

# Tourism Innovations

A Bi-Annual Refereed International Journal

## Research Papers

### Determinants of Backpackers' Experience and Expenditure in Himachal Pradesh

*Arun Singh Thakur, Jaswinder Singh & Jyoti Thakur*

### Residents' Perceptions Towards Impacts of Tourism Development in the Trans-Himalayan Region of Leh-Ladakh, India

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## Research Notes

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### Coordination between Administrative Announcement and Ground Level Management in Tourism: Evidence from Chilika Lake, Odisha

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**Indian Tourism and Hospitality Congress (ITHC)**

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## A Bi-Annual Refereed International Journal

**TOURISM INNOVATIONS: A JOURNAL OF INDIAN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY CONGRESS (ITHC)** is a bi-annual international referred research Journal focusing on academic perspectives in Tourism and Hospitality. Being a journal of inter-disciplinary field, it focuses on various aspects of tourism and hospitality like, Contemporary Issues, Tourism Impacts, Eco-tourism, Sustainable Tourism, Tourism Marketing, Medical Tourism, Health Tourism, Culture Tourism, Culinary Arts, Service Operations and other tourism, travel and hospitality areas. The objective of the journal is to have a comprehensive collection of research articles and dispersal of updated knowledge and information about tourism sector.

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# TOURISM INNOVATIONS

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Email: journal.itc@gmail.com, bhartipublications@gmail.com

## Editor's Note

*"Research is creating new knowledge"*

-Neil Armstrong

The *Tourism Innovations-the Journal of Indian Tourism and Hospitality Congress* is excited to present the second issue of volume nine (Vol. 9, Issue 2) for 2019. The Tourism Innovations-the Journal of Indian Tourism and Hospitality Congress is an international scholarly research journal that publishes high-quality, refereed articles that advance the knowledge base of the hospitality and tourism field. Tourism Innovations focuses on original research, both conceptual and empirical, that clearly contributes to the theoretical development of our field. This journal aims to be intellectually vibrant, engaging and open, and to the same time integrative and inspiring. In one sense this reflects the organic development of Progress in Tourism and Hospitality Research and is in recognition of the key strength of the journal in the tourism field.

To promote the exchange of current and innovative ideas, Tourism Innovations also includes a Research Notes section. This section will publish short articles that report advances in methodology, exploratory research findings or extensions/discussions of prior research.

Over the last few decades, Tourism studies has evolved highly disintegrated and concentrated into different theme capacities, or strengths. The academics consideration has resulted in the publications of hundreds of referred articles in media. Nonetheless *Tourism Innovations* is specifically devoted to evolving subjects in tourism and hospitality industry not only in India but all across the globe.

Our special thanks to all the members of the Advisory Board and the reviewers who have endlessly helped and reinforced in many ways and have given their valuable time and other commitments. Lastly, our heartiest gratitude to all the contributors for their solid support for research creativities, and all the readers who have continuously shown their interest in the concerned journal. We look forward to accept your manuscripts and fruitful response for more developments.

*Chief Editors*

Prof. S. P. Bansal

Dr. Sandeep Kulshrestha



**TOURISM INNOVATIONS**  
**An International Journal of**  
**Indian Tourism and Hospitality Congress (ITHC)**

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Vol. 9, No. 2, August, 2019

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# **Determinants of Backpackers' Experience and Expenditure in Himachal Pradesh**

**Arun Singh Thakur, Jaswinder Singh & Jyoti Thakur**

## **Introduction**

The term backpacking is not novice in tourism industry. At the global level it is an important cultural, economic and social phenomenon which is termed as backpacking. The usual connotation for backpacking is budgeted travelling internationally using low cost Carriers and primarily budgeted accommodation doing some special interest activities (O'Reilly, 2006; Sorensen, 2003). In times of developing world there is a new term used interchangeably with backpacking is came up as flashpacking. The association of flashpacking is with regards to more disposable income during travelling which makes remarkable difference from the backpacking. Both backpackers and flash packages have their preference over the other Travellers opting for flexible itineraries to travel, travelling for long periods of time and participating in various recreational and adventure activities. Understanding the motivations of the backpackers travelling to a destination and participating in various activities is very important since they contribute to economy more as a result of their extended stay and intense contact with the host population (Minotta, 2015). The conceptual foundation for the motivation of backpackers is the need and concept of socialization. That further automatically leads us to applicability of word of mouth (WOM) theory. The purchase decisions and tourist behaviour are primarily influenced by word of mouth in tourism industry. In the present context of technological developments the social media, online forums/blogs are also another source for word of mouth to take travel decisions which also includes the reviews of the destinations and various service providers (Murphy, 2001).

There is an urgent need of research studies on the behaviour of backpackers which includes their expenditure pattern and various determinants of special interest tourism product experiences. In the past decade

India has become a favourite destination for the western backpackers. In past 10 years from 2006 to 2016 the foreign tourist arrivals has increased to double from 4.45 million in 2006 and 8.80 million in 2016 (Source: Ministry of Tourism, Government of India). While discussing the top three source countries for foreign tourist arrivals United States, United Kingdom and Canada shares close to 30 % of total tourist traffic in India. Further total count of Western countries is more than 60%. This is a positive sign for the tourism industry of India in terms of global growth and particularly destination on the wish list of backpackers and the flashpackers. In view of the facts it became utmost important to conduct research studies which determine the backpackers experience including their motivations and also the expenditure pattern so as to tap the potential of market for generating employment and benefiting economy.

The present study focus upon exploring the various motivations of backpackers visiting Manali in Himachal Pradesh with an understanding of dynamics of social interactions and sharing of information by the backpackers through word of mouth.

## **Understanding the Theory of Backpacking**

It has been observed in various studies that camaraderie with unknown travellers during their touring is as a result of fear and act as first preference of backpackers whereas it has been of secondary importance for backpackers to made an interaction with the host community (Cohen, E., & Avieli, N. 2004). Such preferences became a prime motivation for the backpackers to develop solidarity with the citizens of different nations during their journey which further results in cosmopolitan understanding (Calhoun, 2002). This ethos in Hannerz's words (1990, pp. 239–240) is the "willingness to become involved with the Other, and the concern with achieving competence in cultures", often through travel. It includes "a sense

<b>Dr. Arun Singh Thakur</b>	Assistant Professor, University Institute of Hotel and Tourism Management, Panjab University Chandigarh
<b>Chef Jaswinder Singh</b>	Assistant Professor, University Institute of Hotel and Tourism Management, Panjab University, Chandigarh
<b>Jyoti Thakur</b>	Himalayan Gateway, Chandigarh

of tolerance, flexibility and openness towards otherness that characterizes an ethics of social relations in an interconnected world" (Molz, 2006, p. 2). Hannerz (2007) predicts an increase in cosmopolitanism as more and more people are "on the move," even if in some cases it is a reluctant kind of cosmopolitanism. This point of view is contradicted by several writers, e.g., Kennedy (2007, p. 269) argues that, "even when individuals are exposed to powerful images of global unity for example through international tourism most appear to nevertheless remain largely entrenched within the primordial ethnic and/or national affiliations they acquired through birth." Cohen distinguished between, "those who seek to reach far-away locations and live with the locals, and those who seek out primarily the enclaves of their own kind." Thirty years later Cohen (2003, p. 98) points out that, "while this distinction appears to be still significant, it should be used to distinguish different kind of backpackers' conduct, rather than define types of backpackers.

## Literature Review

The theory of individuals identified at a social platform provides the basis for word of mouth factor among the backpackers. The individual is presented as social identity which is formed by various social groups widening continuously and thereby the actions, thinking and beliefs of the individual are affected to fulfil the needs of this social theory. To identify within the group leads the individual to route his self based upon attitude, motivation and behaviour as per making match with the group's properties (Tajfel, 1974). In past 10-15 years the researchers and subsequently literature related to backpacking has been increased to a considerable amount. The similarity in most of the literature is about the commonalities among the backpackers and determinants of backpacking experiences. There is also a trend analysis among the Israeli travellers regarding formations of homogenous communities based upon touring patterns (Maoz, 2005; Noy & Cohen, 2005). If we consider the backpacking trips to India, the tourist travelling from various countries can be easily differentiated on the basis of their motivation of travel. To understand more it can be generalized that the Danish travellers would like to have an experience which is colourful and full of cultural diversity whereas Israeli backpackers are more interested in leisure, peaceful and isolated travel experience and to Israeli backpackers India is a country with extended stay (Nir, 2006). Such information regarding the motivations of tourist visiting India is widely available on the blogs written by these travellers during the course of development of backpacking tourism in the recent past. One such review about Manali as destination is quoted below as reference.

