**Host community perception on tourism impacts and their role in tourism planning in Chamba, Himachal Pradesh, India**

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**Abstract:**

The aim of this study is to evaluate and analyze the association between the tourism impacts on the community’s quality of life with their role in tourism planning for quality improvement. The Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh is selected as a study area for this research. The evaluation results show the impacts of tourism on the community’s quality of life. It revels the association between the factors which affects the community’s quality of life and their stage of involvement in tourism planning.

**Key words:** Tourism Impacts, quality of life, tourism planning.

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1. **Introduction:**

Now a day’s tourism is an impactful element to bring the changes in both the economy development and countries development (Gumus,2007). Tourism development brings the several benefits for the community and affect them in several ways, Tourism increases the traffic congestion, crime rate, cost of living and water waste (Nunkoo and Ramkisson,2009). The sustainability of tourism depends upon the numbers of actors like the consideration of tourism impacts on the community (Cahndralala,2010). The community’s attitudes towards the tourism are significant as it argues that people who are associated with the tourism activities are more happy and welcome tourism and tourists (Snaith and Haley,1999).

A good numbers of research studies has been conducted related to the tourism impacts and community’s perceptions on it (Wall and Mathieso,2006). It is a fact that all communities have its own culture and tradition on which tourism imparts its effects, especially in the developing countries.

The specific aim of this study is to evaluate and analyze the tourism impacts and the role of community in tourism planning in Chamba, Himachal Pradesh, India.

**Research Objectives:**

1. To study the social, cultural and economic impacts of tourism and community’s role in tourism development planning.
2. To evaluate the community affects and their satisfaction by the tourism development.
3. To determine the factors which are important for the degree of community’s role in tourism development planning.
4. **Tourism planning and community role:**

Tourism development planning in developing countries are not involving the community’s participation in decision making process or they are either marginalized (Dola and Mijan,2006). The community is not only excluded from the tourism planning process but also from project management and decision making. It is a common practice in developing countries with top down approach (Teye et al.,2002).

There is a need for the community’s participation in management and planning tourism especially in relation to the developing countries (Cater,1994). The community’s participation in tourism planning is specifically for the effectiveness of planning and tourism management. The role of community for planning and decision making is not only important for tourism benefits but also for sustainable development of the area (Dark,1991; D’A more ,1992; Green,1995; Leslie,1993; Murphy,1988). Therefore, there are many hindrances for the community’s participation in tourism planning and development especially for developing country like India. Few of the hindrances are the instructions of the government system in which tourism planning and development depends on the sectoral grounds and are the norms and no participation of community in tourism planning and development (Mohammadi,2010).

Lack of infrastructure to participate in tourism planning and development aspects in developing countries is the main issue in relation to involvement in tourism decision making process (Dola and Mijan,2006). There are social, culture and economic hindrances for the community’s participation in tourism planning and development issue (Aref and Redzuan,2006).

1. **Community’s attitudes towards tourism:**

Community’s attitude towards the tourism development is crucial and valuable for the decision makers. However, the community is the most important part who get affected either positively or negatively by the various tourism development. To minimize the effects of tourism impacts the action can be planned to reduce the gap between tourists and community (Zhang et al.,2006).

The influence factors for resident’s attitudes and perceptions are different for different communities. The communities social structure has the ability to absorb the different values which are brought by the tourists (Mansfeld,1992). This is a relationship between community and their perception on tourism development planning focusing upon the positive attitude towards tourism development, who are getting benefitted by it (Nzama,2008).

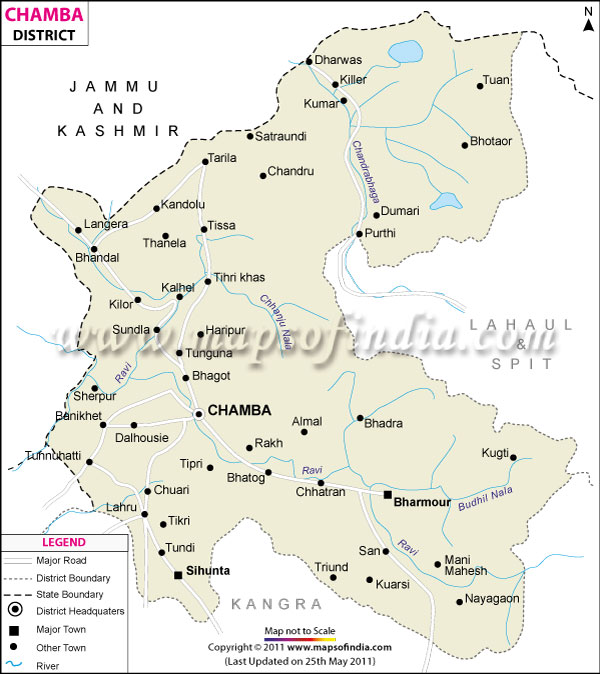
It is also a balance between the economic benefits and the cost on the environment and culture of the host-community. Residents deal with it by underpinning the negative impacts by the economic benefits which provides satisfaction towards the community (Dyer et al.,2007; Cavus and Tanrisevdi,2003; Faulkner and Tideswell,1997). Tourists and community relationship create positive impacts in term of societal peace, different culture exchange and interaction and negative impacts in term of related environmental and social costs. Tourism helps in improvements in the term of attraction enhancement, recreational activities and services. In other way, tourism provides opportunities to community to meet with people, make them friends and explore their self into new world (Kumar et al.,2009).

