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Author: Shiva Prasad Jaishi

Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management, Nepal

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HOSPITALITY EDUCATION IN NEPAL: STATUS AND CHALLENGES

Shiva Prasad Jaishi

Chief Officer/Senior Faculty

Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management

shivaprasadjaishi@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Tourism and hospitality, a people pleasing industry; aspires skillful, competent and capable enough workforce for providing quality service. This can only be achieved through the quality education and training system exercised in the country. The aim of this study is to identify the status and challenges of hospitality education in Nepal as perceived by stakeholders. Policies and plans documents were reviewed as secondary source. Dairy, questionnaire and interviews were used to highlight the insights of present scenario of hospitality education in Nepal. Stakeholders, policy makers and researchers are hopeful to find this work fruitful. Numerous academic institutions have been established in the short span of time. Moreover, many study programs have been introduced in affiliation with different universities from Nepal and abroad. Increasing positive perception towards this field of study is prospects. However, there are some challenges of the study of hospitality education program; lack of the umbrella organization to monitor and evaluation, gap in understanding, lack of qualified and competent faculties, lack of research activities, and confusion in study programme. As a field of diverse nature, hospitality needs multi skilled human resource to serve nationally and globally. Hospitality is considered as one of the main economic stream. Therefore, the nation should pay serious attention for the development of hospitality and tourism education.

Key words: Challenges, Hospitality Education, Status

Introduction

As a people business, hospitality and tourism believes on the quality service (Oktadiana, 2011). Quality service is possible through quality workforce. Quality human resource of hospitality industry needs to have the sound academic knowledge and better understanding of relevant skills and technologies. The competent graduates who have such demanding skills will have the best employment opportunities in global hospitality job market. The role of the formal education is crucial in order to achieve the objective of the prerequisite of competent human resource. The responsibility of developing tourism and hospitality management human resources lies within the hospitality organizations and within the education system of the country (Christou, 1999, pp. 683-692). Hospitality education plays the role to produce responsible and competent human

resource to execute the multi requirements of the industry. Hospitality education has emerged as driving force for developing economies therefore these economies recognized hospitality as vehicle for their visualized development and growth (Mill & Morrison, 1999).

As far as the tourism education in Nepal is concerned, though the history of tourism is already 56 years, it has hardly been recognized in the academia of Nepalese universities (Kunwar, 2012). The history of the hospitality education begins with the establishment of the Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hospitality Management (NATHM) formerly known as Hotel Management and Tourism Training Centre (HMTTC). The Centre was established by the government of Nepal with the technical assistance of ILO and UNDP to produce trained human resource needed in tourism and hospitality Industry in 1972 (Dahal & Sapkota, 2013).

Realizing the role of the hospitality and tourism education, government of Nepal has given special consideration while formulating policies and plans. Private sector is also encouraged to establish the institutions to conduct academic and training programmes for producing quality human resource. Hospitality education recognized as separate field of study in 1999, when Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management and Nepal Tourism and Hotel Management College started to launch Bachelor of Hotel Management with Affiliation of Tribhuvan University and Pokhara University (Jaishi, 2008). It has been resulted into the establishment of numbers of hospitality education institutions for the last one and half decades. In order to produce skilled human resources for the tourism industry, initiatives will be taken to move the Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel management towards self-dependence. High level educational programs and trainings will be conducted by the Academy. It will be developed as the major agency to coordinate, regulate and monitor HRD programs related to tourism. Moreover, necessary coordination will be ensured in strengthening educational and training programs run by the private sector related to this sector (National Planning Commission, 2007). The plan has clearly stated that there will be mechanism to regulate the tourism and hospitality education institutions. However, it is not clear regarding strategic initiatives for the governance of the hospitality and tourism education programs conducting by different institutions affiliated with different universities from Nepal and abroad. As a result, the programs are not in a same line. There is a gap among the stakeholders in understanding the programs. The hospitality and tourism education sector itself, therefore need to develop strong foundation by setting the mechanism for understanding the programs, determining the learning outcomes and its competencies, and carry out the research activities.

