**Role of Tourism Industry in Economic Development of Nepal**

**(A Case Study of Lumbini Area)**

## Role of Tourism Industry in Economic Development of Nepal: A Case Study of Lumbini Area - Tikaram Sharma 2009

**A Thesis**

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Date: 2065-10-21

The thesis entitled Role of Tourism Industry in Economic Development of Nepal (A Case Study of Lumbini Area) has been prepared by Mr. Tikaram Sharma under my supervision. I hereby recommend this thesis for examination by the thesis committee as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Economics.

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i

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This thesis entitled Role of Tourism Industry in Economic Development of Nepal (A Case Study of Lumbini Area) submitted by Mr. Tikaram Sharma to the Central Department of Economics, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Economics has been found satisfactory in scope and quality. Therefore we accept this thesis as a part of the said degree.

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ii

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###### Tika Ram Sharma

iii

**Executive Summary**

Tourism is an industry with entombment present and potential value for Nepal. The tourism sector has been placed as a priority sector keeping its contribution towards the overall development of Nepal.

Lumbini is comparable to major heritage sites of the world in terms of its importance as the birthplace of lord-Buddha, the apostle of peace. It's potential for development into a world-class pilgrimage and tourist center is great. For the lack of a continuous history, much of Lumbini' attraction is in the form of archeological sites and objects. Its development and conservation history in our time is less than 50 years, An Ambitious Lumbini development master plan envisaged transforming the sacred site of Lumbini into a place where the universal message of peace and compassion-central to the Buddhist philosophy, can be experienced.

Lumbini Development Trust's effort to carry out the Master Plan has been a peace meal basis. The number of pilgrims and tourists to the site has not grown substantially as requisite access, coherently presented attractions, variety and range of amenities and suitable package of activities have not been promoted in Lumbini. Problems of proper management and utilization of created facilities on the site have been seen. The sanctum sanctorum has not been able to give real experience to the visitors. The purpose of created facilities at monastic enclaves has been flouted. The level of infrastructure on site is poor.

The lesson learnt from promotion of Buddhist package in India has not been applied on the Nepalese side despite having a number of very important historical, archeological and cultural sites intimately linked to Buddha and Buddhism scattered in Kapilvastu and Nawalparasi districts adjoining Lumbini. Assertive marketing promotion of this world Heritage Site coupled with a provision of transport, communication and other infrastructure is required.

iv

A holistic approach to market the Buddhist sites is essential. For this, an optimum utilization of created facilities and adoption of methods for generation of resources for increased self-reliance is the desired path.

Improved surface and air transport and preferably an international airport nearby is essential to boost the number of pilgrims and tourist to Lumbini. Internal Capacity of the site needs to be enhanced to handle increased number of visitors without and negative impact on the site itself and experience of the visitors. Ways and means of generating income and employment to the local communities have to be explored for sustained upkeep of the ambient environment around the site. A coherent system of site interpretation with code of conduct to be compiled by all stakeholders has to be developed and enforced. A uniform signage engraved on traditional material such as stone, copper, brass or wood at the important zones, sites and objects of archeological importance is necessary.

Lumbini can provide a destination image for Nepal. If its development, conservation and tourism promotion efforts are taken up synergistically. Enhancement of management and networking capacity both on the domestic and international fronts is required to achieve this goal.

v

vi

##### **Table of Contents**

**Page No.**

*Recommendation Letter i*

*Approval Sheet ii*

*Acknowledgements iii*

*Table of Contents iv*

*List of Tables viii*

*List of Figures ix*

*Executive Summary x*

List of Abbreviations xii

Chapter One: Introduction 1-8

[1.1 Definition 1](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415753)

[1.2 General Background 1](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415754)

[1.3 Statement of the Problem 3](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415755)

[1.4 Significance of the Study 6](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415756)

[1.5 Objectives of the Study 7](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415757)

[1.6 Limitation of the Study 7](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415758)

Chapter Two: Literature Review 9-33

[2.1 Review of Related Studies 9](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415760)

2.1.1 Review of Ph.D. Thesis 9

2.1.2 Review of Research Articles 12

2.1.3 Review of Research Report 14

2.1.4 Review of Books 15

[2.2 Review of Tourism Policies 17](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415761)

[2.2.1 The First Plan (1956-1961) 17](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415762)

[2.2.2 The Second Plan (1962-65) 18](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415763)

