



Jyapunhi Jatra of Panauti: Wonderful festival tourism product of Nepal

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Abstract

Purpose - This study examines Jyapunhi Jatra, a significant yet underrepresented intangible cultural heritage and festival tourism product of Panauti, Nepal. The research aims to explore its cultural relevance, celebration practices, and potential for tourism development.

Methodology/Design/Approach - Using a qualitative approach with analytical and descriptive research design, the study draws on both primary data (interviews, observations) and secondary sources.

Findings - Jyapunhi Jatra, held annually during Jestha's full moon, embodies Panauti's indigenous cultural identity through unique rites, processions, and customary practices. Despite its rich heritage value, the festival remains underutilized in the tourism sector.

Originality/Value - This paper fills a gap in the documentation and promotion of Jyapunhi Jatra by highlighting its potential as a vibrant cultural tourism asset. It contributes to broader efforts to integrate intangible heritage into sustainable tourism strategies.

Keywords: Jyapunhi Jatra, involving communities, means and materials, processes and procession, rites and rituals, tourism product

Introduction

Jyapunhi is one of the most wonderful and special *Jatra* celebrated with joyfully by all the residents of *Panauti*. The *jatra* falls in the Nepali month of *Jestha*, therefore, it is called *Jyapunhi jatra* in local dialect. In *Nepal Bhasa* the term '*Jya*' stands 'work' and '*punhi*' means *purnima* or full-moon. It is also known as the *Panauti Jatra* and *Hille Jatra* as well. It is performed especially in the core of *Panauti* an old and cultural city during the rainy season hence; sometimes it is called as *Panauti* and *Hille Jatra* respectively. The procession of holding the chariots takes place on full-moon i.e. on the *Jestha Shuklapaksha's Dwadashi* i.e. Nepali month *Jestha's* Waxing Moon period's twelfth lunar day. The day is called '*Dya: Kwaha Bijyaigu*' in *Nepal Bhasa*, which means Descension of God i.e. an act of moving downwards (Lakoju, 2078, pp. 120-121).

Panauti is one of charming and fascinating tourist destination of Nepal. The capital city of Nepal, Kathmandu, lies 32 kilometers southeast of this city. It's a small town in Nepal's *Bagmati* province that is part of the *Panauti Municipality of Kavrepalanchowk* District. It has been declared a protected Monument Zone and is listed as a Tentative World Heritage Site for a cultural category, as the early medieval settlement site in 1996 (DoI, n.d., pp. 51-53). This city is located in latitude 85 31' 00" E and longitude 27 35' 00" N. (Ulak, 2012, p. 66). Geographically, the village of *Panauti* is located where the critically endangered *Punyamata* River and the well-known living river *Rosi* meet. *Panauti* is thought to be composed of just one rock. It's intriguing that not

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a single *Panauti* home has been damaged by an earthquake. Thus, there haven't been any earthquakes in this region since.

The city's triangle shape results from the intersection of two rivers at the *Triveni Ghat*. It is located above a single and solid platform of a stone where two rivers converge *Punyamata*, or *Punyawati*, from *Tukcha Nala* woodland, and *Rosi*, or *Rudrawati*, from *Phulchowki* forest. The people of *Panauti* believe that the *Rudra* River or *Rurdawati*, and the *Parvati* River or *Punyawati*, met at the intersection where the *Lilawati* or *Durga*, was about to meet. This location later became *Triveni* (DoI, n.d., p. 51). The conjunction of three rivers regards as an important religious and sacred site since very early time as per the Hindu philosophy and Nepali society as well.

As per the Hindu religious scriptures, long traditions and practices a visit or just an ablution in such places like *Triveni* pilgrimage enables a man to be freed from many sins and anxieties. Furthermore, it's also thought that in *Panauti*, a third river, the *Lilawati*, converges with the first two, creating another triangular confluence known as *Triveni*. The last one, however, is supposed to be seen only to the mercies, or intellectuals, and the *Dharmatma* or sheers. *Triveni's* presence at *Panauti* has significantly increased both its religious significance and its appeal. Because of this, a large number of devotees from all over the nation flock here on festive occasions to perform holy ablutions and to pay respects to the neighboring *Indreshwor Mahadev* temple and other sacred locations. In Hinduism, the *Triveni* location is also known as *Uttar Prayag Tirtha*.

Panauti, which is located beneath the Kathmandu Valley, may be another UNESCO World Heritage Site. The 12th through the 17th centuries saw the *Malla* regime closely monitor this city. This is the evidence of architecture and culture that the *Bardhan* family had between the 13th and 17th centuries during the *Malla* dynasty (Khanal, 2010, p. 6). In addition to being built on a single stone and located where two rivers converge, *Panauti* has preserved a variety of ancient festivities (Ulak, 2012, p. 77). In this respect Ulak (2012, p. 77) further mentions that:

There are more than 50 festivals celebrated in *Panauti* every year. While the national festivals have fixed dates, religious festivals are set by astrologers following the lunar calendar. The best part about the festivals in *Panauti* is that all the events are celebrated with the same enthusiasm and glory the way it used to be in early days when people had no other means of entertainment.

As a whole, *Panauti* is richest in tangible and intangible cultural heritages including festivals and *jatras*. Numerous different festivals and *jatras* have been celebrated here throughout the year. Among the special festivals, *Jyapunhi* is considered important one through the social unity and harmony, cultural heritage and tourists and tourism perspectives. Recently, through the tourist and tourism perspectives *Jyapunhi jatra* is identified as indigenous cultural identity and a popular cultural tourism product of *Panauti*. Nonetheless, this *Jatra* is still not adequately exposed through the tourist and tourism perspectives. Many socio-cultural facets of this *jatra*, including its celebration practices, processions, rites and rituals, custom and customary laws, and its potential as a fantastic source of festival tourism products, have not yet conducted adequate research. Therefore, focusing it as the major research questions and gaps this paper entitled *Jyapunhi Jatra of Panauti: Wonderful Festival Tourism Product of Nepal* has been prepared.

Numerous researches have been done on festivals and *Jatras*, but none have focused specifically on *Panauti's Jyapunhi Jatra*, which is a wonderful festival tourism attraction. Due to a lack of adequate studies and research, many facets of this festival's tourism offering are still unknown. Obviously, the concerns touching this subject always stimulate the scholars to find out the information. Because of the problems ingrained in this celebration, the researchers were prompted to write this research paper with the following research questions, like: What is *Panauti's Jyapunhi Jatra*? How is it observed? Why is *Panauti's Jyapunhi Jatra* regarded as one of the wonderful festival tourism product of Nepal?. The main goal of this study is to trace the *Panauti's* historicity and its status as a significant cultural heritage site. The specific objectives of the study are, on the other hand, to investigate the several facets associated with *Jyapunhi Jatra of Panauti* and to analyze *Jyapunhi Jatra of Panauti* as a wonderful festival tourism product of Nepal.

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

Since it will serve as the prism through which a researcher assesses the study problem and research questions, the theoretical foundation is a crucial tool for every kind of research project. In social science research, reviewing the literature is one of the main methods for developing a strong theoretical basis. This aids in identifying the theories that might be applied to investigate the research topics. The material listed below has been reviewed in this paper based on the aforementioned doctrine.