This study is aimed to examine the current status of hospitality and tourism education in Nepal, reason for studying hospitality education, perceptions of stakeholders towards this, research activities conducted by the hospitality educators, prospects and challenges of hospitality education in Nepal.

Objectives

The general objective of this study is to examine the current status of hospitality and tourism education in Nepal. Other specific objectives are as follows:

- To identify current status and prospects of hospitality education in Nepal
- To examine perception of stakeholders towards hospitality education
- To identify future challenges of hospitality education in Nepal

Literature Review

Hospitality education aims to enhance an individual's personality and develops confidence to manage the industry. However, a few studies has attempted on tourism and hospitality education in Nepal. According to the diverse nature of the industry, it is not easy to precisely define what skills and competencies a hospitality management graduates may need (Gamble & Messenger, 1990). Tourism and hospitality education is multidisciplinary field of study. Graduates require a multi-skills base, which allows them to be creative, flexible and adaptable (Tas, 1998). It plays significant role for the promotion of tourism in such a country like Nepal, which has lots of potentiality blessed with natural beauty and a rich cultural heritage.

Tourism is different from other sorts of industries. It does not sale destination physically. It sales the pride of destination and services required to visitors in particular destination with the help of skilled human resources. Hospitality students require a real and in-depth understanding of the industry and issues human resource management within it form a theoretical and conceptual view points before they are given operational and perscriptive models how to operate within industry environment (Baum & Nckson, 1998). Hospitality human resources need extra technical and operational skills and managerial knowledge to handle the activities that they are given to carried out. Hospitality graduates require additional technological training when they are hired within the industry (Dopson, 2005). In most countries, there is considerable gap between what is learned in the classroom and the real world of work in the hospitality industry. Hospitality education programmes must continually shift to meet changing demands in the hospitality industry (Asirifi, Doku, Morrison, & Sackey, 2013). Tremendous changes are taking place in hospitality industry which poses several challenges for transformation of the whole educational process including curricula, learning materials, instructional practices, and education stakeholders (Wang & Wang, 2009).

Methodology

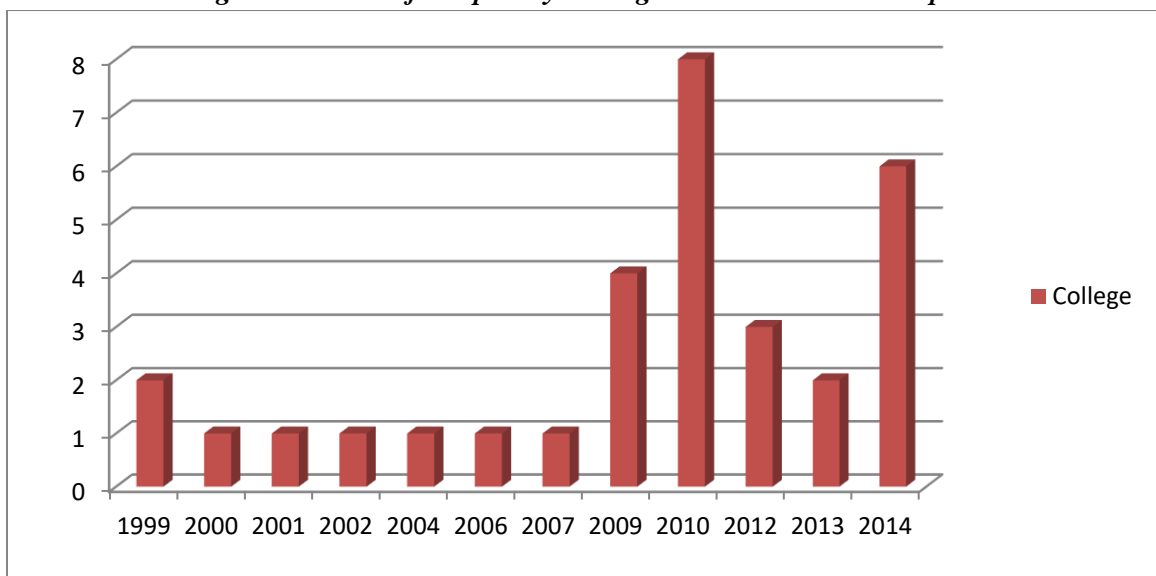
The purpose of this study is to explore the status, perception of stakeholders, and challenges facing by hospitality education in Nepal. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used. Primary and secondary sources were used to collect the data for this study. The researcher initially reviewed policies and plans of government. Similarly documents available on the websites, such as university, colleges and Ministry electronic newspapers, planning documents, statistical reports, brochures, prospects were reviewed. Dairy was maintained to know the current position of the hospitality education in Nepal. Purposive sampling method was used. Interviews were conducted to get the views of respondents from various sectors such as current students, hospitality graduates, hospitality educators, managers of hotels and owners of hospitality education institutions. There were 180 respondents including 52 female being interviewed by phone and face to face. They consisted of hotel managers, entrepreneurs, parents, lecturers, hotel management graduates, current students of hotel management. Simple size is given in appendix 4.

