000–100,000, reflecting modest initial earnings in tourism enterprises.

## Tourism Entrepreneurs Awareness Level of Knowledge Management

The awareness of knowledge management (KM) among tourism entrepreneurs was assessed across five key dimensions, people, process, technology, organizational structure, and organizational culture—consistent with the framework proposed by Wibowo (2014). A total of 24 dichotomous (yes/no) items were used, and respondents' awareness scores were computed based on the proportion of affirmative responses. Following the awareness index developed by Devkota and Phuyal (2018), scores below 50% indicate inadequate awareness, scores between 50% and 75% indicate moderate awareness, and scores above 75% indicate adequate awareness. This multidimensional approach captures KM activities ranging from knowledge creation and sharing to storage, retrieval, and application, supported by leadership, organizational culture, human resource practices, and training mechanisms (Wibowo, 2014). Findings reveal varying levels of awareness across dimensions. On the people dimension, entrepreneurs demonstrated moderate awareness (70.17%), despite high openness to employee suggestions (95.43%) and limited employee involvement in strategic decision-making (56.29% not involved) and KM-related training participation (27.43%). The process dimension showed adequate awareness (77.09%), reflected in strong emphasis on employee learning (96.86%), regular feedback (92.57%), and interaction sessions (57.43%). Technological awareness remained moderate (62.85%), as although most firms used technology to acquire new information (80.29%), fewer had established formal knowledge-sharing mechanisms. Similarly, organizational structure reflected moderate awareness (68%), with strong recognition of human capital value but limited formal KM strategies. In contrast, organizational culture exhibited adequate awareness (76.23%), supported by teamwork, knowledge transfer practices, and learning orientation, despite weak reward systems and limited industry engagement. Overall, the findings indicate that respondents provided a total of 5,981 affirmative ("yes") responses, accounting for 71.20%, while 2,419 responses (28.80%) were negative ("no"). According to the awareness index proposed by Devkota & Phuyal (2018), this overall score falls within the 50%–75% range, demonstrating that tourism entrepreneurs exhibit a moderate level of awareness of knowledge management practices.

## Challenges and Managerial Solutions


**Figure 2:** *Challenges in Knowledge Management Practices*

The study identifies substantial challenges in the adoption of knowledge management (KM) practices among tourism entrepreneurs in Kathmandu Valley. A large majority of respondents (87.29%) reported facing challenges in implementing KM initiatives. The most prominent barriers include a lack of awareness of knowledge management (25.43%) and insufficient financial resources (21.71%), followed by employee resistance to new learning (15.71%) and limited managerial attention to KM and sustainable business practices (14.57%). Additional constraints include inadequate KM expertise (12.57%), weak infrastructural facilities (12.00%), poor knowledge-sharing behavior (11.71%), and insufficient professional and managerial support (10.86%). Furthermore, ineffective reward systems that do not promote knowledge sharing (6.20%) and structural issues such as employee instability and low levels of professionalism were also noted. Respondents identified employees (58.34%) as the primary source of these challenges, followed by government policy (23.71%) and organizational policy (22.54%). In terms of frequency, challenges were perceived to arise moderately to frequently by most respondents, indicating that KM-related obstacles are persistent rather than incidental. Despite these constraints, most entrepreneurs (85.71%) believed that the challenges are manageable and that effective KM practices can be implemented within tourism enterprises. Key managerial solutions proposed include conducting KM awareness programs (26.29%), motivating employees toward continuous learning (21.43%), strengthening financial resources (19.71%), and fostering coordination and discussion within organizations (15.71%). Other strategies involve giving greater strategic emphasis to KM and sustainable business practices (14.00%), promoting knowledge-sharing behaviors (13.43%), and implementing KM-focused training and development programs (13.14%). Improvements in infrastructural facilities, availability of KM expertise, professional support, and reward systems aligned with knowledge sharing were also emphasized, aligning with prior studies (Pandit & Kautish, 2020; Rezaei et al., 2021). Responsibility for implementing these solutions was primarily attributed to organizations (35.67%) and employees (24.33%), highlighting the need for shared accountability and coordinated action in strengthening KM practices.

## Inferential Statistics

**Common Method Bias:** Common method bias (CMB) happens when replies diverge as a result of the instrument rather than the respondents' real predispositions, which is what the instrument is expected to reveal. To investigate the issue of common method biased the study uses the full collinearity technique (Kock, 2015). Common method biased is assessed in SmartPLS 4 by running the model connecting all the variables with the dummy variable that

includes random data and the VIF of outer model is reported. Since the VIF of outer model is less than 3.3 so it fulfill the criteria of VIF less than 3.3 (Tiwari et al., 2025). Hence, we can conclude that the model is free from the issue of common method biased.