[2.2.3 The Third Plan (1965-1970) 18](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415764)

[2.2.4 The Fourth Plan (1970-1975) 18](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415765)

[2.2.5 The Fifth Plan (1975-1980) 19](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415766)

[2.2.6 The Sixth Plan (1980-1985) 20](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415767)

[2.2.7 The Seventh Plan (1985-1990) 20](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415768)

[2.2.8 The Eighth Plan (1992-1997) 21](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415769)

[2.2.9 The Ninth Plan (1997-2002) 22](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415770)

[2.2.10 The Tenth Plan (2002-2007) 23](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415771)

[2.2.11 The Three Year Interim Plan (2007-2010) 26](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415772)

[2.3 Review of Previous Study on Study Area 29](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415773)

**Chapter Three: Research Methodology 34-36**

[3.1 Selection of the Study Area 34](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415774)

[3.2 Research Design 34](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415775)

[3.3 Nature and Sources of Data 35](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415776)

[3.4 Techniques of Data Analysis 35](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415777)

[3.5 Organization/Chapter Plan 36](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415759)

**Chapter FOUR: Tourism Development in Nepal 37-49**

[4.1 General Background 37](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415778)

[4.2 The Statistical Measurement of Tourism 37](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415779)

[4.3 Pattern of Tourism Arrival in Nepal 37](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415780)

[4.4 Tourist Arrivals by Purpose of Visit 40](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415781)

[4.5 Tourist Arrivals by Months 42](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415782)

[4.6 Tourist Arrivals by Age Group and Sex 43](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415783)

[4.7 Earnings Generated by Tourism in Nepal 44](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415784)

[4.7.1 Gross Foreign Exchange Earnings in Convertible Currencies (1992-2007) 46](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415785)

[4.8 Government Revenue from Tourism 47](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415786)

[4.9 Legal Framework for the Tourism Development 48](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415787)

**Chapter FIVE: General Outline of Study Area 50-95**

[5.1 Geo-Climate Condition (Lumbini Area) 50](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415788)

[5.1.1 Location 50](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415789)

[5.1.2 Climate 51](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415790)

[5.2 Historical Evidences of Lumbini 51](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415791)

[5.2.1 Maya Devi Temple 52](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415792)

vii

[5.2.2 Nativity Sculpture 53](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415793)

[5.2.3 Ashokan Pillar 53](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415794)

[5.2.4 Puskarinior Holy Pond 53](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415795)

[5.2.5 The Marker Stone 53](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415796)

[5.2.6 Natural Biodiversity 53](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415797)

[5.2.7 The Lumbini Museum 54](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415798)

[5.2.8 World Heritage Site: The Sacred Garden 54](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415799)

[5.2.9 Lumbini Village Tour 54](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415800)

[5.2.10 Eco-tourism 55](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415801)

[5.2.11 Peace Flame 55](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415802)

[5.2.12 Peace Bell 55](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415803)

[5.2.13 Central Link Canal 55](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415804)

[5.2.14 Other Attractions 55](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415805)

[5.3 Master Plan and Development 56](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415806)

[5.3.1 Present Condition of Lumbini 59](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415807)

[5.3.2 Monastery Zone 60](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415808)

[5.4 Packaging of Buddhist Sites 68](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415809)

[5.4.1 Package Tourist 69](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415810)

[5.4.2 Infrastructure and Facilities on Site 71](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415811)

[5.5 Market Potentials 72](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415812)

[5.5.1 International Pilgrims 73](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415813)

[5.5.2 International Tourists 74](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415814)

[5.6 Interpretation at Sites 74](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415815)

[5.7 Involvement of Local People 77](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415816)

[5.7.1 Capacity Enhancement 78](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415817)

[5.8 Improvement of Infrastructure and Facilities 79](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415818)

[5.9 Attraction of Tourism Sector 81](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415819)

[5.10 Tourism Status of Bhairahawa/Lumbini Area 82](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415820)

[5.10.1 Tourist Arrival in Lumbini 83](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415821)

[5.10.2 Country-wise Visitor in Lumbini 84](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415822)

[5.10.3 Employment in Hotel and Lodges of Lumbini Area 86](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415823)

[5.10.4 Change of Lifestyle of Local 88](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415824)

[5.11 Purpose of Visit 89](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415825)

[5.11.1 Length of Stay 90](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415826)