The in-depth interview was conducted to gain the information from managers, entrepreneurs, parents, and lecturers, while group interview was conducted with students. Unstructured questions were used. Simple mathematical tools were used to analyze the collected data.

Analysis and Discussion

Results

Figure 1: Status of Hospitality Management Education in Nepal



Above figure shows the number of hospitality management colleges established during the period.

Table No. 1 :Number of Universities, number of colleges and number students

Number of Universities	Number of colleges	Numbers of students approved by university	Number of students enrolled in 2014	Enrolled percentage
4	18	1444	1200	83%

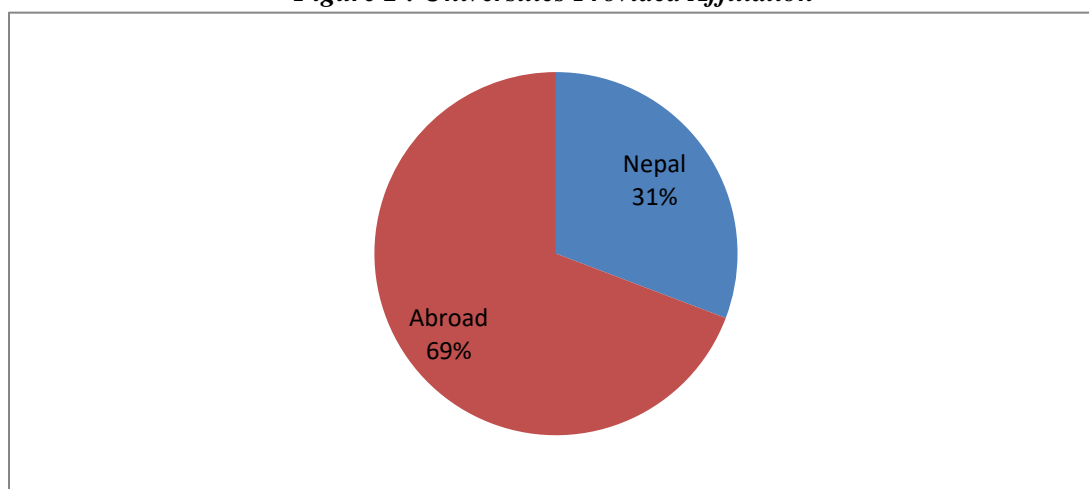
Table 1 shows that there are 18 hotel management colleges affiliated to four universities of Nepal with 1444 number of students approved by the universities for enrollment each year but only 83 % enrolled in 2014. This shows that there is shortage of students about 17% (see appendix 1).

Table No. 2 Number of Universities, colleges and students

Number of Universities/Association	Number of colleges	Numbers of students approved by university	Number of students enrolled in 2014	Enrolled percentage
9	13	1152	852	74%

Table 2 shows that there are 13 hotel management colleges in Nepal affiliated from different universities and associations from abroad with 1152 approved number of student for enrollment. Only 852 students are enrolled in 2014 which occupied only 74% for total approval number of students (See Appendix 2).