*"Am 'fusse' des Himalaya"*

Reviewed 21 November 2010

[Google Translation](#)

Manali ist der klassische Zwischenstopp um nach Ladakh zu kommen. Von hier aus kann man Busse fuer den mittlerweile nur mehr 'zweihoechsten pass' der welt nach Leh erstehen. Manali liegt bereits auf ca. 2000 m - und die Landschaft erinnert ein bischen an die Alpen. Es lohnt durchaus ein paar Tage hier zu verbringen! (Wenn man nicht viel Zeit in Indien hat, sollte man vermutlich doch schnell weitereisen - erlaubt es die Zeit wuerde ich 2-3 Tage hier empfehlen). Besonders 'old Manali' ist sehenswert. Darueber hinaus reizt das kleinstaedtische Ambiente. Gerade aus Neu-Dehli kommend kann man vor allen auch die bessere Luft, und die ehrlicheren Leute geniessen ... Ein paar kleinere Wanderungen um Manali lohnen ebenfalls!

**Translated by Google Translator:** Manali is the classic stopover to get to Ladakh. From here you can board buses for the now only 'two-highest pass' in the world to Leh. Manali is already at about 2000 m - and the landscape is a bit reminiscent of the Alps. It is definitely worth spending a few days here! (If you do not have a lot of time in India, you should probably go on a quick trip - if the time permits I would recommend 2-3 days here). Especially 'old Manali' is worth seeing. In addition, the small-town ambience is appealing. Especially coming from New Dehli you can enjoy in front of all the better air, and the more honest people ... A few smaller hikes to Manali are worthwhile too!

Source:[https://www.tripadvisor.in>ShowUserReviews-g297618-r87800330-Manali\\_Manali\\_Tehsil\\_Kullu\\_District\\_Himachal\\_Pradesh.html#](https://www.tripadvisor.in>ShowUserReviews-g297618-r87800330-Manali_Manali_Tehsil_Kullu_District_Himachal_Pradesh.html#)

For understanding more about the motivating factor for Israeli backpackers it was found that economic holiday experience with respect to holidaying in India is also on board. Their prime purpose of travelling is 'get away' from the present hostile and undemocratic situation (mandatory service in armed forces) in their country. Literature reveals that they want to rest and "get away from it all". Claim to above fact is from a 32-year old female, whose name is Malera (an Israel female backpacker) writes, "The whole idea of getting away from here (Israel) was to gain perspective in order for you to get to know my life. I'll just add that in addition to being a regular citizen who suffers from all the regular burdens of life (bomb attacks, enemy attacks etc.)". Erik Cohen in his studies conducted in early 70's elaborates that the drifters of that time were aspiring to submerge in host communities. This raised the interest of researchers and practitioners toward the business of backpacking tourism (Muzaini 2006). In context of backpackers most studies generalised that the people who are travelling for novice pleasure experience which might be extended to inter-destination/inter-cultural/inter-country/inter-geography tourist attraction with important factor of flexible itinerary. Be the part of the local culture, folk, interaction and looking like localities is also one of the

prime motivations for these tourists, rather they want to be as comfortable as local communities. Most of the times their way of recreation is just living the life as that of locals and involving themselves in natural, cultural or some sort of adventure activities.

The discussion above about the backpackers can be considered as segmentation method of differentiating them from the other tourists.

## Motivation for Backpacking Travelling

### 1. Personal Motivations for Backpacking

In the 21st century it has been advocated by many studies that social status has become one of the prime motivation factor for the backpackers Vijay home to reflect their personality as courageous, independent and allocentric person (Cohen 2004). This motivation has lead to formation of a self within an individual which is socially adorable (White and White 2004). Third world countries offers the choice of destinations which provides an opportunity for the construction of the self and also being narrative for gaining cultural enriched education particularly for the young generation (Desforges, 2000). Backpacking experience of tourism provides an opportunity to the young generation to create a self styled image of theirs by accepting the challenges of backpacking travelling and not through a set practice of image perception in the society by age, gender, nationality, education level and service. This search for new identity by the individuals can be drawn sometimes within their own society as a matter of archetypal values inherited by their society (Galani-Moutafi 2001). Most of the respondents examined in this present study reflected escape tourism behaviour from their stress life, materialistic world and artificial nature of surroundings in search of authentic, pure and relaxed primitive environment (Cohen, 2001). Even many of the young turks would like to feel the freedom from their elders in terms of autonomy of travelling, choice of food, choice of partners with whom they would like to stay and the activities at the destination. Moreover in case of Israeli travellers forced from their mandatory Army service before their High School. In general the motivations for the backpackers are primarily heterogeneous due to their divorce and multifaceted reasons (Pearce and Foster, 2007). Backpackers desire for independence, search of new adventures and challenges, unpopular routes and offbeat destinations are the common motivations enlisted in the backpacker literature (Fuchs and Uriely, 2009). To meet their expectations they usually follow the long-term flexible itineraries which allow them to beat the limitations of time and constraints to follow the fixed schedule as per itinerary. This feature of their trip allows them to penetrate deep into the local cultures with often interactions with the host communities (Murphy, 2001). They also tend to know more about the concept and origination of backpacking tourism (Main, 2007). Cohen in his study in 2011 emphasized upon backpacking as an

ongoing process which allows the tourists to search for unique social identity and resemblances which identifies themselves a distinct person within their communities. Due to the sharing of experiences through various online modes and word of mouth, most of the backpacker communities have the similar opinion about travelling and the way they see the world (O'Reilly, 2006).

### 2. Belongingness as Motivation

The next motivation for the backpackers we are about to discuss is the places of interaction and belongingness attitude for acquiring experience. The commonality for a particular type of place to stay and the use of transport can be seen among the backpackers (Butler and Hannam, 2012). Hostels are the preferred accommodations for most of the backpackers, not just because they are economic but due to the reason the type of environment they provide in which allows one to get closer to others (Murphy, 2001). This way they also have access to the useful information about travelling and making optimum use of resources including time, money and destination attractions. For travelling the most preferred mode is through public transport, which provides them unique opportunities of interacting with local population, doing sightseeing at reasonable rates, be safer among the larger population and indigenous experience (Butler and Hannam, 2012). By opting such type of accommodation and the mode of transportation they also intend to get the company of their peers with similar motivations and interest. Socialization and meeting new people is one of the prime agenda of backpacking tourism and thus they made their itinerary flexible where they can accommodate the time requirements of the people who could be a new friend

### 3. Word of Mouth as Motivation Factor

The most reliable source of information for most of the backpacker travelers is experience shared through their counterparts by word of mouth. Accumulation of such information also reflected from the behaviour of most backpackers we eat purchasing decisions, involving in the activities at the destinations, food preferences and choice of accommodation (Abrantes, Seabra, Lages, & Jayawardhena, 2013). An interpersonal relationship among the travellers is the foundation for backpacking experience through their networks (Vogt, 1976). The technique of storytelling through various online and offline mode by these travellers is the popular way of sharing the experience and recommending the places, products cultural attraction and community attributes to the potential backpacks (Vogt, 1976). This mutual exchange of information further leads to providing assistance and advice on the every aspect of the trip (Maoz, 2007). The nature of travelling done by the backpackers forces them to rely upon the information provided by word of mouth through other backpackers. Because the activities and the areas they are travelling are generally less known to the world and do not have more

sources of authentic information available. Moreover the component of flexibility in their itinerary can incorporate changes in the travelling destinations at any point of time and then they required to look upon alternative options of travelling and logistic support also (Uriely et al., 2002).

#### 4. Intercultural Social Interaction as Motivation

Social interaction with the counterparts is another motivating factor for the backpacker which is also revealed from the literature that they enjoy sharing their stories of travel experience with other backpackers in exchange of listening to their experiences (Buttle, 1998). For fulfilling the need for this social interaction the backpackers uses the platforms of public spaces like hostels, transport, common rooms and relatively available online platforms also (Mohsin & Ryan, 2003).