1. **Research Methodology:**

**Study area and sample**

District Chamba of Himachal Pradesh is the study area for this research. It is located at 579 kms from the capital of India, and 343 kms from the state capital Shimla of Himachal Pradesh. It is one of the important tourism destinations of Himachal Pradesh.

Data has been collected through the stratified random sample with the help of questionnaire. Questionnaires have been filled by the houses in the area selected. On the basis of randomly selected area map coordination. During survey if any house denies to answer the questionnaire the next house was selected. Only 18 years above age respondents were selected to respond to questionnaire. Out of 200 questionnaires which were used for the survey, 180 were selected on the basis of proper filled questionnaire with the total response is 90%.



**Fig.1** Map of Chamba Source: Mapsofindia.com

* 1. **Data analysis**

Structured questionnaires were used as survey instrument for this study. Three sections have been created in the questionnaire; first section contains the demographic characteristics of the community respondents. The second section was belonging to the economic, cultural and social items of tourism. The total 17 impact indicators were selected on the basis of their strong impacts on the study area. Four points scale was used (1=strongly disagree to 4= Strongly Agree) for the study of the responses of the residents on 17 impacts indicators. The selection of all 17 impact indicators is purely on the basis of research studied on the related issues on different areas.

The final section is related to the people inclination for the involvement in tourism development planning was tested on the basic questions. For this study the SPSS ver 16.0 (statistical packages for social sciences) is used. To evaluate the perception of the community on social, economic, cultural and environmental impacts on the study area, the descriptive statistics is used.

1. **Results and Discussion**

**5.1 The sample profile:**

In this study the numbers of male were (63.3%) while the female numbers were (36.7%). Highly educated respondents were (19.3%) of the sample and medium educated (54.3%) and less educated (26.4%) respectively. Low income group comprises of 123 respondents whose monthly income is less than 10000/- per month. Majority of the community respondents belongs to 18-40 age group (46.3%), 41-55 age group (23.4%) and 56-and above (30.3%).

* 1. **Result analysis**

It comprises of mean, standard deviation (SD) of the responses on 17 items has been shown in fig. 1. The valid responses are in 152-180.The mean results clearly shows that some items have the strong impact on community including some positive and negative. The effect of retailing growth (3.10), job opportunity for local community (3.07) cost of living (3.10), income of house hold (2.73) and agricultural field destroying (2.77). The main problem of concern is the agriculture field destruction.

To study the community character of 17 impacts factors the varimax rotated factor analysis was implemented giving four factors having eigen value greater than 1.00, which is 62.79% of the total variance. The sphericity od Bartlett’s test was 1412.174, p < 0.001 and Kaiser was 0.81 clearly indicates that the data is suitable for the factor analysis.

For third factor, the environmental effect of tourism. All items show the negative impacts of tourism on the environment of the study area by mean score. Agriculture field destroying (factor loading 0.72), traffic jams (factor loading 0.83), disappearing the vegetation (factor loading 0.76), soil erosion (factor loading 0.79). All these negative impacts are due to not having proper land use planning and ignoring rules related to it.