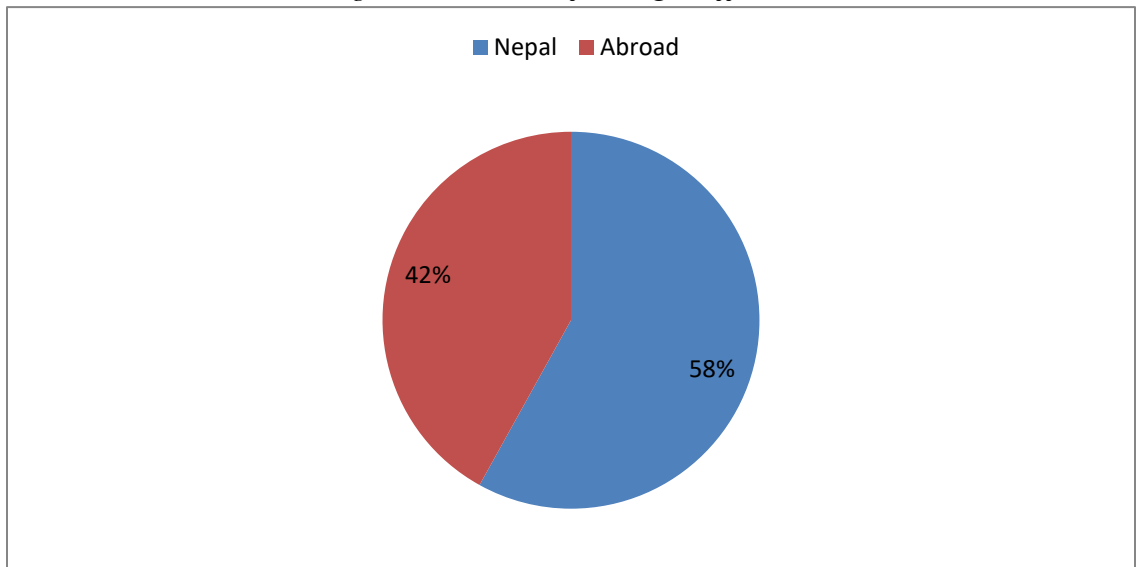
Figure 2 : Universities Provided Affiliation



Above figure shows that there are altogether 13 universities and professional associations provided affiliation to different colleges to run the bachelor level in hotel management in Nepal. Among them 4 universities of Nepal and 9 universities and associations are from abroad (see appendix 1&2).

Total seats available for bachelor level in hotel management are 2596. Enrolled numbers of students are 2052 in 2014. Aggregate percentage of enrollment in academic year 2014 is 79.

Figure 3 : Number of Colleges Affiliated



There are 31 colleges providing hotel management education in Nepal. Among them 18 colleges affiliated from 4 universities of Nepal and 13 colleges affiliated from 9 universities from abroad. Figure shows 58 percent occupied from universities of Nepal and 42 from foreign universities.