Majapuyria (1981) The festivals of Nepal, Anderson (1988) The Festivals of Nepal, Regmi (1966) Medieval Nepal (Vol-II), Smith (2003) Issues in Cultural Tourism Studies, Shinde (2010) Managing Hindu Festivals in Pilgrimage Sites: Emerging Trends, Opportunities, and Challenges, Bowdin, Allen, Toole, Harris, & Macdonnel (2011) Events Management, Page & Connel (2014) The Routledge Handbook of Events, Dulal (2022) Prospects of Promoting Festival Tourism: A Case Study of Khame Jatra in Bhaktapur and (2024) Mahalaxmi Jatra: An Amazing Festival Tourism Product of Lubhu, Nepal have been reviewed for generating theoretical approach for this paper.

Likewise, for generating empirical knowledge and finding the research gaps the following literatures such as Pradhan (2053 BS) Panautiko samskritik sampadako ek adyayan (a study of cultural heritage of Panauti), Khanal (2010) Panauti dig Seeks New Light on Medival Nepal, Tamrakar (2069 BS) Panautika Prachin Kathaharu-1 (Ancient Legendaries of Panauti 1), Ulak (2012) Heritage tourism in Panauti, Lakoju (2078BS) Panauti, Dulal (2079 BS) Purbamadyakalin sahar Panautiko aithasik tatha samskritik mahatwa (Historical and cultural significance of Panauti an early medieval city) have been reviewed in this study.

In order to generate theoretical and practical knowledge, researchers have employed both theoretical and empirical methodologies throughout the study. This study contributes to the exploration of the *Jyapunhi Jatra* as a fantastic festival tourism product and various concerns related to the *jatra*, in addition to sketching the historicity of festivals and *jatras* in the world and Nepal. Thus, the following conceptual framework has been used in this study in order to address the aforementioned research gaps, issues, and goals.

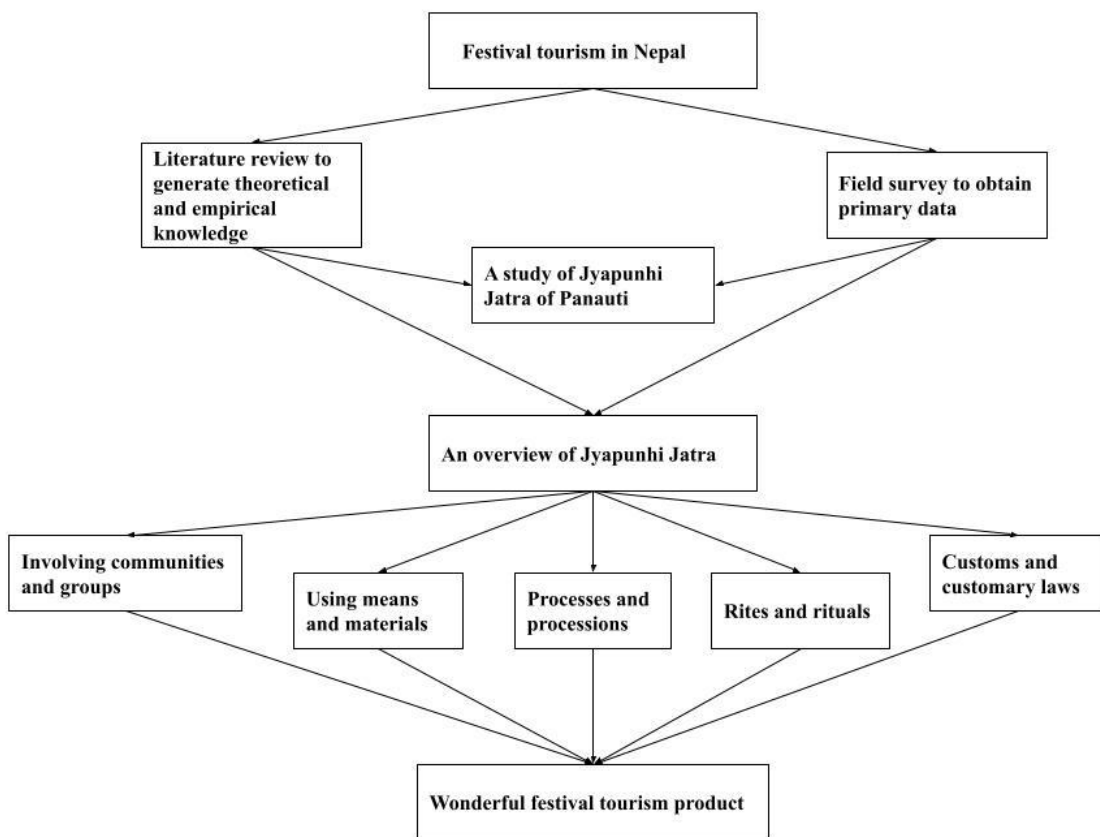


Figure 1. Conceptual framework. Source: Author’s field work, 2024

According to the key words, objectives, and figure mentioned above, this paper has discussed issues related to protecting cultural heritage and promoting tourism, as well as issues involving clans and communities, using means and materials, processes and procession, rites and rituals, customs and customary law, and sources of attraction as festival tourism products.

Methodology

This study is qualitative in nature since it examines religious belief, deities, worship systems, festivals, *Jatra*, rituals and procedures, customs, and customary laws. In this study, primary and secondary data were also employed. The primary source of original data is field work. First-hand information has been gathered through interview and observation techniques. In order to get detailed information about the specific *Jyapunhi Jatra* events in *Panauti*, researchers used a participant observation approach. Similarly, organized interviews with the key informants were conducted in order to gather primary data. The secondary data were gathered by means of a literature review of various published and unpublished sources, including books, journals, reports, and electronic versions.

Findings and Discussion

In order to collect primary data for the field survey, researchers used the methods of interviewing and observation. What is it *Jyapunhi Jatra*? When and how is it observed? Why is it celebrated by the *Panauti* community? What are the conventions, customary law, and conducting rites and rituals? To what extent is it regarded as an excellent festival tourist offering in Nepal? These are the main inquiries that were made of the locals while conducting the fieldwork. In a similar vein, the field survey revealed the procedure, customs, and involvement of both locals and visitors. Finally, *Jyapunhi Jatra's* history, customs, involvement of clans and communities, use of materials and processes, rites and rituals, customs and customary law, and sources of attraction as a wonderful festival tourism product are just a few of the subheadings that have been used to present the findings and discussions.

History of Panauti

Panauti has been identifying different names through the ages. It was known as *Panchal Desha* during Epic period while it was named as *Panawati*, *Purnawati* and *Asmanagar* in ancient time. There is a golden plate inscription in *Indreswor* temple where *Panauti* is identified as *Asmapur*, whereas, *Bhasa Vansawali* denotes it as the named *Panatigram*. Similarly, the inscription dated 1717 BS of *Brahmayani* temple mentioned *Punyawati* and another inscription dated 1776 BS of *Vamshagopal* i.e. Krishna temple coined the name *Punyawatipuri* to identify to the *Panauti*. Likewise, two copper plate inscriptions dated 1900 BS and 1914 BS of *Brahmayani devaghar* identified *Panauti* as the names *Panati* and *Palanti* respectively. Recently, it is recognized as other pilgrimage sites, including *Shachi Tirtha*, *Mokshyadayani Sthal*, *Punyadham*, *Trivenidham*, and *Prayaga Tirtha* (Dulal, 2079, p. 46).