The measurement model, also known as the outer model, describes the relationships between observed indicators and their underlying latent constructs. In this study, the measurement model was assessed using three key criteria: internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity, following the approach of Hajjar (2018). Internal consistency was evaluated using Composite Reliability (CR). According to Hajjar (2018), CR values ranging from 0.6 to 0.7 are considered acceptable, while values between 0.7 and 0.9 indicate satisfactory to good reliability. Conversely, CR values of 0.95 or higher may indicate item redundancy. The results presented in the table demonstrate that all constructs meet the recommended CR thresholds, thereby confirming adequate internal consistency of the measurement model employed in this study.

Convergent validity was assessed using Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and factor loadings. In evaluating convergent validity, this study followed the criteria proposed by Hair et al. (2019), which recommend an AVE value of at least 0.50. In addition, factor loadings of 0.70 or above are considered desirable, although in the context of exploratory research, loadings of 0.40 or higher are deemed acceptable (Hair et al., 2019). Table 5 shows the factor loading and AVE of the study. In this study, some indicators have loading less than 0.4 and some constructs achieved AVE values less than 0.5. the AVE of the construct personal benefit from tourism development, perceived positive tourism impact, overall community satisfaction and attitudes for additional tourism development was less than 0.5 which is not acceptable so the items of the corresponding construct with lower factor loading was dropped. Item pbftd_1 and pbftd_2 from personal benefit from tourism development, ppti_3 ppti_4 and ppti_5 from perceived positive tourism impact, ocs_1 and ocs_4 from overall community satisfaction, afatd_1 and afatd_5 from attitudes for additional tourism development were dropped to achieve AVE value of 0.5 or above as their loading were lowest.

**Table 3:** *Convergent Validity*

| Construct | Indicators | Outer Loading | Average Variance Extracted (AVE) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Personal Benefits from Tourism Development | pbftd_3 | 0.586 | 0.599 |
| | pbftd_4 | 0.865 | |
| | pbftd_5 | 0.839 | |
| Perceived Positive Tourism Impact | ppti_1 | 0.814 | 0.618 |
| | ppti_2 | 0.758 | |
| Perceived Negative Tourism Impact | npti_1 | 0.568 | 0.578 |
| | npti_2 | 0.767 | |
| | npti_3 | 0.792 | |
| | npti_4 | 0.828 | |
| | npti_5 | 0.851 | |
| | npti_6 | 0.724 | |
| Overall Community Satisfaction | ocs_2 | 0.592 | 0.538 |
| | ocs_3 | 0.78 | |
| | ocs_5 | 0.809 | |
| Attitudes for Additional Tourism Development | afatd_2 | 0.651 | 0.55 |
| | afatd_3 | 0.801 | |
| | afatd_4 | 0.765 | |

Discriminant validity was evaluated using three commonly applied approaches: indicator cross-loadings, the Fornell–Larcker criterion, and the heterotrait–monotrait (HTMT) correlation ratio. To assess cross-loadings, the criterion suggested by Hair et al. (201) was applied, which requires each indicator to load more strongly on

its associated construct than on any other construct. As presented in Table 6, this condition was satisfied for all indicators, indicating the absence of cross-loading issues. Additionally, the Fornell–Larcker criterion was then used to examine whether each latent construct explains more variance in its own indicators than in those of other constructs. As shown in Table 7, the square root of the AVE for each construct exceeds its correlations with other latent variables, thereby confirming discriminant validity ( Hamid et al., 2017). Finally, discriminant validity was further validated using the HTMT ratio. Table 8 indicates that all HTMT values are below the recommended threshold of 0.85, confirming that discriminant validity is adequately established across all constructs (Yusoff et al., 2020)

**Table 4:** *Fornell-Larcker Criterion*

| | **afatd_** | **npti_** | **ocs_** | **pbftd_** | **ppti_** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| afatd_ | 0.742 | | | | |
| npti_ | -0.247 | 0.761 | | | |
| ocs_ | 0.413 | -0.144 | 0.733 | | |
| pbftd_ | 0.432 | -0.123 | 0.371 | 0.774 | |
| ppti_ | 0.359 | -0.004 | 0.383 | 0.378 | 0.786 |

**Table 5:** *Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio*

| | **afatd_** | **npti_** | **ocs_** | **pbftd_** | **ppti_** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| afatd_ | | | | | |
| npti_ | 0.344 | | | | |
| ocs_ | 0.71 | 0.219 | | | |
| pbftd_ | 0.658 | 0.157 | 0.594 | | |
| ppti_ | 0.759 | 0.166 | 0.786 | 0.707 | |

**Goodness of Fit:** According to Ramayah et al. (2017), model fit or goodness of fit can be assessed using the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) and the Normed Fit Index (NFI). An SRMR value below 0.08 indicates a satisfactory fit (Hu & Bentler, 1998), while NFI values range from 0 to 1, with values closer to 1 representing a better fit (Hair et al., 2019). In this study, the SRMR was 0.069 and the NFI was 0.739, meeting the recommended thresholds. Therefore, the model employed in this study demonstrates an acceptable fit.