Figure 4 Number of Students Enrolled

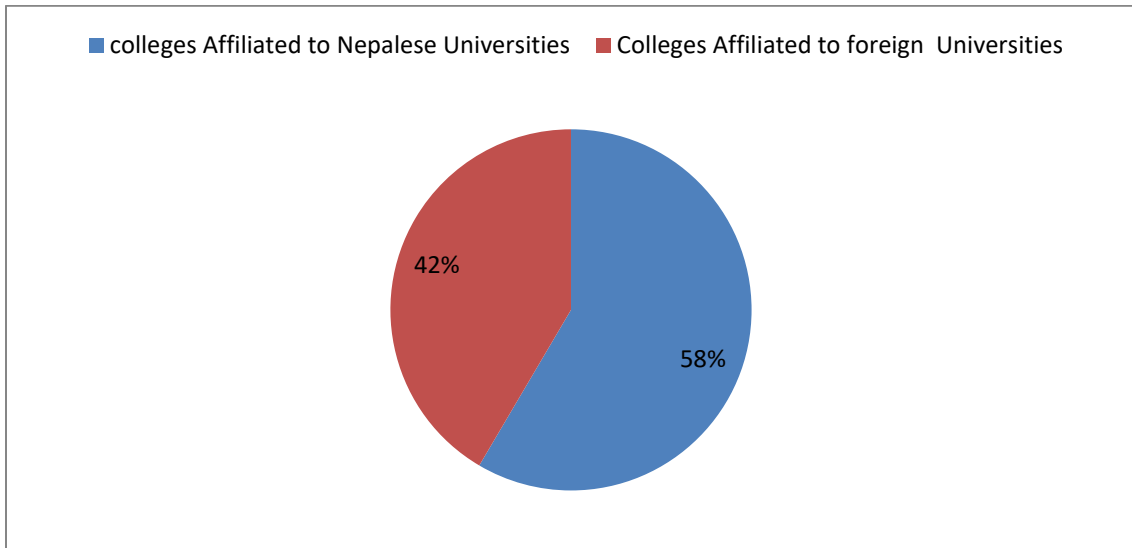


Figure above shows that the number of students enrolled in 2014, 58 percent in Nepalese university and 42 percent foreign university affiliation. None of them are constituent colleges of the national universities.

Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management (NATHM), oldest institution of the country, is owned by government, all others are private owned institutions.

Ratio of Students and Hotel Industry in Nepal

Though the number of colleges and the number of students have increased significantly, there is question of placement in internship as well as job. The hospitality job market in Nepal is highly low as compare to the number of students enrolled and graduated from colleges. There are only eight five star hotels in Nepal. If all students are interested to join internship in five star hotels, ratio will be 1:256 i.e 256 students in one hotel at a time which seems to be less possible to accommodate.

There are 75 star category hotels in Nepal in 2014. If colleges manage the internship for the students in star category hotels the ratio will be 1:27 i.e 27 students in one hotel which is also nearly impossible (see appendix 3).

Reasons to Study Hotel Management

Table No.3 : Reason to Study Hotel Management

Reason	Number	Percentage	Rank
Easy to go abroad	89	89	1
Work in local market	4	4	2
Establish own business	3	3	3

Improve family business	2	2	4
Confusion	2	2	4

The table shows the reason behind to study the hotel management in bachelor level. It indicates that 89 percent of the students and their parents are interested towards hospitality education because of easy to go to abroad and get job over there. There is a significant relationship between students, parents and other respondents in this regards. Eleven percent of the parents are unknown. They believe on their children that they are doing better for them. Three percent students confidently said that they will develop their own business related to their study. Two percent are studying to operate and improve their family enterprise already established. Four percent are interested to work in local market. Two percent are in confusion.

Most of the graduates are satisfied with their study. Sixteen percent expressed dissatisfaction to their study. Majority of graduating students suggested to have an improvement and updated curricular, inclusion of knowledge of latest technologies, focused on more practical knowledge.

Interest Area of Students

Table No. 4 : Interest of Students

Area	Number	Percentage	Rank
Food Production Department	24	24	1
No Choice	15	15	2
Food and Beverage Department	13	13	3
Front Office	11	11	4
Sales and Marketing	10	10	5
Teaching	9	9	6
Housekeeping	8	8	7
Shopping centre	6	6	7
Human Resource	4	4	9
Finance and Accounting	0	0	10

Table 4 shows that 24 percent of students are interested to work in kitchen. Their aim is to be a chef in the reputed hotel. Fifteen percent have no choice. They think that it depends upon situation. Thirteen percent students are interested in food and beverage, eleven percent front in office, ten percent in sales and marketing, nine percent in teaching, eight percent in housekeeping, six percent in shopping centre, four percent in human resource and no one is interested in finance and accounting.

Students' Interest on Further Study

Study of master in hospitality and tourism is not popular among the students. Students' first preference goes to abroad for study. Study shows that ninety percent of students want to go abroad for their advance study. Their choice is not tourism and hospitality management in abroad as well. Among them 68.2 percent are interested to study Master of Business Administration (MBA). For 20.3 percent of students of hospitality management is in preference. Remaining 12.5 percent are ready to go what they will get. They have no choice.

