

## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DESTINATION IMAGE AND TRAVEL INTENTIONS: EVIDENCE FROM NEPAL

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### ABSTRACT

Promoting one's nation as a distinctive superior destination and creating huge tourism influx is what the nations' are striving for at recent times. The countries globally are having strategic orientation on how and why the visitors or travelers patronize destinations differently. In this context the studies emphasizing destination image as a primary tool of promotion is getting increased attentions. This study thus aims to analyze and empirically test the relationship of destination image with travel intentions considering sports tourism event/s as the attributive element forming the destination image. To fulfill the objective, the study is based on the sample size of 417 respondents who have participated in the sports tourism events in the popular destinations of Nepal. The study encompasses the time period of 2014-15. Using convenience sampling method and 5-point Likert type scales indicating the destination image, sports tourism events image and travel intentions the primary data has been collected through self-administered structured questionnaire. The methodology used for the analysis consists of correlation and regression analysis.

The study reveals that the high positive image perception of the destination will be forming positive intentions of the tourists to travel to the destination or revisit. It further depicts that sports events or other attributes or benefits of positive experience ultimately pave positive travel intentions with more revisits and increased referrals. The results imply that the promotion of tourism products and services with a satisfied experience in combination with several destinations attributes and benefits promote destination image generating increased travel intentions.

**KEYWORDS:** tourism, Nepal, industry, destination

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