During the Epic period *Pancha Pandav* were taken one year shelter in this territory, at the same time it was identified as *Panchal Desh* (Lakoju, 2078, p. 48). Neolithic stone tool was discovered from the *Jugu* village, *Khopashi* near *Panauti* (Sharma, 1983, p. 1). Several stone sculptures belonged to *Lichchhavi* period were identified from this heritage site (Pradhan, 2053, p. 244). Likewise, there find some coins of late *Lichchhavi* period in 2066 BS, while conducting archaeological excavation in the *Layaku* i.e. palace square (Lakoju, 2078, p. 34). Still, there find an inscription of King Shiva Dev and *Amshuvarma* of *Sambat* 520 i.e. 598 AD from *Khopasi* village near *Panauti* (Vajracharya, 2030, pp. 274-278).

The history of *Panauti* begins with King *Yaksha Malla's* unification of Nepal. One of the oldest cities in Nepal, *Panauti* is home to numerous temples that date back to the 15th century or earlier and are still standing today. *Panauti's* founder, *Ananda Malla* (1274–1310 BC), has been disputed; some assert that the town was built by King *Harisingh Dev*, citing a golden letter from 1385 unearthed in the *Indreswor* temple. *Panauti*, *Banepa*, *Sanga*, *Nala*, and *Palanchowk* were all eventually incorporated into the united kingdom of Nepal by the end of the 13th century, which had Kathmandu as its capital. As King *Yakshha Malla* passed away, the kingdom of Nepal was divided into numerous states. *Bhaktapur* was the biggest and most powerful of them all. *Bhaktapur*

was a kingdom that included *Panauti*. As a dowry, King *Bhupatendra Malla* had handed the *Panauti* state to his sister (Ulak, 2012. p. 68).

Panauti has a long history as a historic city. The majority of the modern archaeologies, however, were restored and constructed during the Malla dynasty. King Prithvi Narayan Shah was undecided on how to invade and subjugate the *Panauti* state during the integration of Nepal because it was headed by a woman. A warrior should not fight the weaker side in accordance with the "*Geeta*" an important religion scripture war principle (Ulak, 2012. p. 69).

Due to this ethical consideration he was in a tough situation because he needed to expand Nepal's territory towards the Kathmandu Valley by winning *Panauti* state, but he was also concerned that if he lost to the Queen of *Panauti*, he would have to forfeit his reputation for capturing (unifying) territory. King Prithvi Narayan's counselors recommended identifying the "man or woman" in charge of *Panauti*. It is difficult to tell males from women in the queen's attire. But they discovered that the monarch was a female and that she had arrived at *Triveni Ghat* early in the morning and cleansed her face with both hands. It became more difficult to attacking the state run by women got very challenging. Then, during the Queen's morning stroll at *Triveni Ghat*, Prithvi Narayan Shah employed a method of shooting a gun from the opposite bank of the *Punyamata* River, aiming for the *Gajur* i.e. pinnacle or temple cap, of the *Indreswor* Temple. She fled from *Panauti* as a result of the abrupt, unexpected invasion (large noise), and Prithvi Narayan included *Panauti* in the unification of Nepal in 1763 (1820 BS) without causing any casualties to either party. The pinnacle of *Indreswor* temple still displays the bullet point (An Interviewed with local people).

Panauti's culture, which mostly adheres to *Bhaktapur* traditions, is comparable to those of the Kathmandu Valley. There was a lot of rain in the valley, and *Panauti* was in risk of flooding from *Punyamata* and *Rosi*. For *Panauti's* protection, the Queen gave the order right away to build an *Aastha Matrika* i.e. temple of eight mother goddesses that was modeled after *Bhaktapur*. To rescue *Panauti* city, *Maneswori (Maheswori)*, *Kathang Kumari (Ganesh)*, and *Itawari (Sankata)* were mostly created outside at three sides. To preserve the rich land and city, they constructed a canal for irrigation on the *Rosi* River (Ulak, 2012. p. 68).

The name *Ga Dyang* refers to the canal wall. This was constructed to prevent disruptions from the *Rosi* River, extending from *Kathang Kumari* to *Triveni Ghat*. Sadly, the tantric traditions were abandoned when *Panauti* was integrated into Nepal in 1783 AD. The goddess of *Itawari (Sankata)* falls in opposition to the *Rosi* River, and the river then attacks *Panauti* once more, starting to float within and sweep away one side of *Ga Dyang* towards the city. *Khusi Bu* (river field) refers to the fertile area between the current *Rosi* River and *Ga Dyang's* opposite side (Ulak, 2012. p. 68).

An Over View of Jyapunhi

Jyapunhi is also known as the *Panauti Jatra* and *Hille Jatra* as well. It is the most important and special *Jatra* is celebrated joyfully by all the residents of *Panauti* as per their financial potentiality. Relatives are invited to witness the grandeur of the *jatra* and the guests are treated with warm hospitality upon their arrival. The *jatra* falls in the Nepali month of *Jestha*, therefore, it is also called '*Hille Jatra*'. In Nepal *Bhasa*, the *jatra* is called '*Jyapunhi jatra*'. In local dialect the term '*Jya*' stands 'work' and '*punhi*' means *purnima* i.e. full-moon.

This *jatra* is also known as "*Jya-punhi Jatra*" because it takes place during the farming season of the Nepali month of *Jestha-Asadh*, when farmers are hard at work in the fields and the chariot of *Panauti* collides on *Purnima*. While the chariot procession occurs on full moon days throughout the *Panauti Jatra*, the *jatra* proper starts on the twelfth lunar day of *Jestha Shuklapaksha*, or *Dwadashi* in Nepali, the month of *Jestha* during the Waxing Moon period. The twelfth lunar day of *Jestha* month during the Waxing Moon cycle is known in Nepal *Bhasa* as "*Dya: Kwaha Bijyaigu*," which translates to "Descension of God." The image of *Bhramhayini* is moved from the main room into a new one on this day. In a same manner, the image of Goddess *Bhadrakali* is taken from the main chamber and set on a new room's throne. The residents of *Panauti* consider that day to be the official start of the *jatra*.



Figure 2. Jyapunhi Jatra Festival. Source: Author's collection, 2024

The festival's myth holds that *Bhadrakali* is the super goddess *Parvati* took on in order to eradicate evils that made people more irrational and passionate. *Indreswor Mahadev* made an effort to appease her. He was driven by *Bhadrakali* and was unable to please her. Immediately after, *Indreswor Mahadev* changed into *Unmatta Bhairav* and dove into *Triveni Ghat*. *Unmatta Bhairav* was given a large organ. After that, he traveled directly to *Bhadrakali*, where they met at the *Dabali*, where he presented *Layaku*. They had sex there, to her complete satisfaction (An Interview with Local people).