In sum total there are several motivations for backpackers to undertake their travel experiences depending upon the personal factors, destination factors and the origin factors of these travellers.

#### 3.1. Data collection and measures

The data was collected from the backpacker and flashpacker travellers travelling to various parts of in Shimla and Kullu Manali in Himachal Pradesh. Respondents were to answer structured questions pertaining to their decision of travel, activities, companion and stay at the destination. They were also asked particularly whether they considered themselves as backpackers or not. Table 1 includes the various constructs and factors upto the usability and satisfaction level of the tourists during their travel and stay at the destination.

**Following are the main objectives under study to understand the backpackers motivation along with connection further leads to expenditure pattern;**

1. Prime Motivation as Get Away Factor
2. Interacting with Locals while Travelling in Public Transport as another Motivation Factor and Curtailing Expenditure
3. Word of Mouth as Decision Making factor by the Backpackers
4. Socio-Cultural Interactions and Taking part in Local Level Fairs and Festivals
5. Home Stay as factor for Economic travel Experience and Motivation factor

Table 1: Data Profile

Paradigms	t-Values
Motivation for Travelling ( $\alpha = .635$ ; $\rho = .69$ )	
Independent Traveller	11.08
Travelling for Adrenaline Rush	13.34
Travelling to Check Personal Abilities	14.56
Cultural Attraction as Motivator	11.35

Motivation to visit Famous Tourist Spots	10.13
Scale "1 – not important" to "5 – very important"	
Belongingness as Motivation ( $\alpha = .589$ ; $\rho = .69$ )	
Prefer to stay at Hostel Accommodation which is popular among Backpackers	12.36
Scale "1 – strongly disagree" to "5 – strongly agree"	
Motivation for Social Platform of Interaction ( $\alpha=0.836$ ; $\rhovc(n) =0.66$ ; $\rho = 0.85$ ) (a)	
Dining Experience	18.89
Living Area	19.78
Sleeping Area	14.56
Scale "1 – never" to "5 – always or almost always"	
Transportation Motivators ( $\alpha = .699$ ; $\rho = .67$ )	
Public Mode of Transportation	11.88
Transit Places during Journey	09.47
Scale "1 – never" to "5 – always or almost always"	
Word of Mouth Motivator ( $\alpha = .674$ ; $\rho = .73$ )	
Travelogues	16.55
Presenting Comparison by a Visitor	14.23
Storytelling about a Place	18.47
Information about Culture, Place, Mode of Transport and Cuisine	13.78
Scale "1 – never" to "5 – always or almost always"	

Table 2

Category	Respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male Respondents	62.2
	Female Respondents	37.8
Marital status	Married	69.5
	Single	30.5
Age	Age of backpackers less than 25 years	17.9
	Age of backpackers between 25 and 35 years	54.8
	Age of backpackers more than 35 years	27.3
Travelling Companion	Respondents Travelling Alone	60.0
	Respondents Travelling with other people met during Journey	19.5
Travelling Experience	Respondents Travelling with Friends or Family	20.5
	Respondents who have travelled less than ten Countries	42.3
	Respondents who have travelled more than ten Countries	57.7

<b>Budget</b>	Budget is important factor	22.4
	Budget is not important factor	29.4
	Spending Amount is Situational	48.2
<b>Travelling Time</b>	Respondents whose trip is scheduled for more than six months	12.0
	Respondents whose trip is scheduled between one and six months	47.3
	Respondents whose trip is scheduled for less than one month	40.7

## Discussion and Conclusion

The backpacker tourism has social and economical value for both tourist and host population and this make it most desirable type of tourism activity. In the beginning few drifters started such SIT activities in remote areas were not welcomed by the locals but later after understanding of the economic benefits of such movement by host communities a well established two-way relation occurred. Such change might be as a result of dissimilarities between backpackers and mass tourists (Hampton 1998; Loker-Murphy and Pearce 1995 and Schvvens 2002) as well as to the varied diversity among backpackers (Cohen 1972, 1973, 2003; Noy and Cohen 2005; Riley 1988; Uriely et al 2002). The assumption of this paper was that there is close relationship between determinants of experience and the expenditure by the backpackers in Himachal Pradesh. In simple terms, it can be argued that backpacker tourist spends to experience of his choice which is generally deviated from the choice of activities of mass tourist.

The expenditure patterns of most of the tourist are mainly for the indigenous and SIT experience. It can be concluded that there is significant relationship between the expenditure and experience and backpackers decision of expenditure is primarily for indigenous and diverse experience. Some main findings of the study are;

- ❖ The major segment of the population motivated as get away from their social circle and tends to involve in cultural activities at the destination with unknown society in search of novice experience. On the other hand prime motivation factor for backpackers is the independence they get to take decision and not under the influence of social stigma which generally they feel in their daily routine. This also provides them a feeling of adventure travelling like allocentric tourist (Cohen, 1979, 2011).
- ❖ Significant number of Backpackers prefer to travel in Public Transport as another Motivation factor for main two reasons, one it provides an opportunity to them as best utilisation of their travelling time with additional benefit of socio cultural understanding and other they can travel on the long haul itineraries

by curtailing their expenditure on the transport which provides them extra budget for increase their stay and involve in more activities.

- ❖ In search of authentic travel experience majority of the tourist rely upon the first hand information by the users of the services or attractions and for that matter word of mouth becomes important Decision Making factor by the Backpackers. This also helps them to bargain for products and services at best possible price although majority of respondents agrees that they don't bargain on the price of the authenticity. This can be concluded that this segment of tourist in Himachal prefer to spend more amount of money on the authenticity in the tourism products and services.
- ❖ Majority of the tourists travelling (more than 60%) are travelling alone and during the course of their journey they prefer to exchange culture through encounters with other travellers at the destination during stay and while doing activities. Significant number of the respondents were in the favour of the existence of dormitory rooms possibly in the youth hostels is a strong point for backpackers, since they like getting together in order to exchange data with tourists sharing the same interests. This is important factor of belongingness and advocated by other studies also (Maoz & Bekerman, 2010).

The study finally concludes that authenticity and basic facilities are on the main agenda of backpacker tourists in Himachal. Due to the long stay of such segment of tourist they contribute much to the economic prosperity of the destination and main such beneficiary are service providers of food, accommodation, handicrafts and activities at the destination. This niche segment of tourism is well termed as pro poor tourism as backpacker prefers off beat destinations at remote areas. Further it is pertinent to mention on the basis of the personal experience of the researcher during the collection of data that good number of backpackers considers Himachal as easy going destination for consumption of drugs and very heavy use of drugs among backpackers is threat to future of the destination. This could be taken as further research area by researches in future also. Strong commitment of Government is desirable in saving the image of state as destination which provides easy access to drugs for backpackers and even other tourists which further leads to many ill effects as women/child sex abuse, demonstration effect on the local community, conflicts among the tourist and locals etc.

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# Residents' Perceptions Towards Impacts of Tourism Development in the Trans-Himalayan Region of Leh-Ladakh, India

Ghulam Mustafa & Aroon Sharma

## Abstract

The rapid expansion of tourism in Leh district of Jammu and Kashmir State, India over the last decade has changed the pattern of economic activities, and therefore it becomes quite significant to understand how the residents' perceive the tourism development as well as their perception towards impacts brought by the tourism industry. This study investigates the perception of residents' regarding the impacts of tourism development in Leh district. A survey based on convenience sampling method was conducted. An Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using principal component analysis with Varimax Rotation was carried out to identify the residents' perception of the various impacts of tourism development. The findings from both descriptive statistics and factor analysis suggest that tourism has generated significant positive economic impacts. However, although tourism has generated huge benefits, the local residents' felt that the huge influx of tourists and increasing tourism activities in the region have also generated negative impacts like regional imbalances, seasonality, increase in the price of land and housing, littering, overcrowding and traffic congestion, increases crime and anti-social activities, cosmopolitan culture. It is also found that tourism stakeholders are very critical about environmental impacts.