The students retained in Nepal are also interested to go for MBA. Negligible figure is interested towards tourism and hospitality. They consider that it has limited scope.

Perception of faculties

The faculties' view regarding the hospitality education is different. There is no security of their job. Very few colleges have the provision of appointment and agreement letters. The owners verbally assign them job to teach the students. The recent trend, there is unhealthy competition among the teachers, which creates favorable condition to entrepreneurs. The remuneration provided to teacher by colleges varies though they are teaching in same level. Teachers' grievances appear time and again regarding remuneration, incentives and other logistic support required in teaching. Study reveals that teaching is considered as part time job. Survey shows that teachers involved in the job are also under qualified.

There is a lack of research activities conducted by lecturers and students and limited numbers of hospitality and tourism research journals are available. It is quite difficult to find national-level standard journal. Based on the interview, 20 lecturers from 10 colleges in Kathmandu, the average teaching experience is 8 years with average research being produced about 1 paper within the period. According to the survey of teachers problems in writing paper or involving in research are 33.33 percent lacks the knowledge in research methodology, 26.67 percent lacks time due to teaching activities, 20 percent lacks the idea or topic for research. Remaining 20 percent consider teaching as part time job, therefore, research is irrelevant. It reveals that research is least preferred. According to teaching faculties, Faculty development programme is highly needed to update with the new teaching pedagogy to meet the demand of industry. Syllabi have to be updated as demanded by environment. Faculty exchange program with renowned institutes is required to play with the innovative ideas.

Perception of Hospitality Education Institutions' Entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurs view towards hospitality education is mixed and lousy. They mentioned the problem of collecting fees in time, due pressure from the groups like

students union, political parties and others. Availability and retention of competent faculty has become a challenge for them. Most of the competent faculties are interested to go abroad.

Perception of Managers

Managers of hospitality organizations consider hospitality and tourism education as an important academic discipline. They focused on the practical knowledge required by hospitality industry. They further hope that syllabi have to be formulated and updated as per the need of the industry. Emerging trends and changing scenarios have to be considered while planning and teaching hospitality management. They believe that such flexibility will help students to cope up with the industry environment in national and global level.

There is no clear classification within hospitality and tourism education yet. Some of the universities consider tourism and hospitality both are separate field of study. They conduct bachelor in hotel and bachelor in travel and tourism management. Some consider these two components are same. They have developed mixed syllabus like Bachelor in Tourism and Hospitality Management.

Discussion

The scope of tourism and hospitality is very broad. It includes not only food and accommodation but also kinds of business that offer variety of services to visitors away from their home. Tourism and hospitality, in all its areas, offer great potential for job opportunities and career advancement than any other industry (Oktadiana, 2011). Skilled human resource is highly necessary to meet the need of varied nature of industry and to cope up with changing environment.

In response to the liberalization, the hospitality education was consciously developed in both vocational and academic sectors like other sectors. The economic liberalization in the country, open sky policies in the aviation sector during the early 1990's and later on the effect of a globalization, gave new boost to hospitality education, through mushrooming of hospitality education have posed some threats in the quality of education as a number of institutes are being run without any proper infrastructure (Kumar, 2014). Liberal policy has given equal importance to conduct training academic programs from private sector in order to produce trained, skilled human resource. Hospitality and tourism study in Nepal was considered non-academic before 1999. It has got recognition as separate discipline after 1999. Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel management (NATHM) shall be developed as umbrella organization to conduct high level educational programs and trainings required by hospitality industry. NATHM shall be developed as Centre of excellence to coordinate, regulate and monitor hospitality