## Structural Model Assessment

The structural model in this study was utilized to examine the hypothesized relationships among latent variables through hypothesis testing, considering both the significance and relevance of path coefficients and confidence intervals. A total of nine hypotheses were tested, comprising four direct and five indirect relationships, using SmartPLS 4 software. Observed indicators with satisfactory factor loadings were assigned to their respective latent variables to ensure model adequacy. The results reveal that the independent variable, personal benefits from tourism development, significantly influences perceived positive tourism impact ($\beta = 0.378$) and attitudes for additional tourism development ($\beta = 0.262$), while negatively affecting perceived negative tourism impact ($\beta = -0.123$). Among the mediating variables, perceived positive tourism impact positively affects overall community satisfaction ($\beta = 0.289$) and attitudes for additional tourism development ($\beta = 0.174$), whereas perceived negative tourism impact exerts negative effects on overall community satisfaction ($\beta = -0.112$) and attitudes ($\beta = -0.182$). Furthermore, overall community satisfaction demonstrates a positive effect on attitudes for additional tourism development ($\beta = 0.223$), highlighting the critical role of both direct and mediating pathways in shaping community perceptions and development attitudes

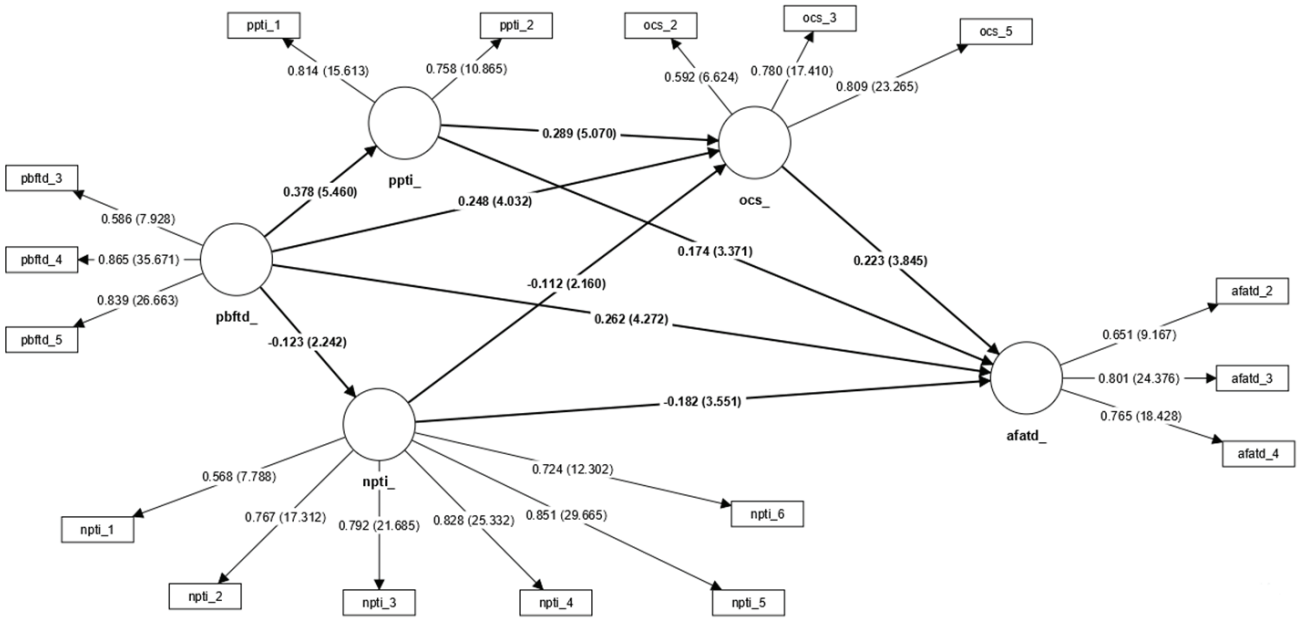


**Figure 3:** *Path Analysis*

For hypothesis testing, we first carried out the bootstrapping in SmartPLS 4 where Streukens and Leroi-Werelds (2016) suggest drawing at least 10,000 subsamples. For the evaluation of hypotheses that are stated in this study we check the t-value, p-value, and confidence interval. Using SmartPLS 4, look for the t-value; if it is greater than 1.96, the relationship is significant; if it is less than 1.96, the relationship is not significant (Purwanto et al., 2021). The t-value gives an indication for the significant of the path coefficients (Chin, 2009). By looking for p-value the decision criteria are that, if the p-value is less than 0.050 or <0.050 then the relationship is significant, if it is more than 0.050 or >0.050 then the relationship is not significant (Purwanto et al., 2020). If the value zero does not fall within the 95% confidence interval, a path coefficient is significant at the 5% level and the confidence intervals should typically be constructed using the percentile approach (Aguirre-Urreta & Rönkkö, 2018). Table 9 exhibits that t-value is greater than 1.96, p-value is less than 0.005 and β-coefficient lies within the confidence interval of 95% for all hypothesis which conclude that there is a significant relationship between variables of all hypotheses. Hence, all of the stated hypotheses are supported.

**Table 6:** *Hypothesis Test*

| Hypothesis | | Beta | SD | t-values | P values | 95% CI | | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | LL 2.5% | UL 97.5% | | |
| $H_8$ | npti_ -> afatd_ | -0.18 | 0.05 | 3.551 | 0 | -0.279 | -0.077 | Supported |
| $H_9$ | npti_ -> ocs_ | -0.11 | 0.05 | 2.16 | 0.031 | -0.207 | -0.001 | Supported |