**Keywords:** Tourism Development, Tourism Impacts, Residents' Perception, Leh-Ladakh

## Introduction

The tourism industry has emerged as one of the most important forces for economic growth and development in many countries of the world. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) ranking shows that there is a close relationship between countries with a high level of revenue from international tourism and the countries at the top of the Human Development Index (Jucan & Jucan, 2013). Tourism has grown manifold in a very short span of time. The international tourist arrivals from 2010 to 2017 have grown at 4 percent per year. The tourism sector has strong linkages with other sectors of the economy which led to economic diversification, and thus its benefits are widely distributed and have substantial direct, indirect and induced benefits supporting economic development (Singh & Tantray, 2017).

The ever-increasing importance of tourism as an engine of economic development, socio-cultural transformation and international understanding particularly in the developing countries has attracted the attention of the government as well as the regional and local authorities to promote tourism as an industry (Bhat, Bhat, & Ali,

1994). The governments in emerging economies perceive tourism as an important means to stimulate economic growth and development (Tosun, 1998; Singh & Unjum, 2016). Tourism is widely viewed as having the potential to provide rural communities with local employment opportunities, tax revenues, and economic diversity. Given the economic profitability of tourism, its promotion has become a popular economic strategy for many communities. Tourism has profound implications for the economic, social and natural environments of these local communities.

In recent decades, tourism has developed quickly in mountain regions all over the world. This growth has led to considerable economic and social change by causing environmental consequences, frequently unpredicted (Price, 1992). Ladakh has recently been undergoing a substantial change from the patterns of traditional farming, pastoralism, and caravan based trade that was present prior to 1950s (Fox, Nurbu, Bhatt, & Chandola, 1994). The region has experienced an ever-increasing flow of traders and visitors especially after the improved air and road connectivity with the rest of the country. The

**Ghulam Mustafa** Research Scholar, Department of Economics, University of Jammu, J&K

**Dr. Aroon Sharma** Associate Professor, Department of Economics, University of Jammu, J&K

last decade and a half Ladakh has witnessed rapid change, especially in the urban areas due to the advent of tourism led development (Chatterji, 1987). The tertiary activities specially geared to tourism have become very important as providers of cash income. The occupational structure has also changed with people working in agriculture is decreasing and people working in tertiary sectors increasing. Tourism has been responsible for introducing large scale commercialization into the economy.

The main objective of this paper is to analyze the impacts of tourism development on local residents' of Leh district.

### **Review of Literature**

Tourism was cheered first because of its economic impacts (Aref, Redzuan, & Gill, 2009). There is a general agreement among the local communities that tourism development brings both positive and negative impacts. There are a number of studies that have examined the residents' perceptions of tourism development and its impacts in their region. The nature of tourism development varies from region to region and thus the local communities perceive its impacts differently. During the early sixties, tourism research mainly focused on the economic impacts of tourism. Later studies focused on other impacts that are brought by tourism activities such as Social, Cultural and Environmental Impacts.

(Smith & Krannich, 1998) evaluates the "tourism dependence" hypothesis that increasing the level of tourism dependence in a community is associated with increasingly negative attitudes about its development. The four rural communities that were surveyed support the hypothesis with some key recommendations.

(Andereck, Valentine, Knopf, & Vogt, 2005) investigated the residents' perceptions of tourism's impact on communities. The results of the study suggest that residents identify many positive and negative impacts. The study finds that those who are benefitting from tourism do not differ from others with respect to the negative impacts of tourism. The study suggests that education and awareness campaigns related to the understanding of the tourism industry can benefit the community in general.

(Marzuki, 2012) studied the perception of local residents' towards the economic impacts of tourism development in Phuket. The study finds that tourism development has provided more benefits than costs to the residents and have positive perceptions of tourism impacts. The study also finds that the residents' are very critical and concerned about the negative impacts on the local economy and natural environments.

(Eshliki & Kaboudi, 2012) analyzes the relationship between the effects of tourism on the quality of local community members' life and the extent of their participation in tourism quality improvement programs. The results of the study indicate that there is a strong

correlation between tourism development effects on community and participation degree. The effects of economic, social and cultural factors are considered as the most important factors on community participation in tourism development programs.

(Kim, Uysal, & Sirgy, 2013) examined a theoretical model that links community residents' perceptions of tourism impact (Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental) with residents' satisfaction with particular life domains and overall life satisfaction. The results showed that community residents' do have perceptions of tourism impact in terms of the four aforementioned dimensions. The study finds that positive perceptions of economic impact, social impact and cultural impact significantly predict residents' sense of material well-being, community well-being, and emotional well-being. The negative perceptions of an environmental impact significantly predict residents' sense of health and safety.

(Salleh et al., 2014) analyzes the impact of tourism development on the local community of Langkawi. The empirical results indicate that the community recognizes that tourism development brings positive impact in general. The findings also showed that social, cultural and economic factors are statistically significant in influencing the overall perceptions on tourism development. However environmental factors as a construct do not influence the community's perception on overall tourism impact on the island.

By reviewing the literature on perceived impacts of tourism, the general inference that can be drawn is that the local population understands that tourism is a mixed blessing and has both positive and negative effects. The level of tourism development varies significantly over both space and time.

### **Tourism Development in Leh-Ladakh**

Ladakh region of Jammu And Kashmir State has enormous tourist resources. The area has most fascinating and charming scenic grandeur possessing natural beauty like glaciers, pastures, and meadow, high altitude lakes, trekking routes, adventurous sports like rock climbing, mountaineering, and river rafting. Ladakh has fascinated many travelers since ancient times (Jina, 2004). The great Chinese traveler, Fa-Hien called it 'Kie Cha' (Bora, 2004).

Ladakh is the high desert valley of the Himalayan range, open between the chains of the Trans-Himalaya to the southwest and the Karakoram Range to the northeast, and crossed in its center by the upper Indus River (Michaud, 1991). Ladakh is the high desert valley of the Himalayan range which is situated in the northwest part of Jammu and Kashmir, India. It is situated between 32 to 36 degree North Latitude and 75 to 80 degrees Longitude. Ladakh is one of the most strategic frontiers of India which is bounded by China in the north, on the west lies the Kashmir and Baltistan, on east and southeast

are Aksai Chin, and on the south, it shares a boundary with Himachal Pradesh. Leh district is one of the most elevated inhabited regions with altitude ranging from 2300 meters to 5000 meters. Its total geographical area is 45,100 sq. km and is one of the most sparsely populated regions in Jammu and Kashmir. Leh district is famous for its highest mountains and peaks which ranges from 18000 ft. to 26000 ft. The important ranges are the Zanskar Range, Ladakh Range, Karakoram Range, and the Great Himalayan Range.



Source: [www.mapsofindia.com](http://www.mapsofindia.com)

**Table 1: Demographic Features of Leh District**

Description	Leh
Total Population	133487
Males	78971
Females	54516
Rural population	87816
Urban population	45671
Density per square km	3
Sex Ratio (per 1000)	690
Average Literacy	77.2%
Male literacy	86.3%
Female literacy	63.6%

Source: District statistical handbook

Table 1 shows the demographic features of Leh district. The total population of Leh district recorded in the population census of 2011 was 133487, out of which 78971 were males and 54516 were females. The total urban population of Leh district was 45671 whereas the total rural population was 87816. There are 690 females for every 1000 males. The literacy rate of Leh district is 77.2%, the male literacy is 86.3% and female literacy is

63.6% respectively. The population density of Leh district is 3 person per square kilometer.

## Study Methods

The study is based on the primary data which was collected using a self-administered questionnaire to assess the perceptions of local residents' regarding the tourism development in Leh district. The number of respondents selected for the study was based on the Convenience Sampling Method which is one of the Non-Probability methods. The questionnaire was distributed amongst the sample of 100. The data was collected on the basis of five-point Likert scale technique wherein 1 signifies 'Strongly disagree', 2 signifies 'Disagree', 3 signifies 'Don't know', 4 signifies 'Agree', and 5 signifies 'Strongly agree'. Principal Component Analysis (PCA) method of Factor Analysis with Varimax Rotation was used to reduce the number of related variables. Descriptive statistics were used to investigate residents' perceptions of the impacts of tourism development in Leh district.