programs conducted in the country. Moreover, necessary coordination will be ensured in strengthening educational and training programs run by the private sector (MOCTCA, 2008). Mushrooming of private sector institutions in hotel management and additional numbers are opening up every year. They usually do not have any infrastructure or labs, have poor faculty and standards (Kumar, 2014). Significant numbers of private hotel management institutions are opening up every year in Nepal without proper infrastructures and qualified faculties especially with affiliation of foreign universities or association even though some of these universities are not reputed in their respective countries as well. This can be appeared as a challenge for Nepalese hotel management education. The number students are also increasing towards hospitality education. The number of students enrolled in 1999 were only 50. The increasing number trend of students enrollment is given in appendix 1 and 2. During this period, the perception of stakeholders has also been changed towards this. One the one hand there is significant relationship between increasing the number of colleges and number of students on the other hand there are problems of proper management and regulations. Though there are policies and plans which speak about the hospitality education. However, almost one and half decade passed, still there is lack of separate tourism and hospitality education policy to govern this academic discipline. There is lack of state owned mechanism to monitor and regulate hospitality and tourism sectors. During this period, the perception of stakeholders has also been changed towards this.

Challenges

On the basis of above analysis discussion following are the challenges ahead

- Managing internship programme effectively as there is limited hotels in Nepal.
- Policies and plans speak about the tourism education but there is a need of separate hospitality and tourism education policy to maintain the uniformity to govern and conduct academic programs in national level.
- To believe over foreign universities has become the challenge in Nepalese society due to their track records in their homeland.
- Students, parents, entrepreneurs, and hotel managers are agreed upon that there is a problem of standardizing the programs to meet the need of the industry nationally and globally.
- Timely modification and updating of syllabi to keep up with demands of hospitality job market.
- Study shows that there is a lack of research activities therefore it is highly necessary to maintain better relations with the corporate world in respect of promoting research activities which will help linking research with the teaching-learning process.
- Enhancing the faculty development programs.

- Study shows that there is lack of competent faculties. Therefore, attracting, motivating, developing retaining and ensuring the qualified faculty are the challenges for hospitality institutions.
- As there is need of faculty exchange, hospitality institutions need to seek collaboration with reputed institutions to twin the programs and faculty exchange.
- There is lack of infrastructure for quality education.

Conclusion and Future Research

The role of hospitality education is crucial for the development of hospitality industry. The history of hospitality and tourism education in Nepal goes back to 1972, when Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management was established as training centre to produce trained manpower required for tourism and hospitality industry. The history of hospitality education shifted towards academic arena when it got the recognition as separate discipline in 1999. After that different institutions offered hospitality and tourism education with affiliation of different universities including Tribhuvan University. The popularity of this study program has been significantly increased.

In the same time the problems and challenges have been emerged in this academic field. The institutional mechanism has to be set up to take initiations to overcome the problems and challenges. Hospitality and tourism education sector must pay attention towards study programs regarding qualified educators, continuing research, writing papers and development of research framework. Confusion in course of study to meet the national needs and international parameters has to be timely addressed.

Hospitality and tourism education institution should produce a workforce which is creative and innovative with skills and high competence to meet the requirement of industry in land and outside. Independent body has to be set up to monitor and regulate the hospitality education sector of Nepal to bring uniformity.

For the increasing response and prestige regarding hospitality and tourism education, concern authority needs to develop appropriate strategies with adequate consideration on the issues explored.

This research suffers from limited scope. It only has focused on the status and challenges of hospitality education. There is need of further research to explore more deeply the most suitable curriculum design and teaching methodology that will meet the need of industry. Development of research frame work in the hospitality and tourism study is also remained as the matter for further exploration.

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Appendix 1

Colleges Affiliated to Universities of Nepal

S. No	University/affiliated	Colleges	Program me staring year	Name of Program	Number of Students Approved by university	Number of Students enrolled in 2014
1	Tribhuvan University	Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management (NATHM), Kathmandu	1999	BHM	168	168
		Nepal College of Travel and Tourism Management (NCTTM), Kathmandu	2010	BHM	84	48
		National College of Computer Studies (NCCS), Kathmandu	2010	BHM	84	67
		Golden Gate International College, Kathmandu	2010	BHM	84	71
		Nesfield International College, Lalitpur	2010	BHM	84	81
		Balkumari College, Chitawan	2010	BHM	84	29
		Total	6			588
2	Pokhara University	Nepal Tourism and Hotel Management College (NTHMC), Pokhara	1999	BHM	96	85
		Ritz Hospitality Management College, Lalitpur	2009	BHM	96	96
		Quest International , Lalitpur	2009	BHM	48	46
		Crescent College,	2009	BHM	48	36