| $H_7$ | ocs_ -> afatd_ | 0.223 | 0.06 | 3.845 | 0 | 0.107 | 0.334 | Supported |
| $H_4$ | pbftd_ -> afatd_ | 0.262 | 0.06 | 4.272 | 0 | 0.137 | 0.377 | Supported |
| $H_2$ | pbftd_ -> npti_ | -0.12 | 0.06 | 2.242 | 0.025 | -0.22 | -0.002 | Supported |
| $H_3$ | pbftd_ -> ocs_ | 0.248 | 0.06 | 4.032 | 0 | 0.124 | 0.363 | Supported |
| $H_1$ | pbftd_ -> ppti_ | 0.378 | 0.07 | 5.46 | 0 | 0.251 | 0.517 | Supported |
| $H_6$ | ppti_ -> afatd_ | 0.174 | 0.05 | 3.371 | 0.001 | 0.073 | 0.275 | Supported |
| $H_5$ | ppti_ -> ocs_ | 0.289 | 0.06 | 5.07 | 0 | 0.172 | 0.395 | Supported |

Following Hair et al. (2019) and Sobaih and Elshaer (2022), mediation was assessed using bootstrapped

path coefficients and t-values, where a t-value greater than 1.96 indicates significance. Full mediation is observed when the direct effect is non-significant but the indirect effect is significant, whereas partial mediation occurs when both direct and indirect effects are significant. The analysis of specific indirect effects in SmartPLS 4, as shown in Table 10, revealed that perceived positive tourism impact and overall community satisfaction significantly mediate the relationship between personal benefits from tourism development and attitudes for additional tourism development, as indicated by t-values above 1.96. In contrast, perceived negative tourism impact did not exhibit a significant mediating effect due to a lower t-value. Overall, the findings indicate partial mediation, as both the direct and indirect effects of personal benefits on attitudes for additional tourism development are significant.

**Table 7:** *Special Indirect Effect*

| Hypothesis | Beta | SD | t-values | P values | 95% CI | | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | LL 2.5% | UL 97.5% | |
| pbftd_ -> npti_ -> afatd_ | 0.022 | 0.013 | 1.75 | 0.08 | 0.002 | 0.051 | Not Supported |
| pbftd_ -> npti_ -> ocs_ -> afatd_ | 0.003 | 0.002 | 1.338 | 0.181 | 0 | 0.009 | Not Supported |
| pbftd_ -> ocs_ -> afatd_ | 0.055 | 0.021 | 2.62 | 0.009 | 0.021 | 0.103 | Supported |
| pbftd_ -> ppti_ -> ocs_ -> afatd_ | 0.024 | 0.01 | 2.389 | 0.017 | 0.01 | 0.051 | Supported |
| pbftd_ -> ppti_ -> afatd_ | 0.066 | 0.024 | 2.753 | 0.006 | 0.027 | 0.124 | Supported |

## Discussion

This study examined tourism entrepreneurs' awareness of knowledge management and its implications for tourism development in the Kathmandu Valley by analyzing five core variables: personal benefits from tourism development, perceived positive tourism impacts, perceived negative tourism impacts, overall community satisfaction, and attitudes toward additional tourism development. The findings provide strong support for H1, indicating a significant positive relationship between personal benefits from tourism development and perceived positive tourism impacts ($t = 5.46$, $p < 0.001$, $\beta = 0.378$; CI: LL = 0.251, UL = 0.517). This suggests that tourism entrepreneurs who derive personal economic or social gains are more likely to perceive tourism as generating positive outcomes for the destination. This result aligns with Ko and Stewart (2002), reinforcing the social exchange theory argument that favorable individual returns enhance positive evaluations of tourism impacts.