The main *Jatra*, which falls on the day of the full moon, begins early in the morning. After a rear-end collision with Goddess *Bhadrakali's* chariot, the god *Bhairava's* is drawn out. Then, representing the divine sexual encounter with Goddess *Bhadrakali*, the chariots of the god *Unmantta Bhairava* and Goddess *Bhadrakali* collide. Three times, this activity is repeated. Every time the chariots clash, worshipers celebrate the joyous coupling of the celestial pair by flinging vermilion at one another. The chariot bearing Goddess *Bhadrakali* and the palanquin with God *Indreswore Mahadev* also clash head-on. Before the palanquin eventually collides with the chariot of Goddess *Bhadrakali*, it is transported back and forth several times. Subsequently, the palanquin collides with the chariot one last time before being removed. This represents the divine mating ritual between Goddess *Bhadrakali* and God *Indreswore Mahadev* (<http://hamropanauti.com.np/panauti>).

A well-known folktale surrounds *Panauti Jatra*. According to mythology, long ago, *Mahadev* begged Shree Krishna to give him one of his wives in order to test Shree Krishna's character. Krishna instructed *Mahadev* to grab one from a room where he wasn't present in order to satisfy his request. Every room that *Mahadev* entered had Krishna and his wives. After failing, he went back to *Kailash* and told *Parvati* everything. *Parvati* chose to put *Mahadev's* character to the test after learning about his experiences. When *Parvati* became lusty, she took on the appearance of a 64-*yogini* and pursued *Mahadev*. *Mahadev* fled and took refuge in a river in *Panauti's Triveni* after becoming scared. Knowing all of this, *Parvati* took on the appearance of 64 *Yoginis* and continued to await Shiva around *Triveni*. Additionally, *Mahadev* manifested as *Unmattabhairab*. When *Parvati* saw *Bhairab's* hideous, frantic incarnation, she became terrified and changed into *Bhadrakali*, sprinting along the banks of the *Roshi* River. Once they arrived in *Layaku Dabali*, *Bhadrakali* eventually became peaceful after *Unmattabhairab* had sex with him from behind. Satisfied, *Bhadrakali* addressed her desire to have another sexual encounter with him in his true form. Then, *Bhairab* transformed back into *Mahadev's* original form and had three more front-facing sex sessions with her (Tamrakar, 2069, pp. 9-13).

Involving community and groups

The population of the town is around 10,000 mainly the *Newars*, *Brahmins*, *Chhetris*, *Giris*, *Magars* and *Tamangs*. *Newar* are the main dwellers of the core of *Panauti*. The core area of settlement of the *Panauti* is populated by the same ethnic community. They are mainly belonged to various *Newar* sub-castes, such as *Achaju* (*Archarya*), *Amatya*, *Bajracharya*, *Banmali*, *Basi*, *Bhaa*, *Bhaju* *Bijukchhen*, *Bikhala*, *Buddhacharya*, *Deula*, *Dhanju*, *Dhaugoda*, *Dhrajju*, *Dhussa*, *Dobate*, *Duiie*, *Duwal*, *Ghoraju*, *Hatti*, *Horaju*, *Hyaju*, *Hyanju*, *Jakibarjar*, *Jhyaba*, *Joshi*, *Kapil*, *Karmacharya*, *Kasaju*, *Khadgi*, *Khimbanjar*, *Khyaju*, *Kisane*, *Konga*, *Lako*, *Lathya*, *Madhikarnikar*, *Mahaju*, *Majhi* *Shrestha*, *Manandhar*, *Maskey*, *Matanchhen*, *Minna*, *Misanayo*, *Napit*, *Nasnani*, *Pasachhen*, *Phachhi*, *Piya*, *Poju*, *Pote*, *Pradhan*, *Pradhananga*, *Prajapati*, *Putuwar*, *Raghu* *Shrestha*, *Rajbhandari*, *Rajkarnikar*, *Rajoupadhyia*, *Ranjitkar*, *Sainju*, *Sanyasi*, *Shahi*, *Shakya*, *Shrestha*, *Singamu*, *Sipani*, *Somname*(*Sonam*), *Sudhakar*, *Suryabansi*, *Sutibanjar*, *Suwal*, *Syaula*, *Takha*, *Tamrakar*, *Taujeja*, *Udas* and *Ulak* and so on (www.hamropanauti.com.np).

Jyapuni Jatra is a Hindu festival where majorities of Hindu *Newar* take part whereas; Buddhist *Newars* also participate during the celebration of festival. This is the time of the year when the whole of the *Newar* community of *Panauti* gets out of their daily monotonies to celebrate in a truly carefree fashion. As the roles and responsibilities *Thakali* a leader and an eldest member of *guthi*, Priest, a *Duin* (woman) and a *Jyapu* (porter), *Dware*, musicians, *Deulas*, *Duincha*, the female '*Duincha*', *Panchapradhan*, leaders of village, *Suwal* and *Karmacharya* (*Achaju*) people are seemed very important personal during the celebration of this *jatra*.

Using Means and Materials

On the basis of traditions, cultural norms and values, rites and rituals, customs and customary laws there needed several things, means and materials for celebrating every festivals, *jatras* and religious ceremonies. Different types of flowers and fruits, flowers and plants leaves, incents, oil lamps, nectars, white and coloring rice etc. are more or less common things, which are needed in every religious ceremonies. Some things, means and materials are taken as the specific objects for especial one.

As per the same doctrine during the *Jatra* of *Jyapunhi* gold plated masks of different deities such as *Indreshwor Mahadev*, *Bhadrakali*, *Unmattabhairab*, idol of Lord *Ganesh* and their *khata*s i.e. chariots, *nols* i.e. polls use for carrying *khata*, '*Khadga*', i.e. a sword brought from *Hanumandhoka*, two green bamboos, different types of dresses and ornaments of gods and goddesses, musical instruments especially *Newari baja* such as *Dha*, *Khin*, *Daha*, *Dam Khin*, *Mag Khin*, *Bhushya*, *chushya*, *Ta*, *Tai-nai*, *Piwach*, *Sarangi*, *Guitar*, *Sitar*, *Violin*, *Basuri*, *Murali*, *panche baja* a set of five types of musical instruments (*Narsinga*, *Sanahi*, *Jhyali*, *Damaha* and *Temko*), and nine *baja* i.e. a group of nine musical instruments including *Latakhing*, *Dhan*, *Dhaluk*, *Dhimaya*, *Nayakhin*, *Kokhi*, *Nagada*, *Pachhima* and *Tatali*, rice, *koncha* a pot of alcohol which represent the god *Bhairav*, alcohol, male goat for sacrifice, buffalo, duck for sacrifice, different species of flowers and fruits, flowers and plants leaves, incents, oil lamps, nectars, white and coloring rice and so on are the most needed things as the basic means and materials.

Processes and procession

Although the *jatra* commences from twelfth lunar day, the festivities span only three days of *Trayodashi*, *Chaturdashi*, and *Purnima* i.e. the thirteenth day, fourteenth day and full moon day of *Jestha's* Waxing Moon period. The thirteenth day of *Jestha's* Waxing Moon period, *Trayodashi* is referred to as '*Duincha Dyakegu*'. In the local community, the day of *Trayodashi* is also called '*Kulakya*'. Whatsoever, *Panauti Jatra* is a combination of the palanquin and chariot festivals. It is the fourth day festival starting off on the tenth day of the bright fortnight of *Jyestha* (May-June) and ending on the third day of the dark fortnight in *Ashad* (June-July).