## Study Results

### Characteristics of Respondents

Of the 100 respondents involved in this study the majority of the respondents, 78 (78%) were males and 22 (22%) of the respondents were females (Table 2). The age of the respondents ranged from 20-29 to 50-59. The majority of the respondents 37 (37%) were in the age group of 30-39, followed by 31 (31%) were in the age group of 20-29, 26 (26%) were in the age group of 40-49, and 6 (6%) respondents belong to the age category of 50-59. From the total of 100 samples, 38 (38%) were married and 62 (62%) were unmarried. The education level of the respondents showed that 40 (40%) of the respondents were graduates, 21 (21%) had a higher secondary degree, and 20 (20%) had studied up to matriculation, while 19 (19%) respondents had post-graduate degrees. Thus the educational status of the respondents was good.

**Table 2: Respondents' Profiles**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	78	78.00%
Female	22	22.00%
Total	100	100.00%
<b>Age</b>		
20-29	31	31.00%
30-39	37	37.00%
40-49	26	26.00%
50-59	6	6.00%
Total	100	100.00%

<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	38	38.00%
Unmarried	62	62.00%
Total	100	
<b>Educational Status</b>		
Up to matriculation	20	20.00%
Higher secondary	21	21.00%
Graduate	40	40.00%
Postgraduate and above	19	19.00%
Total	100	100.00%

Source: Primary survey

### Residents' perceptions towards tourism impacts

The results of the mean (Table 3) indicate that some of the variables have stronger effects than others. Higher the mean value indicates that respondents are agreeing with the statement. The highest mean value (4.21) is for the statement 'Tourism increases income and employment opportunities to the local population of the region'. Whereas the lower the mean value indicates that respondents are not agreeing with the statement. The lowest mean value was (1.96) for the statement 'Tourism does not lead to an increase in the price of goods and services'. The value of the standard deviation indicates the dispersion of a data set relative to its mean.

**Table 3: Respondents' perceptions of tourism impacts**

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N
Seasonal tourism creates high risk and unemployment issues.	3.91	.84202	100
Tourism creates regional imbalances as it provides benefits to a small group of people.	4.11	.79003	100
Tourism increases the price of land and housing.	3.90	.89330	100
Local handicrafts and organic farm products benefit from tourism.	3.98	.77824	100
Tourism increases income and employment opportunities to the local population of the region.	4.21	.76930	100
Tourism does not lead to overcrowding and traffic congestion.	2.01	.77192	100

Tourism does not put enormous pressure on local land use.	2.17	.86521	100
Tourism does not lead to an increase in the price of goods and services.	1.96	.87525	100
Tourism lead towards problems like littering.	3.99	.68895	100
Tourism has not become a problem for carrying capacity.	2.17	.98530	100
Tourism development does not increase crime and anti-social activities.	2.36	.89352	100
Tourist inflow improves the standard of living.	3.67	.95405	100
Tourism development should be discouraged when it harms the natural environment.	4.10	.77198	100
The huge influx of tourists increases wastewater generation.	3.76	.78005	100
Tourism creates a cosmopolitan culture in the region.	3.81	.84918	100
Tourism does not lead to occupational changes of residents.	2.14	.88785	100

Source: Primary Survey

Furthermore, the sixteen items of tourism development and its impacts were exposed to an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using principal component analysis. It was used to assess the perception of local residents' towards Tourism development and its impacts in Leh district. Factor analysis was used in order to reduce the number of variables.

Before proceeding to factor analysis Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy was performed. For current data, KMO value was found to be 0.631 thus confirming the appropriateness of data for factor analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is also used to test the relationship between the variables and is found statistically significant, thus indicating that variables are highly correlated. Table 4 shows the value of two tests indicating the suitability of data for factor analysis.

**Table 4: KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	.631
Bartlett's Test of Approx. Chi-Square	252.229
Sphericity df	120
Sig.	.000

Communality is the part of a variable's total variance and indicates the extent to which this variable can be explained by the factors. Principal Component Analysis works on the assumption that all variances are the same; therefore, all the communalities before extraction are 1. The criteria for the number of factors to be extracted are based on the size of Eigenvalues and the variable Communalities. Only those factors are considered as significant whose Eigenvalue is greater than one. The principal component extraction method of factor analysis with Varimax rotation and factor loading of 0.40 is used to reduce the number of variables and to include the items into a factor. From the EFA it is found that seven factors are extracted which accounted for 67.881 percent of the total variance explained.

**Table 5: Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) of residents' perceptions of tourism impacts**

Factors	Eigen Value	Variance Explained	Factor Loadings	Communalities
Factor 1: Tourism and Negative Economic Impacts	2.872	17.949		
Seasonal tourism creates high risk and unemployment issues.			0.826	0.689
Tourism creates regional imbalances as it provides benefits to a small group of people.			0.718	0.596
Tourism increases the price of land and housing.			0.493	0.698
Factor 2: Tourism and Positive Economic Impacts	1.766	11.038		
Local handicrafts and organic farm products benefit from tourism.			0.826	0.715
Tourism increases income and employment opportunities to the local population of the region.			0.801	0.694
Factor 3: Tourism and Overexploitation	1.553	9.709		
Tourism lead towards overcrowding and traffic congestion.			0.813	0.722
Tourism does not put enormous pressure on local land use.			0.560	0.624
Factor 4: Tourism and undesirable impacts	1.353	8.457		
Tourism does not lead to an increase in the price of goods and services.			0.810	0.746
Tourism lead towards problems like littering.			0.596	0.680
Tourism has not become a problem for carrying capacity.			0.498	0.642
Factor 5: Tourism and Social Impacts	1.175	7.345		

Tourism development does not increase crime and anti-social activities.			0.766	0.678
Tourist inflow improves the standard of living.			0.718	0.547
Factor 6: Tourism and Environmental Impacts	1.101	6.880		
Tourism development should be discouraged when it harms the natural environment.			0.778	0.755
The huge influx of tourists increases waste water generation.			0.679	0.688
Factor 7: Tourism and Cultural Impacts	1.040	6.503		
Tourism creates a cosmopolitan culture in the region.			0.859	0.800
Tourism does not lead to occupational changes of residents.			0.531	0.588

The Eigenvalue associated with each factor represents the variance explained by that particular variable. The Eigenvalues in terms of percentage of variance explained by the first factor is 17.949% of total variance 67.881%, followed by 11.038%, 9.709%, 8.457%, 7.345%, 6.880%, and 6.503% percentage of variance is explained by 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th factor respectively. Further only those having Eigenvalues greater than one is retained which are seven in this case. The results obtained reveal that all factors have an Eigenvalue greater than one i.e., factor one with an Eigen Value of 2.872; factor two with an Eigenvalue of 1.766; factor three with an Eigenvalue of 1.553; factor four with an Eigenvalue of 1.353; factor five with an Eigenvalue of 1.175; factor six with an Eigenvalue of 1.101; and factor seven with an Eigen Value of 1.040. Thus all the seven factors are significant and hence, retained.

The first factor (Table 5) shows that all the variables in the first factor are concerned with negative economic impacts hence named as 'Tourism and Negative Economic Impact'. The total percentage of variance (17.949%) is explained by this factor out of cumulative variance of 67.881%. The combined number of variables into this factor are (1) Seasonal tourism creates high risk and unemployment issues with a factor loading of 0.826 (2) Tourism creates regional imbalances as it provides benefits to small group of people with a factor loading of 0.718 and (3) Tourism increases the price of land and housing with a factor loading of 0.493.

The second factor (Table 5) shows that all the variables in the second factor are concerned with the positive economic impact hence named 'Positive Economic Impact'. The total percentage of variance (11.038%) is explained by this factor out of cumulative variance of 67.881%. The combined number of variables into this factor is (1) Local handicrafts and organic farm products

benefit from tourism with a factor loading of 0.826 and (2) Tourism increases income and employment opportunities to the local population of the region with a factor loading of 0.801.

The third factor (Table 5) shows that the two variables in the third factor are concerned with overexploitation hence named as 'Tourism and Overexploitation'. The total percentage of variance (9.707) is explained by this factor out of cumulative variance of 67.881%. The combined number of variables into this factor are (1) Tourism lead towards overcrowding and traffic congestion with a factor loading of 0.813 and (2) Tourism does not put enormous pressure on local land use with a factor loading of 0.560.

The fourth factor (Table 5) shows that all the variables in the fourth factor are not wanted by anyone hence named as 'Tourism and Undesirable Impacts'. The total percentage of variance (8.457) is explained by this factor out of cumulative variance of 67.881%. The combined number of variables into this factor is (1) Tourism does not lead to an increase in the price of goods and services with a factor loading of 0.810 (2) Tourism lead towards problems like littering with a factor loading of 0.596 and (3) Tourism has not become a problem for carrying capacity with a factor loading of 0.498.