Conversely, H2 is also supported, revealing a significant negative relationship between personal benefits and perceived negative tourism impacts ($t = 2.242$, $p = 0.025$, $\beta = -0.12$; CI: LL = −0.22, UL = −0.002). This indicates that as personal benefits increase, sensitivity toward negative tourism consequences tends to decline, consistent with the findings of Kharel et al. (2022). Support for H3 demonstrates a significant positive association between personal benefits from tourism development and overall community satisfaction ($t = 4.032$, $p < 0.001$; CI: LL = 0.124, UL = 0.363). Similarly, H4 confirms that personal benefits significantly influence attitudes toward additional tourism development ($t = 4.272$, $p < 0.001$, $\beta = 0.262$; CI: LL = 0.137, UL = 0.377). These findings imply that tourism entrepreneurs who personally benefit from tourism not only perceive greater community well-being but also exhibit stronger support for future tourism expansion, corroborating the conclusions of Kharel et al. (2022) and McGehee and Andereck (2004).

The analysis further establishes the importance of perceived positive tourism impacts. H5 is supported, showing a significant positive relationship between perceived positive tourism impacts and overall community satisfaction ($t = 5.07$, $p < 0.001$, $\beta = 0.289$; CI: LL = 0.172, UL = 0.395). Likewise, H6 confirms that positive perceptions significantly enhance attitudes toward additional tourism development ($t = 3.371$, $p = 0.001$; CI: LL = 0.017, UL = 0.275), consistent with Rasoolimanesh et al. (2015). Furthermore, H7 demonstrates that overall community satisfaction positively influences attitudes toward additional tourism development ($t = 3.845$, $p <$

0.001, β = 0.223; CI: LL = 0.107, UL = 0.334), supporting Nunkoo and Ramkissoon (2011). In contrast, H8 and H9 reveal significant negative effects of perceived negative tourism impacts on attitudes toward additional tourism development (t = 3.551, p < 0.001, β = −0.18; CI: LL = −0.279, UL = −0.077) and overall community satisfaction (t = 2.26, p = 0.031; CI: LL = −0.207, UL = −0.001). While these findings align with Rasoolimanesh et al. (2015), they diverge from Kharel et al. (2022), suggesting contextual differences in how negative tourism impacts are experienced in the Kathmandu Valley.

## Conclusion

This study investigated tourism entrepreneurs' awareness of knowledge management and its role in promoting tourism development in the Kathmandu Valley, while also identifying key determinants of tourism development and challenges associated with the implementation of knowledge management practices. The empirical results confirm significant relationships among personal benefits derived from tourism development, perceived positive and negative tourism impacts, overall community satisfaction, and attitudes toward additional tourism development. Specifically, personal benefits and perceived positive tourism impacts were found to enhance community satisfaction and foster supportive attitudes toward further tourism development. In contrast, perceived negative tourism impacts were shown to diminish both community satisfaction and support for tourism expansion. These findings highlight the importance of maximizing tourism benefits while effectively mitigating adverse social and economic impacts to ensure sustainable tourism development. The study further identifies limited awareness of knowledge management, financial constraints, and employee resistance to new learning as major barriers to effective knowledge management implementation. These challenges were primarily attributed to employee-related factors, followed by organizational and governmental influences. Respondents emphasized that targeted knowledge management awareness programs, continuous training and development, employee motivation, and improved coordination between management and staff are critical strategies for overcoming these obstacles. The implications of this study are substantial for tourism entrepreneurs and policymakers. Strengthening knowledge management practices can enhance innovation, operational efficiency, and long-term sustainability within tourism enterprises. For policymakers, the findings provide empirical support for the formulation of targeted policies and educational interventions aimed at strengthening tourism entrepreneurship and sustainable tourism development. Future research should incorporate a broader range of stakeholders, extend to other tourist destinations in Nepal, and further examine the roles of education, innovation, and cultural context in shaping knowledge management awareness and tourism development outcomes.

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