Formally, *Jyapunhi jatra* starts from the *Trayodashi* i.e. the thirteenth day and came to an end in the *Purnima* i.e. the thirteenth day, fourteenth day and full moon day of *Jestha's* Waxing Moon period. Altogether, it takes fourth days for reaching its concluding remark. Therefore, the whole celebration processes and processions can be classified into the preparation stage, first day, second day, third day and fourth day in which different rites and rituals perform in different places where the procession arrive.

In those days the procession circumambulated all the villages such as *Brahmayani* temple, *Triveni ghat*, bank of *Rosi* River, *Indreswor* temple complex, *Layaku tol*, *Police pati*, *Dumangal*, *Syaulatole*, *Sohrakhutte pati* and reaches *Lampati*, *Nawadurga Dabali* of the core of *Panauti*. The details of performing rites and rituals and customs and customary law associated with the *jatra* given separately in below.

Rites and rituals

During the primary farming season, which involves planting rice plants and harvesting wheat, *Jyapunhi Jatra* is observed. This *Jatra* was finished in the early days before daylight arrived. On it, there are two variants. In the first form, the *Jatra* is finished at night or before daylight arrives, allowing the people to continue to their farm and work. In the second version, the primary goal of the *Jatra* is for *Unmatta Bhairab* and *Bhadrakali* to have sex. The goddesses believe that sexual relations should only take place in secret and in the shadows. *Jatra* must therefore take place before daylight. But these days, the *Jatra* begins after daybreak and ends before afternoon, typically at 12:00 PM (Ulak, 2012, p. 77). In general, *Jyapuni Jatra* is a four-day celebration held in *Panauti* Core. Consequently, an analytical discussion of the entire set of rites and rituals, ceremonies, and activities related to this *jatra* is conducted based on the celebration days.

Preparation Stage: *Jyapunhi Jatra* officially begins on the thirteenth day, or *Trayodashi*, and ends on the thirteenth, fourteenth, and full moon days of *Jestha's* Waxing Moon period, or *Purnima*. But, it takes long times for its preparation. Since the previous days, *Thakalis*, *Guthi* members, locals, and relevant authorities have been performing managerial duties in order to ensure thorough preparation. The day before *Trayodashi*, *Thakalis* and every *Guthi* member completed all the tasks pertaining to the temple's cleanliness and the locations that the procession would pass through. Gold-plated masks of various deities, an idol of Lord *Ganesh* and his *khatas*, polls, *Khadga*, two green bamboos, necessary dresses and ornaments of gods and goddesses, musical instruments particularly *Newari baja* and *panche baja*, a pot of alcohol, male goats, buffalo, and ducks, as well as various flowers and fruits, incense, oil lamps, nectars, white and coloring rice, and so forth, are among the essentials they manage.

First Day Celebration: In the morning of *Trayodashi*, the '*Duincha*' brings two green bamboos and places them outside of the place where *Bramhayini* is kept. In the evening, the '*Dware*' receives a '*Khadga*', a sword brought from *Hanumandhoka*, in temple of goddess *Maneshwori* near bus-park. After the '*Dware*' receives the sword, he carries it and goes to worship different deities of *Panauti* while being accompanied by musicians. At night, the statue of *Bramhayini* is brought out from the place where it is kept and put in the chariot. Upon reaching the *Bramhayini* temple, the statue of *Bramhayini* along with her throne, is welcomed and placed inside the temple.

During the evening of *Trayodashi*, after the chariot of *Bramhayini* reaches near the bridge, the main priest, *Suwal* sub-caste of *Newar* community, and the *Duin* perform a worship ceremony and cross the bridge slowly and carefully, in a unique walking style to reach the *Bramhayini* temple that is across the river. They walk normally till half way through the bridge. After that, they walk in a special manner. The special and unique walking style is called '*Duincha Dyakegu*'. Such special kind of walk is done for more than half an hour. According to a folktale, once there was a flood in '*Punyamata*' river and it was impossible to cross the river, so, the people started praying to '*Basukinaag*', a serpent god, who extended himself along the river banks, acting as a bridge. After that, the people walked on the *naag's* body and crossed the river to reach the *Bramhayini* temple. The *naag's* body being slippery, they had to walk very slowly and carefully. Since then, the tradition of walking slowly while crossing the bridge is still continued and is called '*Duincha Dyakegu*'. There is always a large crowd of spectators during the ritual of '*Duincha Dyakegu*' on the day of *Trayodashi*.

Late in the evening is when the *Duin* awakening, or *cha-nya-ya-ke-gu*, is demonstrated. One of the main draws of the *Panauti Jatra* is this ordinary stroll. A priest, a *duin* (a lady), and a *gyapu* (a porter) go together with Goddess *Bhadrakali* and cross the bridge of *Punyamati* River for performing Tantric sacrifices to Goddess *Brahmayani*. In the past, there was a lot of rain and flow in *Punyamata* during the nighttime *puja*. Midway through the night, *Puja* must be carried to *Brahmayani*. Not a bridge. *Basukinaga* consented to act as a

mediator between them. No *Panauti* woman reported using the back of the *Basukinaga*, or serpent, to cross the river. The only one ready to do so was a *Duin* (cast or professionally by a midwife). In order to cross the river with the other members of her team, the *Duin* crept ahead by using her fingers on the back of the *naga*, or serpent god. The current 20-meter-long wooden/suspension bridge, which attracts devotees, carries on this tradition.

On completion of the process of '*Duincha Dyakegu*', the chariot of Goddess *Bhadrakali* with a '*Dware*' and the statue of *Bhadrakali* itself are pulled while being accompanied by traditional music. The chariot is also filled with local people who climb on the chariot to watch the chariot being pulled and get a rush of adrenaline flowing through their blood. Just like *Bramhayini's* chariot, the chariot of *Bhadrakali* also crosses the river and reaches the *Bramhayini* temple and is welcomed inside. The statue of *Bhadrakali* is kept inside the temple with *Bhadrakali's* stone statue of the temple. After that, no one is allowed to enter the temple. Tantric rituals are performed all night inside the temple. Before the ritual is performed, a goat sacrifice is offered to *Bramhayini*. After the ritual begins, a goat sacrifice is offered to *Bhadrakali*. At the same time, the *Basukinaag*, that is right opposite to the *Bramhayini* temple, is offered milk.

Second Day Celebration: On *Chaturdashi*, the next day morning, the '*Deulas*' put red and white cloths on the bamboos brought by the '*Duincha*' and take them away. Then, the female '*Duincha*', along with *Panchapradhan*, leaders of village, *Suwal* people, and *Karmacharya (Achaju)*, carries worship materials and follows the chariot. At that time, the chariot of *Bramhayini* is carried while musical instruments accompany the procession. Eventually, the chariot of *Bramhayini* reaches a bridge near *Panauti's Trivenighat* marking the commencement of '*Duincha Dyakegu*' ritual. There is a huge crowd of people at the *Bramhayini* temple early in the morning. On this day, the public worship and offer animal sacrifice at the temple as per their potential.