The fifth factor (Table 5) shows that all the variables in the fifth factor are concerned with Social Impact hence named 'Tourism and Social Impacts'. The total percentage of variance (7.345) is explained by this factor out of cumulative variance of 67.881%. The combined number of variables into this factor are (1) Tourism development does not increase crime and anti-social activities with a factor loading of 0.766 and (2) Tourist inflow improves the standard of living with a factor loading of 0.718.

The sixth factor (Table 5) shows that all the variables in the sixth factor are concerned with Environment hence named as 'Tourism and Environmental Impact'. The total percentage of variance (6.889) is explained by this factor out of cumulative variance of 67.881%. The combined number of variables into this factor are (1) Tourism development should be discouraged when it harms the natural environment with a factor loading factor of 0.778 and (2) The huge influx of tourists increases wastewater generation with a factor loading factor of 0.679.

The seventh factor (Table 5) shows that all the variables in the seventh factor are concerned with Culture hence named 'Tourism and Cultural Impact'. The total percentage of variance (6.503) is explained by this factor out of cumulative variance of 67.881%. The combined number of variables into this factor is (1) Tourism creates a cosmopolitan culture in the region with a factor loading of 0.859 and (2) Tourism does not lead to occupational changes of residents with a factor loading of 0.531.

## Discussions

The findings from both mean and factor analysis to analyze the perception towards impacts brought by

tourism industry suggest that the respondents have a strong perception in the statements that 'tourism increases income and employment opportunities to the local population of the region', 'local handicrafts and organic farm products benefit from tourism', 'tourist inflow improves the standard of living', 'tourism creates regional imbalances as it provide benefits to small group of people', 'seasonal tourism creates high risk and unemployment issues', 'tourism increases the price of land and housing', 'tourism lead towards problems like littering', 'tourism development should be discouraged when it harms the natural environment', 'tourism creates a cosmopolitan culture in the region'. This may be because the tourism industry had become a strong industry in Leh district and subsequently local residents work in hotels, restaurants, as tourist guides, taxi drivers and have earned more income by selling their local produce to tourists and tourism-related establishments. The results showed that tourism has generated significant positive economic impacts. However, although tourism has generated huge benefits, it has also generated some negative impacts. The local residents felt that tourism has also generated negative impacts like regional imbalances, seasonality, increase in the price of land and housing, littering, cosmopolitan culture.

The findings also indicates that the tourism stakeholders have a weak perception in the negative statements that 'tourism does not lead toward overcrowding and traffic congestion', 'tourism does not put enormous pressure on local land use', 'tourism does not lead to an increase in price of goods and services', 'tourism has not become a problem for carrying capacity', 'tourism development does not increase crime and anti-social activities', 'tourism does not lead to occupational changes of residents'. This may be because the negative impacts of tourism have affected local residents directly. The huge influx of tourists and increasing tourism activities in the region have also generated some negative impacts. It is found that the respondents viewed that tourism development has contributed towards overcrowding and traffic congestion, increase in the price of goods and services, increases crime and anti-social activities. It is also found that tourism stakeholders are very critical about environmental impacts.

## Conclusion

The local residents' support tourism development because it is the most dominant economic activity of Leh district. Due to its high multiplier effect, its benefits are widely distributed. The people from other sectors of the economy which are not directly associated with tourism such as Agriculture, Horticulture, and Handicrafts are also benefitting from the increased tourism economic activities. The residents are also aware of the fact that that tourism has brought many negative impacts as well. Therefore certain measures and policies need to

be developed to minimize the negative impact on the environment and the sustainable use of these resources should remain at the forefront. Due to the fragile ecosystem of the area, all the tourism products must be designed with eco-tourism concepts so that tourism in Leh helps in preserving the natural and cultural environments. The available resources must be effectively and sustainably used. Both the tourists and tourism stakeholders must be encouraged to use environmentally friendly practices for their waste management. However tourism in Ladakh is facing structural weaknesses such as high seasonality, extreme territorial concentration, and it is also vulnerable to foreign cyclical fluctuations. Keeping in view on all these, Ladakh must strengthen its non-tourism sectors as well so that it can survive the periodic dips in tourism demand.

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# How Do Tourists Perceive Quality & Image in Context of Casual Dining Restaurants?

Sandeep Kaur & Mandeep Kaur

## Abstract

The present study seeks to explore the impact of perceived quality dimensions on the restaurant image in the context of casual dining. This study employs a self-administered questionnaire and the target population is the tourists who have visited casual dining restaurants of Punjab. Convenience sampling technique has been employed to gather data from 798 tourists. Multiple regression analysis with a stepwise procedure has been applied to examine the relationship between quality and image. The results reveal that quality of food, service and physical environment have an important bearing on shaping tourists' image towards casual dining restaurants. This research reckons that an understanding of tourists' views about restaurant quality that shape their image towards casual dining is of great importance for the destination marketeers.

**Keywords:** Perceived Restaurant Quality, Food, Service, Physical Environment, Image, Casual Dining.

## 1. Introduction

The concepts of 'quality' and 'image' have gained enormous relevance in the fields of tourism and hospitality (Mason & Nassivera, 2013). Past literature has tried to explore the relationship between quality and satisfaction in restaurant settings and also the impact of satisfaction on post-consumption behaviors of customers (Ha & Jang, 2010) Nam & Lee, 2011; Ryu & Han, 2010; Hwang & Ok, 2013; Jalilvand, Salimipour, Elyasi & Mohammadi, 2017). Specifically, the main focus of existing studies was to analyze the impact of food quality, service quality and quality of the physical environment on customers' satisfaction and future behavioral intentions (Erkmen & Hancer, 2019). On the other hand, little is known about how the attributes of restaurant quality affect the image of a restaurant. Very limited research has been undertaken to examine the linkage between combined influences of restaurant quality (food quality, service quality and quality of physical environment) and restaurant image (Ryu, Lee & Kim, 2012; Erkmen & Hancer, 2019). Furthermore, the previous studies conducted on the factors determining the restaurant image, it has been observed that most of the studies have selected the customers of a restaurant as a target population (Han & Ryu, 2009; Hwang & Ok, 2013). Within the domain of the restaurant industry, particularly the field studies on tourists' perceptions of the quality and image of a restaurant still have to be explored (Ryu et al., 2012; Erkmen & Hancer, 2019). The existing studies

have addressed customers' perceptions about quality and image of the restaurant in different restaurant settings such as an upscale restaurant (Ryu et al., 2012) and fine dining (Erkmen & Hancer, 2018). However, the findings of this study cannot be generalized in different restaurant settings (Hwang & Ok, 2013; Erkmen & Hancer, 2019). Furthermore, the relative importance of restaurant quality dimensions on the image can vary among different type of restaurant settings (Ryu et al., 2012). According to the report of Food Zania (2017), in the Indian context, Casual dining restaurants (CDRs) is a preferred format for dining out in terms of price, offer and spending quality time with family. Furthermore, in the Indian restaurant industry, the market share of CDRs in an organized standalone format and chain format constitute 61 percent and 34 percent, respectively. Thus, the present study used casual dining settings as the research setting because customers can enjoy dining out at a moderate price in a casual atmosphere (Hwang & Ok, 2013). The purpose of the present study is to address this gap by investigating the combined influence of food quality, service quality and quality of the physical environment on the image of a casual dining restaurant.