		Dhangadhi				
Total		4			288	263
3	Purbanchal University	Kantipur International College (KIC)	2000	BHM BHCM	120 80	156
		White House School of Hotel Management	2006	BHM	80	43
		South Asian College of Hospitality Management, Biratnagar	2001	BHM	80	80
		Gateway College of Professional Studies, Kathmandu	2009	BHM	40	40
		Aayam, Lalitpur	2012	BHM	40	26
		Morgan, Kathmandu	2012	BHM	40	40
Total		6			480	385
4	Kathmandu University	Nepal College of Management	2010	BHTM	44	44
		Little Angles	2010	BHTM	44	44
Total		2			88	88
		Total			1444	1200

Source: www.fomecd.edu.np
<http://www.purbuniv.edu.np>
<http://www.ku.edu.np>
<http://www.pu.edu.np>
Field survey 2014

Appendix 2

Colleges affiliated to the Universities and Associations from abroad

S. No.	University /affiliated	Colleges	Program me starting year	Name of Program	Number of Students Approve d by universit y	Number of Students enrolled in 2014
1	Salzburg University of Applied Science	International School of Tourism and Hospitality (IST)	2004	B. Sc. In Hospitality Management /	132	132
2	Queen Margaret University , U.K.	Silver Mountain School of Hotel Management	2002	BIHTM	120	75
3	Swiss Hotel Associatio n(SHA)	Global Academy of Tourism and Hospitality Education (GATE)	2007	Higher Diploma in Hotel and Restaurant Management	150	123
4	Karnataka State University , India	International College of Hospitality Management (ICHM), Kathmandu	2013	B. Sc. In Hospitality and Catering Management	120	120
5	CTH London, U.K.	Brihaspati College of Management, Kathmandu	2013	BHM	40	28
6	Lincoln University , Malaysia	Yala Peak College of Business Management (YPCBM)	2014	BHM	105	58
		Academy of Culinary Arts	2014	BHM	105	30
		National College Management and Technical Science, Kathmandu	2014	BHM	40	17
		Pokhara Lincoln	2014	BHM	70	40

		International College, Pokhara				
		Western Mega College, Butwal	2014	BHM	70	33
Total		5				
7	Nilai University, Malaysia	International College of Hospitality Management (ICHM), Lalitpur	2014	BHM	40	40
8	Help University, Malaysia	Mid-Valley International College, Ganeshwor	2012	Bachelor of Business (Hospitality Management)	80	76
9	IMI centre	White House School of Hotel Management	2010	BHM	80	80
Total	9	13			1152	852

www.moe.gov.np
Field Survey 2014

Appendix 3
Number of hotels in Nepal

Hotel category	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Five star	8	8	8	8	8
Four star	2	2	2	2	2
Three star	13	15	15	15	15
Two star	28	29	29	26	26
One star	26	26	26	24	24
Tourist Standard	387	423	442	482	424
Total	464	503	522	557	499

Source: Nepal Tourism Statistics 2014

Appendix 4
Sample size of the study

S. No.	Categories of respondents	Number of respondents	M	F	Total
1	Hotel Managers	20	15	5	80
2	Entrepreneurs (hospitality institutions)	20	18	2	
3	Parents	20	10	10	
4	Lecturers	20	15	5	

5	Hotel management graduates	60	40	20	100
6	Current students	40	30	10	
Total		180	128	52	180

Abbreviation

BHM	Bachelor of Hotel Management
BTHM	Bachelor of Tourism and Hotel Management
NATHM	Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hospitality Management
ILO	International Labour Organization
UNDP	United Nations development Programme
HRM	Human Resource Management