This day is also called *Mu: Jatra* i.e. *Mul Jatra* which means main festival. On this day, the locals prepare and enjoy varieties of delicious meals. On the same day, *Ganesh Jatra* is held splendidly. During the *jatra*, the idol of Lord *Ganesh* is carried around the town with traditional music's accompany. Similarly, a buffalo sacrifice is offered to *Bhairav* inside the courtyard of *Indreshwor* temple after the completion of worshipping rituals. Only on the day of *Chaturdashi*, buffalo sacrifice is allowed and it is the same day when the *Deulas* are given permit to enter the temple once. Then, the sacrificed buffalo's head and local alcohol is taken to the *Bramhayini* temple. The next day, during the *jatra*, the buffalo head is put on *Unmattabhairab* and *Bhadrakali* like a garland. On the same day, in the courtyard of *Bramhayini's* abode, three small jars made out of mud are kept and a goat is sacrificed to conduct a ritual called *Jogichakra* which is a ritual performed after somebody's death on 5th or 7th day of the death.

Third Day Procession: Third day i.e. fourteenth day of the bright fortnight is the last day of the *jatra*, the *Purnima*, is celebrated splendidly. There is often a huge crowd of people those who have come from farther places to witness and celebrate the *jatra*. On this day, the chariots of god and goddess *Indreshwor Mahadev*, *Bhadrakali*, and *Unmattabhairab* are brought together and collided at *Layaku Dabali*, a central open stage like space. In the morning of *Purnima*, a pair of goats is sacrificed at the *Bramhayini* temple. Subsequently, the statues of *Bramhayani* and *Bhadrakali* are taken out from the temple and placed on a northern platform. Then, the two priests who are assigned for the worship offer a duck as a sacrifice after bringing worship materials from their respective homes. Once the worshipping rituals are completed, one of the priests hand '*Khadga*' i.e. sword, to the '*Dware*'. The sword is kept on the chariot of *Bramhayani*, which is positioned opposite the temple and then the chariot is taken around the town, accompanied by traditional music, and finally rests facing west in *Layaku Dabali's* '*Police-pati*' that is a shelter-like public place where people gather.

From there, the *Dware*, Priest (*Panchapama*) and the public proceed to the *Indreshwor* temple, rejoicing with music. After the worshipping rituals, *Jangam*, the priest of temple dedicated to four-faced golden *Indreshwor Mahadev*, carries the statue of *Indreshwor* outside of the temple, passing through the '*Dakshini Dhoka*' southern door to reach the chariot where the four-faced *Mahadev* is placed. Thereafter, the three chariots of *Mahadev*, *Bhairav* and *Bhadrakali* that are near the *Indreshor Chowk (Haataa)*, are taken to the river bank of a place called *Lampati*, accompanied by traditional music.

First, the chariot of Lord *Mahadev* is taken, followed by *Bhadrakali's* and then *Bhairav's*. Only one priest accompanies chariot of *Indreshwor Mahadev* while the local people ride on the chariots of *Unmattabhairav* and *Bhadrakali*. The chariot of *Mahadev* is taken through *Dumangal*, *Syaulatole*, *Sohrakhutte pati* and reaches *Lampati*. Along the way, in the middle of the path, worshiped to Lord *Mahadev* is conducted at a place with *Shivlinga*. Eventually, the chariots are taken to *Lampati* with the chariot of *Bhadrakali* in the center and the chariots of *Bhairav* and *Mahadev* on the either sides and then the chariot of *Mahadev* is carried by all and placed next to the main road in front of *Layaku Dabali*.

Likewise, the chariot goddess *Bhadrakali* is pulled and kept a further away from *Police-pati*. In the same way, the chariot of Lord *Bhairav* is also pulled and collided with the chariot of *Bhadrakali* kept near the *Police-pati*. When the two chariots collide, the riders of the chariots show their excitement by throwing and smearing "Abir," or scarlet powder, on one another. After this is done, the chariot god *Bhairav* is taken back and kept a little further from *Nawadurga Dabali*. When the chariot Lord *Unmattabhairav* reaches its destination, the chariot of goddess *Bhadrakali* is pulled and collided with that of *Bhairav* from behind. Similarly, the chariots of *Bhairav* and *Bhadrakali* are collided with each other three times and then the chariots of *Bhadrakali* and *Mahadev* are collided with each other from the front three times.

When the chariots collide, the people smear color on one another to show their joy. This is known as *Naubaja*, or a set of nine *baja*, which is a set of nine musical instruments, including *LatakHING*, *Dhan*, *Dhaluk*, *Dhimaya*, *Nayakhin*, *Kokhi*, *Nagada*, *Pachhima* and *Tatali*. Even to protect themselves from the colors, spectators are not allowed to open umbrellas throughout the show. Additionally, it is not customary to give the devotees "Prasad," or nectar offerings of the gods and goddesses. It is customary to raise Lord *Mahadev's* chariot high and then let it fall to the ground after the procession in which it collides with the goddess *Bhadrakali's* chariot is finished. This is because it is thought that the people who carry the priest, who has fallen to the ground, when the chariot of *Mahadev* is stomped, will receive priceless treasures from the treasury of the *Indreshwor* temple.

Concluding Activities: *Bramhayini jatra* is held at night after the afternoon's *jatra* of chariot collisions is over. Carrying a traditional torch and singing traditional music, the people go from *Bramhayini's* home to *Police-pati* to greet him. The chariot is used to transport *Bramhayini* across the town. After that, Goddess *Bramhayini* is invited to return to her own home. A celebration feast known as "*Walan Bhwe*" is held after the buffalo sacrifice that was offered on the grounds of the *Indreshwor* shrine the day before is prepared. *Panauti Jatra's* fourth day comes to an end in this manner. Ultimately, the offerings are dispersed among the devotees once all of the chariots are brought close to their individual temples. Finally, when the sun was low in the evening, this *Jatra* would come to an end. Today, though, this *jatra* is held at daytime. This *jatra* was traditionally ended at night since it is believed that women and children should not be shown it because it is directly tied to sex.

Customs and Customary Law

One of the key components of any indigenous ethnic group's identity that sets them apart from one another is their customs and customary law. Within the norms, values, privileges, traditions, and discipline of that specific ethnic group, it aids in the control, management, guidance, and regulation of a member, family, and community. Customs are the institutions that carry out their institutional duties in the community (Dulal, 2024 & Singh, p. 24). In general, each ethnic group has a unique organization. In their community, they carry out various tasks in accordance with social norms and needs. These organizations are referred to as indigenous institutions of the community since they were established in compliance with the provisions of customary law (ILO, 2009, P. 81).

In order to achieve the goals of the members of that particular civilization, the communities are establishing traditional or indigenous institutions. It is a functional system that is regulated by the laws, rules, and community regulations that are in place. According to the system, the *Newar* community has its own set of customs and regulations. Since ancient times, the *Guthi* and *Thakali* systems have served many purposes in *Newar* culture. *Guthi*, or diverse organizations of people, have been a part of *Newar* society since very early times. They were founded for a variety of specific objectives. The word is derived from the word *gosthi* in

Sanskrit (Levy, 1992, p. 144). The community's leader is the *Thakali*. He is the group's oldest member. Because of his advanced age, he knew enough about people and things to worry the entire tribe. His views were solicited on all issues pertaining to the clan, specifically caste customs and religious observances (Regmi, 1966, p. 733).