## 2. Literature Review & Hypotheses Development

### 2.1 Restaurant Quality

Prior research has indicated that among the variety of attributes, customer consider the quality of food,

**Sandeep Kaur** Doctoral Research Fellow, University School of Financial Studies, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, Punjab

**Dr. Mandeep Kaur** Professor, University School of Financial Studies, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, Punjab

atmosphere and employee service to be critical for dining out in the restaurant (Nam & Lee, 2011; Ha & Jang, 2012; Bujisic, Hutchinson & Parsa, 2014; Jalilvand et al., 2017; Liu & Tse, 2018). Nam and Lee (2011) conducted a study to identify the factors influencing foreign travelers' satisfaction using the context of traditional Korean restaurants. In this study, three dimensions namely intangibles, tangibles, and food was used to measured tourists' perceived service quality of traditional restaurants. In addition, Ha and Jang's (2012) study identified the effect of atmospherics and perceived quality of food and service on customers' behavioral intentions in an ethnic restaurant setting. Bujisic et al. (2014) examined the linkages between attributes of restaurant quality (service, food, and ambiance) and customer behavioral intention (return intentions and word-of-mouth) using the context of two different types of the restaurant (upscale and quick service). Moreover, Jalilvand et al. (2017) examined the linkages among dimensions of relationship quality, restaurant quality, perceived value, and word of mouth behavior of customers in the context of a traditional restaurant in Iran. This study incorporated three dimensions: food, personal interaction, physical environment for a comprehensive evaluation of restaurant quality. In general, all four studies have examined the influence of restaurant quality attributes on customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions using different segments of a restaurant. However, none of the previous studies have explored the effects of three components of restaurant quality on customers' perceptions of restaurant image specifically in the context of CDRs.

## **2.2 Influence of Food Quality, Service Quality and Quality of Physical Environment on Restaurant Image**

Image is a complex phenomenon (Ryu, Han & Kim, 2008). Authors have defined the image in numeral ways such as Baloglu & Brinberg (1997, p. 11) defined the image as "the sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that people have of a place or destination". Furthermore, in the context of an upscale restaurant, Ryu et al. (2012) define the brand image as "the sum of the emotional perceptions, ideas, or symbolic attitudes that customers associate with restaurants". For full-service restaurants, image is defined as "emotions, ideas or attitudes that customers associate with full-service dining restaurants" (Jin, Lee & Huffman, 2012, p. 534). In this study, the restaurants' image refers to the sum of the emotions, perceptions, ideas, or attitudes that customers associate with casual dining restaurants.

Prior research has recognized the restaurant quality as a multidimensional phenomenon that captures tangible and intangible attributes of restaurant services (Ryu & Han, 2010; Ha & Jang, 2010; Nam & Lee, 2011). In the context of a restaurant industry, Lehtinen and Lehtinen (1991) have captured the quality, considering it two-dimensional structure (i.e. process quality and outcome quality). However, literature (Ryu et al., 2012; Jalilvand

et al., 2017) also supports restaurant quality as the three-dimensional structure consists of physical environment quality (i.e., atmospherics), interactional quality (i.e., service quality) and outcome quality (i.e., food quality). Food is the essence of the customers' evaluation of dining experience (Raajpoot, 2002). Good quality food can only satisfy the need and expectations of customers (Peri, 2006). As far as different restaurant settings are concerned, the quality of food was a significant foreteller of customer satisfaction in the context of a quick-casual restaurant (Ryu & Han, 2010) and traditional restaurant (Jalilvand et al., 2017). In the relevant literature, attributes used to measure food quality mainly focuses on taste, freshness, variety, visually attractive and nutrition. In restaurant settings, service quality has been defined as "the level of service provided by restaurant employees" (Ha & Jang, 2010). Service quality has been found as one of the vital components of restaurant experience (Namkung & Jang, 2008; Jang & Namkung, 2009). Most of the previous research has explored the importance of service quality in different restaurant settings; for example, Nam and Lee (2011) had identified intangibles dimension of quality (i.e., employee service), the most important antecedent affecting foreign travelers' satisfaction in the context of ethnic Korean restaurants.

Bitner (1992) explained the physical environment in service organizations by using the term servicescape. Servicescape is the "built environment or more specifically, the man-made physical surroundings as opposed to the natural or social environment" (Bitner, 1992, p. 58). Similarly Lee and Jeong (2012) defined physical environment as an "environment created by the service provider including overall layout, design, decoration, and aesthetics". The physical environment is a key factor that it gives a cue to consumers about the organization's capabilities and quality even before making a purchase decision (Bitner, 1992). Furthermore, Physical environment communicates the organization's image to customers (Rapoport, 1990) and influence the customers' satisfaction with the service (Bitner, 1992). The physical environment has been found a very important aspect of consumer evaluation of satisfaction with regard to restaurant services (Ryu & Han, 2010). Specifically, the previous study revealed that ambiance created by pleasant music, color, lighting and attractive interior design/decor influence customer satisfaction towards the quick-casual restaurant. Specifically, in the context of service organizations like hotels, restaurants, and retail stores, etc., physical surroundings have the ability to create and influence customers' perceptions of the firm's image (Booms & Bitner, 1982; Bitner, 1992). The main elements of the physical surroundings include lighting, wall decor, temperature, color, texture, quality of materials, signage, furnishings and so on that can be changed and controlled by an organization to reinforce the image in customers' perceptions or to influence their

behavioral intentions (Bitner, 1992). Especially for resort hotels in Malaysia, Ali, Omar and Amin (2013) found that the physical environment has a significant influence on restaurant image. This finding supported that good atmosphere of eating outlet enhances the restaurant image in the minds of customers. Erkmen & Hancer (2019) also investigated the effect of food, service and atmospherics on the brand image using the context of fine dining restaurants in Istanbul. Their results revealed that there is a positive relationship between service quality and the brand image of a fine dining restaurant. Ryu et al. (2012) in their study revealed that the quality of the physical environment, food, and service were the significant contributors to customers' perceived image of an authentic upscale Chinese restaurant. Based on the above discussion (Figure 1), it is hypothesized that:

$H_1$ : Tourists' perceptions of the food quality have a positive effect on their image toward casual dining restaurant.

$H_2$ : Tourists' perceptions of the service quality have a positive effect on their image toward casual dining restaurant.

$H_3$ : Tourists' perceptions of the physical environment quality have a positive effect on their image toward casual dining restaurant.

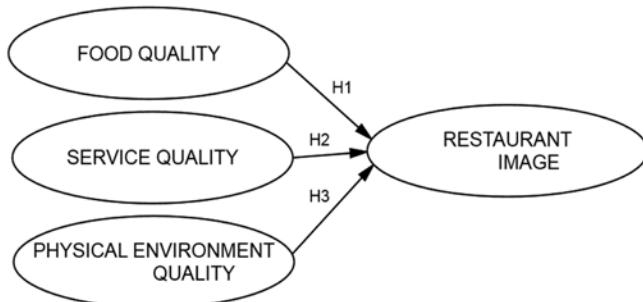


Figure 1: Research Framework

### 3. Research Methodology

#### 3.1 Research Instrument

The present study used measures based on previous research. The first section dealt with the seventeen attributes intended to measure restaurant quality, adapted from Meng and Elliott (2008); Ryu and Jang (2008); Ryu et al. (2012); Namkung and Jang (2008). These attributes have been categorized into three dimensions: food quality, service quality and quality of the physical environment. The second section measured restaurant Image using six items adapted from Jang, Ro and Kim (2015); Ryu et al. (2012). All the items were measured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

#### 3.2 Pilot Study

The initial 23 items of the questionnaire were reviewed by three subject experts (PhDs in the area of food service and hospitality) for content validity. Each of the subject experts removed the repetitive, extraneous and inexplicable items from the list. This process resulted in the retention of 20 items for further analysis. Then, the revised questionnaire was prepared and the pilot survey was carried out with on-site customers at casual dining restaurants (CDRs) located near to tourist attractions of the Amritsar city of Punjab. This study has defined CDRs as "a restaurant serving moderately priced food in an ambiance oriented towards providing an affordable dining experience, with table service". The Average Spending per Person (INR) on eating out CDRs ranges from 250 to 500 (exclusive of taxes) in the context of India (Food Zania, 2017). The self-administered questionnaires were distributed to 190 on-site customers in the evening and at night over a two-week period using a convenience sampling approach. A total of 156 usable questionnaires completed in all aspects considered for further analysis. In this survey, the main emphasis was on the reliability analysis of the questionnaire items for perceived quality and restaurant image. To do this, Cronbach's alpha was used. The Cronbach's alpha statistic was found to be above 0.7 for both the constructs, indicating satisfactory reliability (Hair et al., 2010). Based on returned questionnaires, three more items were deleted and some corrections to the layout of the questionnaire were made. For the final survey, 17 items were retained.