**Table 1.** Factor analysis and descriptive statistics of different tourism impacts in Chamba

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS** | | | **FACTOR LOADING** | | | | |
| **ITEMS** | **Sample size N** | **Mean** | **Standard deviation (SD)** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| **Factor 1: social and cultural impacts factor** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Increase in social problems and crime | 170 | 2.03 | 0.94 | 0.1 | 0.77 | -0.14 | -0.02 | 0 |
| improvement in area image | 169 | 2.13 | 1 | 0.21 | 0.78 | -0.06 | -0.03 | -0.07 |
| destroying the aboriginal culture | 172 | 2.39 | 0.96 | 0.13 | 0.76 | -0.07 | -0.13 | 0 |
| Disturbance in the peaceful life of the area | 161 | 2.47 | 1.02 | 0.21 | 0.72 | -0.05 | -0.05 | -0.02 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Factor 2: Life quality improvement factor** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| improvement in the quality of services in the area | 168 | 1.81 | 0.81 | 0.06 | -0.09 | -0.04 | 0 | 0.71 |
| overall improvement in the life quality | 172 | 2.35 | 0.9 | -0.03 | 0.01 | 0.04 | 0.09 | 0.73 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Factor 3: Environment quality factor** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Increase in the more traffic jam in the area | 172 | 1.68 | 1.06 | 0.83 | 0.14 | 0.04 | 0.03 | 0 |
| Increase in growd in the area | 175 | 1.71 | 1.01 | 0.81 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.12 | 0.05 |
| Problem of soil erosion increasing | 173 | 2.1 | 1.03 | 0.79 | 0.12 | 0.01 | 0.26 | 0.06 |
| cutting of trees and disappearance of vegetation in the area | 169 | 2.35 | 1.02 | 0.76 | 0.18 | 0.02 | 0.13 | 0.1 |
| Destruction of agriculture fields in the area | 178 | 2.67 | 0.93 | 0.72 | 0.21 | 0.13 | 0.11 | 0.01 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Factor 4: Economic impact factor** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Increase in the cost of living | 173 | 3.2 | 0.81 | -0.02 | -0.1 | 0.67 | -0.06 | 0.05 |
| Income of household increase | 167 | 2.91 | 0.91 | 0 | -0.1 | 0.67 | 0.01 | 0.02 |
| Improvement in other sectors due to tourism | 163 | 2.6 | 0.85 | -0.01 | 0.06 | 0.65 | -0.07 | 0.07 |
| Development in retailing in the area | 177 | 3.1 | 0.8 | -0.03 | 0.07 | 0.63 | -0.05 | 0.021 |
| Increase in the job opportunities for the host community | 172 | 3.05 | 0.82 | -0.21 | 0.01 | 0.5 | 0.05 | 0.012 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Source: Author |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

For third factor, the environmental effect of tourism. All items show the negative impacts of tourism on the environment of the study area by mean score. Agriculture field destroying (factor loading 0.72), traffic jams (factor loading 0.83), disappearing the vegetation (factor loading 0.76), soil erosion (factor loading 0.79). All these negative impacts are due to not having proper land use planning and ignoring rules related to it.

The first factor is in relation with the cultural and social impacts. It analyzes the items like disturbance in quite life of the area (factor loading 0.72) loss of aboriginal culture (factor loading 0.76), increasing crime rate (factor loading 0.77) showing negative impacts of tourism in the area. However, the improvement of the area image due to tourism (factor loading 0.78) showing positive impact of tourism.

The second factor is in relation with the analysis of tourism economic impacts. The study results show that the job opportunities (loading factor 0.50) and growth in retailing) loading factor 0.63) have the high correlation with these factors. Tourism also increased the expenses of life (factor loading 0.67), increase in household income (factor loading 0.67) and other economic section (factor loading 0.65).

The fourth factor is in relation with the analysis of two items, improvement in life quality (factor loading 0.71) and quality improvement in public services (factor loading 0.70) which are related to improvement in quality of life the study area.

* 1. **Correlation analysis Result**

This method explains the comparison of factor correlation degree in relation to involvement in tourism development planning variables. The regression method is used to predict the scores of factors. Two questions are important to test the degree of host-community involvement;

1. The results of tourism impacts are positive to be considered for the involvement of community in tourism development planning.
2. The planning related to tourism development is effective and brings the improvement and reduce the negative effects. So, it is appreciated.

These variables are tested with seven -point scale to include the broad range of responses and can be compared with the non-correlated factor analysis result.

Therefore, the mean of question-1 and question -2 are 3.14 and 3.29, which clearly predicts that host-community prefer to participate in tourism development planning.

The correlation results of factor analysis scores with degree variables of participants, at 0.05 level of significance and coefficient of correlation is significant at 0. 01level.The highest coefficient of correlation is related to social and economic impact factors. For first question, the coefficient correlation with economic factor is 0.68 and 0.52 for second question with 0.05 level of significance. For social and cultural factors, the correlation coefficient is also significant i.e. -0.21 and -0.17. It clearly indicates that the inclination of community towards the involvement in tourism planning has significant relationship at 0.05 level of significance with all factor of tourism development planning. Other factors are also shown significant relationship with the degree of community involvement in tourism development planning.

1. **Conclusion**

The analysis results show that the community has a resistance for tourism impacts. The negative impacts of tourism force the community to be involved in tourism development planning. While, the positive impacts results in the support and involvement for achieving tourism development planning goal. In this research area the benefits from the tourism push the community to participate in tourism development planning. The coefficient correlation assessment shows that there is a relationship between the tourism impacts and community’s involvement in tourism development planning. In this research study the factors related to social, cultural and economic are related as important factors for community involvement in tourism development planning. Tourism impacts on society and their cooperation in tourism planning leads to the reducing weakness and strengthening the positive effects. To make it reality, the relationship between the community and the tourism planner must be effective. As it is clear in the introduction chapter the impacts are different for different societies. So, the result of this study cannot be generalized on other society with confidence. Finally, the study is expressing the firm relationship between tourism impacts on community and degree of involvement in tourism development planning. More research needed to be conducted on these issues and factors which put impact on it.

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