According to the locals, the *Guthi* and the community leader *Thakali* are likewise connected to the *Newar* of *Panauti*. In earlier days, there were a number of *Guthis*. However, as a result of the locals' carelessness, the *Guthis* are gradually becoming less numerous. These days, the *Newar* population in *Panauti* follows the practices and rules of the *Guthis*, including *Sona Guthi*, *Sei Guthi*, *Dauwali Guthi*, and others. According to the same doctrine, *Jyapunhi Jatra* is entirely dependent on *Guthi* and *Panch Pradhan* and is governed by the following customary laws.

- The chariot procession is held annually during the full moon, and the actual *jatra* starts on the twelfth lunar day of *Jestha Shuklapaksha's Dwadashi*, which falls during the Nepali month of *Jestha's* Waxing Moon period.
- This *jatra* is believed to be off-limits to women and children because it deals directly with sex, which may be why the scene depicting the sexual encounter between the goddess *Bhadrakali* and the god *Unmatta Bhairav* is performed.
- Because of the display of sexual activity and the need to avoid women and children, *jatra* used to end at night.
- *Duin-cha-nya-ya-ke-gu'*, or the actions of *Duin* awakening, take place in the late evening on the fourth day, or the fourteenth day of the light fortnight.
- During the procession of "*Khadga*" a sword from *Hanumandhoka* was displayed at the temple dedicated to the goddess *Maneshwori*, which is located close to the bus park. With the sword in hand, *Dware* travels to worship various *Panauti* deities while being escorted by musicians.
- No one is permitted to enter the temple while the statue of *Bhadrakali* is kept along with *Bhadrakali's* following that.
- Tantric rites are carried out inside the temple all night long, including the sacrifice of a goat to *Bramhayini*, following the placement of the goddess *Bhadrakali* sculpture. At the same time, milk is offered to the *Basukinaag*, which is directly across from the *Bramhayini* temple.
- A buffalo sacrifice is sacrificed to *Bhairav* inside the *Indreshwor* temple courtyard following the conclusion of the third-day procession.
- When Lord *Unmattabhairav's* chariot reaches its *Layaku* during the procession, the goddess *Bhadrakali's* chariot is drawn and collides with *Bhairav's* from behind. Similar to this, *Bhairav* and *Bhadrakali's* chariots collide three times before *Bhadrakali* and *Mahadev's* chariots collide three times from the front respectively. It represented the actions of the intercourse between gods and goddess.
- The people splatter color on one another when the chariots collide, signifying their joy. Even to protect themselves from the colors, spectators are not allowed to open umbrellas throughout the show.
- Additionally, it is not customary to give devotees "Prasad," or nectar offerings of the gods and goddesses.

As a Wonderful Festival Tourism Product

Literary sources state that the celebration of festivals and *Jatras* in Eastern culture and civilization originated in the Vedic era, when there is an account of Emperors offering horses as sacrifices at the "*Ashomegha Yagna*" festival (Majapurua, 1981, p. 2). During the Vedic Period, the terms "*Maha*" and "*Jata*" were synonymous with "festival" and "*Jatra*," respectively. According to *Haribanshapuran* Lord Krishna had lifted *Gobardhan* hill, the particular occasion is known as the "*Girimaha*" festival. Several *Mahas* and *Jatas*, including *Indramaha*, *Skandamaha*, *Rudaijata*, *Sivajata*, and *Nagajata*, are mentioned in the Jain text "*Gayadhammakaha*" (Agarawal, 1964, pp. 4-5). In India, there is also a custom of commemorating holidays and *Jatras*. *Indrajatra* and *Viswamitra* are two of New Delhi's most well-liked festivities (Sharma, 1978, p. 27).

Some cylindrical events are defined by regular and regulated travels across some unit of space, while many cylindrical events are linked to people moving to various temples or pilgrimage sites in a more haphazard

fashion. A deity may occasionally be transported across space, but less frequently, devotees may find a deity in a temple, shrine, or a sequence of them, arranged in a certain order. As it is known throughout in South Asia, a *Jatra* refers to both the carrying of the god and the more structured movements of worshippers across the city (from the *Sanskrit Yatra*, a journey, festival train, procession, pilgrimage) (Levy, 1992, p. 420). A festival is a customary celebration held by a community that revolves around a particular feature of that community, including its cultures and religions. It is frequently observed as a national or local holiday.

An idol is decorated and carried in a grand religious procession during *Jatra* for a number of reasons. These include honoring the idol, providing him with a fun outing, introducing him to other gods and goddesses, taking him for his yearly bathing ritual, or just giving him the chance to witness a festival or ceremony alongside the travelling public (Anderson, 1988, p. 26). In this context Dulal (2022, pp. 9-10) writes that:

However, a festival is an event ordinarily celebrated by a community, centering on some characteristic aspect of that community and its religions and cultures. It is often marked as a local or national holiday. Festivals and *Jatras* are religious and cultural ceremonies which are celebrated for recalling of special events, keep patience to the gods and goddesses, protection of man and animals, and for the betterment of agro-farming. As cultural events, festivals are significant because they attract tourists. Festivals are important tourist assets of a given area; they are also tourist products sustaining the tourists' needs. Tourist movement, in which the motivation to travel is the willingness to attend festivals is referred to as festival tourism.

The majority of Western study on festivals characterizes them as cultural manifestations that communities re-imagine to satisfy their desires and leisure requirements, to build their identities, and to contribute to socioeconomic growth (Derrett, 2003; in Shinde, 2010). Scholars in the West are often interested in identifying characteristics that are commonly observed across a variety of festivals, whereas in the East, festivals are studied for their inherent significance. This difference in academic approaches stems from the nature of festivals in the two distinct contexts: homothetic approaches are common in the West, while idiosyncratic approaches are used in the studies of non-Western festivals (Walmsely, 2008; in Shinde, 2010). In the context of event tourism research Page & Connel (2014, p. 38) state that:

Event tourism as a separate discourse takes an instrumentalist approach in which the dominant themes are the production and marketing of festivals for tourism and other forms of development with a heavy methodological emphasis on marketing and economic impact assessment. The roles of events in tourism include attracting tourist (to specific places, and to overcome seasonality), contributing to place marketing (including image formation and destination branding), amazing attractions and places, and acting as catalysts for other forms of development. Dominating this discourse has been the assessment of economic impacts of events and event tourism, planning and marketing event tourism at the destination level, and studies of event-tourism motivation and various segmentation approaches. The study of negative impacts of events and event tourism is a more recent line of research.

As national traditions, festivals, *Jatras*, and *Melas* help shape each nation's unique identity on the planet. Every year, on specific auspicious days and times, individuals who worshipped the gods and goddesses may observe various festivals, fairs, and *Jatras*. For hundreds of years, a wide range of activities have been referred to as festivals. The Policy Studies Institute (PSI, 1992, p. 1; in Bowdin, Glen, Allen, O' Toole, Harris & Macdonnel, 2011, p. 19) noted that traditionally, a festival is a season of joy, rest, and relaxation that is frequently followed by a physically taxing time spent planting or harvesting crops. The celebration of community or cultural reaffirmation is a festival's key component. Dance, theater, and music are essential components of any celebration, however the creative substance of these events varies and many have a religious or ceremonial component. In this regards Smith (2003, p. 140) mentions that:

Festivals celebrated in a particular location from small villages to large towns aims to bring people together to celebrate their local area. Today, although many festivals aim to cater primary for the local community, they succeed nevertheless in attracting tourists, and around 56 percent of all festivals are created with a tourist audience in mind. Festivals have a higher concentration of visitors in areas of the country that are already established as tourist destinations, and the majority of festival organizers therefore design the program content with the attraction of tourists in mind.

