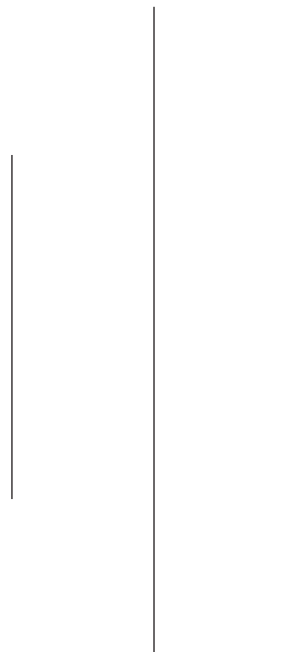


Exploration of factors affecting e-commerce adoption by tourism organisations in Nepal



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Abstract

Tourism is one of the major contributors to the GDP (Gross Domestic Products), and small-medium tourism enterprises (SMTEs) constitute the significant portion of the overall tourism market in Nepal. With the advancement of information and communication technologies (ICT), the successful application of e-commerce tools has become an indispensable facet of the tourism industry. The SMTEs play a vital role in tourism and adoption of e-commerce practices can bring various benefits to these organisations due to global reach of e-commerce. However, despite its influence in reshaping the structure of this sector, SMTEs in developing countries like Nepal have often lagged to seize the opportunity to reinforce their businesses through e-commerce. While factors affecting e-commerce adoption by SMTEs have been well documented in developed countries, limited attention has been given towards the developing countries like Nepal. As a result, this research aims to address this gap and explore both facilitating and obstructing factors affecting the e-commerce adoption of the Nepalese tourism organisations.

In achieving this objective, a mixed method research design has been employed through semi-structured interviews of seven informants and a survey of one hundred ninety-eight tourism organisations. A conceptual model grounded on the e-readiness model and Technology, Organisational and Environmental model (TOE) has been proposed using statistical and thematic analyses. The factors in the model have been divided into environmental and organisational factors. Additionally, based on the purpose and level of e-commerce use in the organisation, the SMTEs are classified into initial and advanced adopters.

The results obtained show that significant predictors in terms of barriers to e-commerce adoption in Nepal are the absence of adequate infrastructure (environmental factor) and

lack of resources (organisational factor). On the other hand, the findings further identified market forces (environmental factor), awareness, value proposition, and role of the owner or top-level management (organisational factors) as the key motivators.

The identification of barriers to the adoption of the e-commerce aids in devising the strategies, plans, and programs required by the managers, IT/web vendors and policymakers to mitigate those barriers and encourage e-commerce adoption. It also contributes to e-commerce adoption discourse and helps to expand and validate models for the tourism industry. The findings of this research corroborate with most of the earlier studies on e-commerce adoption and contradict with some of the findings related to culture, supporting IT industry and security concerns. Finally, in the context of e-commerce adoption, this study makes a significant contribution to the information system knowledge realm, especially for developing countries.

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Thank you very much.

Certificate of Original Authorship

I, Sanjay Lama declare that this thesis, is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Master of Science (Research) in Computing Sciences, in the Faculty of Engineering and IT at the University of Technology Sydney. This thesis is wholly my own work unless otherwise reference or acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

This document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

Signature of Student: Production Note:
Signature removed prior to publication.

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List of Abbreviations

ADSL	Asymmetric digital subscriber line
ATM	Automatic Teller Machine
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GDS	Global Distribution System
HAN	Hotel Association of Nepal
IBM	International Business Machines Corporation
ICT	Information Communication and Technology
ISP	Internet Service Providers
MOCTA	Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation
NATTA	Nepal Association of Tour & Travel agents
NTB	Nepal Tourism Board
PCA	Principal Components Analysis
PEER	Perceived External E-Readiness
POER	Perceived Organisational E-Readiness
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SMTEs	Small and Medium Tourism Enterprises
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SWIFT	Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication
TAAN	Trekking Agencies' Association of Nepal
TAM	Technology Acceptance Model
TIMS	Trekkers' Information Management System
TOE	Technology organisational environment
TRA	Theory of Reasoned Action
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
UTAUT	Unified Theory of Acceptance and use of Technology
UTS	University of Technology, Sydney