[5.11.2 Tourist Accommodation in and Around Lumbini 91](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415827)

viiii

[5.12 Impact of Tourism in Lumbini 91](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415828)

[5.13 The Main Attraction of Lumbini Area 93](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415829)

[5.14 Problems of Tourism in Lumbini 93](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415830)

[5.14.1 Hospital Facility 94](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415831)

[5.14.2 Drinking Water 94](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415832)

[5.14.3 Toilet 94](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415833)

[5.14.4 Tourism Information Center 94](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415834)

[5.14.5 Tourist Materials 94](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415835)

[5.14.6 Transportation 94](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415836)

[5.14.7 Trained Tourist Guides 94](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415837)

[5.14.8 Co-ordination 95](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415838)

5.15 Experts' View 94

**Chapter SIx: Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations 97-102**

[6.1 Findings 97](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415840)

[6.2 Conclusion 97](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415839)

[6.3 Recommendations 100](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220415841)

**Annexes (I-V)**

**Bibliography**

**List of Tables**

ix

**Page No.**

[Table 4.1:](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416086) [Tourist Arrivals and Average Length of Stay (1992-2007) 38](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416087)

[Table 4.2:](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416088) [Tourist Arrival by Purpose of Visit (1992-2007) 40](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416089)

[Table 4.3:](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416090) [Tourist Arrival by Month (1992-2007) 42](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416091)

[Table 4.4:](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416092) [Tourist Arrivals by Sex and Age Groups (1992-2007) 43](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416093)

[Table 4.5:](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416094) [The Foreign Exchange Earnings from Tourism 45](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416095)

[Table 4.6:](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416096) [Gross Foreign Exchange Earning in Convertible Currencies 46](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416097)

[Table 5.1:](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416098) [Acompilation of Twenty Construction Components 58](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416099)

[Table 5.2:](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416100) [Buddhist Sites around Lumbini in Nepal 70](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416101)

[Table 5.3:](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416102) [Tourist Arrival (Belhiya) 83](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416103)

[Table 5.4:](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416104) [Tourist Arrival in Lumbini 83](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416105)

[Table 5.4:](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416106) [Tourist Visiting Lumbini by Major Countries 85](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416107)

[Table 5.5:](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416108) [Hotels in Lumbini Surroundings 87](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416109)

[Table 5.6:](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416110) [Tourist Visiting by Purpose in 2008 89](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416111)

[Table 5.7:](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416112) [Accommodation Capacity in Lumbini 91](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416113)

[Table 5.8:](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416114) [Fee Structure 93](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416115)

**List of Figures**

x

**Page No.**

[Figure 4.1: Tourist Arrivals by Year 39](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416186)

[Figure 4.2:](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416187) [Tourist Arrivals by Purpose of Visit in Nepal 2007 41](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416188)

[Figure 4.3:](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416189) [Tourist Arrivals by Sex 2007 44](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416190)

[Figure 4.4:](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416191) [Gross Foreign Exchange Earnings in Convertible Currencies (1992-2007) 47](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416192)

[Figure 5.1:](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416193) [Tourist Travel Trend to Lumbini 84](file:///D%3A%5Cthesis%20b%5C3841%5CTikaram%20Sharma%20-economics.doc#_Toc220416194)

ix

**xi**

 **List of Abbreviations**

$ dollar

#### A.D. Anno Domino

B.C. Bikram Sambat

BIMSTEC Bay of Bangal Initiative Multi0sectoral Technical and Economic cooperation

CBS Central Bureau of Statistics

COSCAP Cooperative Development of Operational Safety and Continuing Airworthiness Programme

DDC District Development Community

DTP District Tourism Plan

FDI Foreign Direct Investment

GDP Gross Domestic Product

GON Government of Nepal

INGO International Non-Government Organization

LDT Lumbini, Development Trust

MA Master of Arts

MOCTCA Ministry of Culture of Tourism and Civil Aviation

NGO Non-Governmental Organization

NIDC Nepal Industrial Development Corporation

NPC National Planning Commission

NRB Nepal Rastra Bank

NTB Nepal Tourism Board

NTTR Nepal Travel and Trade Reporter

SAARC South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation

SASEC South Asia Sub-Regional co-operation

TRPAP Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation

UN United Nations

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNO United Nation Organization

VDC Village Development Committee

WTO World Tourism Organization

xii