Located in the middle of the ancient villages of *Khopasi*, *Malpi*, *Taukhal*, *Subba Gaun*, and *Sunthan* sits the medieval city of *Panauti* is one of the touristic sites in Nepal. Each of these villages has historical significance in addition to the valley's natural beauty. Most visitors to *Panauti* come to *Khopasi* to take in the breathtaking natural surroundings. *Khopasi*, now known as the industrial estate of the *Kavrepalanchowk* District of Nepal, was the seat of the *Kirat* dynasty, who ruled over ancient Nepal prior to the *Lichhavis*. There are two important tourist attractions that are *Namobuddha* and *Dhulikhel* locate in walking distance of roughly 5 km from *Panauti* for nice hiking.

One of the places where internal tourists travel to see cultural heritage is *Panauti*, where they go on pilgrimages to honor religious deities. Promoting *Panauti* as a culturally significant city helps draw tourists from abroad. In *Panauti*, heritage tourism entails more than just seeing to scenic locations; it also involves getting up close and personal with customs, history, and culture that were shaped by forefathers in a prehistoric setting. The foundation of *Panauti's* heritage tourism is the idea that every village has a history or tale to share, one that has been passed down from ancestors and preserved by contemporary culture. This may have an impact on the quickly expanding niche market for visitors interested in experiencing the regional customs, traditions, artwork, historical monuments, and cultures that accurately depict the *Panauti* as a live heritage site (Ulak, 2012, p. 64).

As a wonderful historical, cultural, and architectural town, where one can regularly observed multitude of festivals and *jatras*. A significant number of tourists visit *Panauti* each year because of its rich cultural legacy, both tangible and invisible, which includes festivals and *jatras*. Many festivals are observed by the people of *Panauti* throughout the year, including *Jyapunhi Jatra*, *Nepal Sambat*, *Buddha Jayanti*, *Dashain*, *Tihar*, *Yomahri Punhi*, *Gaijatra*, *Krishna Janmashthami*, *Naag Panchami*, *Gathemangal*, *Ram Nawami*, *Chaite Dashain*, *Holi*, *Shivaratri*, *Shree Panchami*, and others.

This paper deals with *Jyapunhi Jatra*, which is celebrated from the twelfth lunar day of *Jestha Shuklapaksha's Dwadashi*, and remaining till to the Nepali month of *Jestha's* Waxing Moon period especially in the *Newar* community is one of the important intangible cultural heritages, an indigenous feature, identity and tourism product of *Panauti*. This *jatra*, like others in *Panauti*, can be used to promote cultural tourism, as *Panauti* residents have been doing for the past thirty years. Many tourists came to see the connected tangible and intangible cultural heritage with each season. As a result, *Jyapunhi Jatra* is a valuable tourist product that may be marketed in tourism markets.

The major day of *Jyapunhi Jatra* is celebrated with great pomp for about a week in *Panauti*, from the preparation stage to the closing remarks. The idols of *Bhadrakali*, *Unmmatbhairav*, *Mahadev*, and *Ganesh* are kept in *khatas* (palanquins) and demonstrated around the core areas of *Panauti* town during the *jatra*. The scenery of this *jatra* is so breathtaking and lovely that it could become a major source of attracting tourists to this place. Thus, it might be developed as an important source of alluring tourists in this destination.

Although through the perspectives of arriving tourist especially international visitors in *Panauti* the situation is not seem so good. Statistics show only 1062 and 2367 tourists of SAARC and non-SAARC countries have visited *Panauti* in 2023 and 2024 respectively to observe beautiful cultural heritages of the destination. The statistics included here of 2024 is only till to the month of October 31. The details of the tourist arriving statistics from non-SAARC and SAARC countries in the destination in 2023 and 2024 presented in the table as follows.

The table reveals that the number of the tourists of non-SAARC and SAARC countries of the last two years i.e. 2023 and 2024 according to the countries. On the basis of above mentioned statistics *Panauti* still cannot able to utilize its tourism products and allures the international tourists in the destination. It is consider as the sensitive matter in the field of tourism of *Panauti*. Therefore, lastly, the local community, local government, concerned authorities, and all stakeholders should focus on promoting *Jyapunhi Jatra*, other festivals and all the natural and cultural heritages as the significant source of tourism product of *Panauti* in order to complete this endeavor without being late.

Table 1. Non SAARC and SAARC Tourist Arrival Statistics in Panauti

S. N.	Country	2023	2024
1	France	332	777
2	Italy	113	403
3	Germany	268	458
4	Spain	132	181
5	USA	33	126
6	Korea	19	56
7	England	25	18
8	Switzerland	13	7
9	Austria	13	30
10	Australia	5	46
11	Belgium	7	16
12	New Zealand	6	9
13	Brazil	11	30
14	India	5	27
15	Taiwan	21	12
16	Singapore	4	35
17	Bangladesh	6	16
18	Vietnam	7	9
19	Iceland	8	5
20	Slovenia	17	7
21	others	20	69
Total		1062	2337

Source: Panauti Tourism Development Center, 2024

Conclusion

Festivals and Jatras are regarded as religious and cultural rituals observed to commemorate significant occasions, maintain faith in gods and goddesses, mark the incarnation of the main characters, safeguard humans and animals, and advance agro-farming. Festival tourism is that specific alternative kind of tourism that allows a visitor to witness celebratory festivities up close. In Panauti, the Jyapunhi Jatra is a well-liked tourist attraction, much like other things that one might see while strolling around the streets. The uniqueness of Panauti's Jyapunhi Jatra is demonstrated by its diverse effects on various aspects of the tourism industry that encourage and facilitate the experience of culture, entertain visitors, and give them a chance to pass the time in an engaging manner. It can therefore be marketed as Panauti's fantastic festival tourist offering.

Even though Jatra is a significant collection of both tangible and intangible elements and cultural legacies, its potential as a magnificent tourism product has not received as much attention or use as it could as a cultural tourism offering. The Newar an ethnic group in the area directly benefits from this traditional practice, which is a product of the Newar community. Therefore, the same community has primary responsibility for the preservation, practice, and commercialization of this festival in the global tourism markets and travel industry as well.

Finally, besides Jyapunhi Jatra Panauti creates an opportunity to experience historic and traditional homes, natural palaces, and traditional, religious locations are all accessible to heritage tourists who come to learn about the way of life such as clothing, farming, industry, dietary habits, rituals, etc. and to breathe new life into historic rivers, Panauti's culture, and the customs of her community. Notwithstanding the antiquated myths surrounding the Jyapunhi Jatra, it continues to be an essential and indispensable aspect of our culture and civilization. It is our job and responsibility to protect and promote the cultures of Panauti, which are our priceless assets.

Acknowledgment

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Declaration

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Not applicable.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Availability of data and materials

The data supporting the findings of this study are available upon request.

Competing interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding this work.

Declaration of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the manuscript preparation process

During the preparation of this work the author used Grammarly in order to correct spelling mistakes and help me make better sentences. After using this tool/service, the author reviewed and edited the content as needed and takes full responsibility for the content of the published article.

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