#### 3.3 Large-scale Survey: Data collection and Sample

In the main study, the fieldwork has been carried out in the four cities of Punjab namely Amritsar, Ludhiana, Mohali, and Jalandhar. These four cities of Punjab has been considered for two main reasons. First, these cities are famous trips destination among domestic and foreign tourists to Punjab, generating more than 88% of total tourists' inflow to Punjab (Punjab tourism statistics, 2016). Second, a substantial number of casual dining restaurants have been located in these cities. The selected CDRs provide affordable food in an ambiance offering an adequate level of table service. The CDRs located near the popular tourist attractions were selected for two purposes: first, to capture the comprehensive views of different segments of respondents (i.e. domestic tourists, foreign tourists, first-timers and repeaters); second, tourists find it convenient to access the restaurant. The target population for this study is the domestic tourists and foreign tourists who savored local Punjabi cuisine at CDRs during their trip to four tourism cities of Punjab. The final questionnaire consisted of three sections focused on perceived quality, restaurant image and travelers' demographic details (e.g., gender, age, occupation, country of residence, and past visits). Respondents were asked to evaluate the items on a five-point Likert scale,

ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to 900 tourists using convenience sampling technique. The main survey was undertaken at different times of day, over a period of four months (December 2018 – March 2019). The completed questionnaires were screened and unusable responses were eliminated. Basically, 798 questionnaires were found to be valid for data analysis, indicating the response rate of 88.67%.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

The analysis of collected data was achieved using SPSS statistics 21. Descriptive statistics has been employed to analyze the demographic profile of respondents. Furthermore, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) has been employed to assess the measurement model. Finally, the relationship between perceived quality and restaurant image is estimated using multiple regression with a step-wise procedure.

## 4. Research Findings

### 4.1 Demographic Profiles of Sample

Out of 798 respondents, 56 percent are male whereas 44 percent are female. In terms of age, the majority of respondents are between 25-34 years (26.2 percent) and 35-44 years (24.8 percent). Most of the respondents are self-employed (26.4 percent) and salaried class (28.6 percent). Amongst the 798 tourists, 53% are domestic whereas 47% are foreigners. In terms of past visits, there is higher proportion of first-time visitors (70 percent) as compared to repeat visitors (30 percent).

### 4.2 CFA Results

CFA has been employed to assess the factor structure in the measurement model. The results of CFA are presented in Table I. The results of model's goodness-of-fit statistics showed a good fit of the model to the data with indices exceeding the cut-off values ( $\chi^2 = 488.449$ ,  $df = 113$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $GFI = 0.930$ ,  $CFI = 0.953$ ,  $NFI = 0.940$ ,  $TLI = 0.943$  and  $RMSEA = 0.065$ ). The value of Cronbach's  $\alpha$  ranging from 0.828 to 0.911 supports the internal consistency of all the four factors in the model.

**Table I: Results of CFA**

Constructs and indicators	SFL	t-value*	CR	$\alpha$	AVE
<i>Service Quality (SQ)</i>			0.912	0.911	0.674
SQ3 Restaurant's employees served me the exact what had I ordered	.854	a			
SQ2 Restaurant's employees gave you prompt and quick services	.822	28.442			
SQ1 Restaurant's employees had well answered to my queries	.816	28.127			

Constructs and indicators	SFL	t-value*	CR	$\alpha$	AVE
<i>Service Quality (SQ)</i>			0.912	0.911	0.674
SQ4 Restaurant's employees were able to explain the menu items	.827	28.739			
SQ5 Restaurant's employees dressed clean and professional	.784	26.433			
<i>Food Quality (FQ)</i>			0.889	0.887	0.667
FQ3 Cuisine is served at the appropriate temperature	.776	a			
FQ2 The Restaurant offers several interesting food & beverages choices on the menu	.846	25.163			
FQ4 The restaurant serves tasty food	.787	23.173			
FQ1 The restaurant offers fresh food	.855	25.451			
<i>Quality of Physical Environment (QPE)</i>			0.850	0.847	0.587
QPE4 The restaurant has appropriate illumination in keeping with its atmosphere	.803	a			
QPE3 The restaurant's temperature is comfortable	.709	20.191			
QPE2 The service apparatus (plates, cutlery, bowls, etc) are clean in good manner	.824	23.569			
QPE1 Dining area is clean and tidy	.721	20.577			
<i>Restaurant Image (RI)</i>			0.830	0.828	0.552
RI4 Guest's impression are positive regarding the restaurant	.736	a			
RI2 The Restaurant seeks to fulfil customer's needs and wants	.830	21.399			
RI3 The restaurant is a favorable place to dine	.767	20.097			
RI1 The restaurant has authentic Punjabi cuisine	.625	16.456			

**Notes:** SFL: Standardized factor loadings; \* all the factor loadings are significant at  $p < 0.000$ ; a parameter value is fixed to 1.

Furthermore, the convergent validity of the measurement model has been verified with two ways. First, all the measurement items indicates the standardized loading estimates of 0.5 or higher (ranging from 0.625 to 0.855) and are significant at the 0.001 alpha level (Hair et al., 2010). Second, the construct reliability and average variance extracted from all the four constructs exceeds the minimum criterion of 0.7 (ranging from 0.830 to 0.912) and 0.5 (ranging from 0.552 to 0.674), respectively, providing the evidence of convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The square root of AVE (values in bold) for all the constructs exceeds the estimates of inter-construct

correlation (values in italics), indicating the discriminant validity of the model (see Table II).

**Table II: Discriminant validity analysis**

	QPE	SQ	FQ	RI
QPE	<b>0.766</b>			
SQ	0.450	<b>0.821</b>		
FQ	0.469	0.580	<b>0.817</b>	
RI	0.499	0.550	0.601	<b>0.743</b>

#### 4.3 Restaurant quality and restaurant image in the context of a casual dining restaurant

Multiple regression analysis has been employed to determine whether the service quality, food quality, and quality of the physical environment (i.e. independent variables) have an impact on restaurant image (dependent variable). In this study, three independent variables have been regressed on the dependent variable by using the step-wise procedure in SPSS. With the step-wise procedure, only independent variables which have a significant impact on the dependent variable enter the model (see Table III). The first predictor variable that has been entered the equation is 'food quality' and it appears the most prominent variable in explaining restaurant image (Model 1). It alone contributes 27.4 percent variability ( $R^2 = 0.274$ ). In Model 2, service quality has been entered the equation and improves the R Square from 27.4 percent to 33.3 percent. Furthermore, in Model 3 quality of the physical environment has been entered which accounts for 2.9 percent variability. The results of Model 3 suggests that restaurant image is explained by three dimensions generating 36.1 percent of the variance which are food quality ( $B = 0.280$ ); service quality ( $B = 0.221$ ), and the quality of physical environment ( $B = 0.197$ ). However, it means that 63.9 percent of the variance can be explained by other factors. The F-statistic for the regression model has verified that all the three independent variables (151.326;  $p = 0.000$ ) significantly contribute to the restaurant image.

**Table III: Models derived from stepwise multiple regression analysis**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change
1	0.523 <sup>a</sup>	0.274	0.273	0.842	0.274
2	0.578 <sup>b</sup>	0.335	0.333	0.806	0.061
3	0.603 <sup>c</sup>	0.364	0.361	0.789	0.029

a. Predictors: (Constant), FQ

b. Predictors: (Constant), FQ, SQ

c. Predictors: (Constant), FQ, SQ, QPE

The standardized coefficient beta indicates the relative importance of each independent variable on the dependent variable (Hair et al., 2010). Food quality ( $\beta = 0.320$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ) has the highest beta scores indicating

the strongest impact on restaurant image (see Table IV). Thus, H1 is supported. Service quality has been found the second most influenced variable ( $\beta = 0.241$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ) followed by quality of physical environment ( $\beta = 0.192$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ) impacting restaurant image. Therefore, H2 and H3 are also supported.

**Table IV: Results of regression analysis (Model 3)**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-value	p-value
Variables	B	Std. Error	( $\beta$ )		
Constant	1.220	0.128	-	9.564	.000
FQ	0.280	0.030	0.320	9.341	.000
SQ	0.221	0.031	0.241	7.092	.000
QPE	0.197	0.033	0.192	6.035	.000

#### 5. Discussion and Implications

The findings of the present study back up the importance of dimensions of quality in shaping the tourists' perceived image of a restaurant, specifically in CDRs setting. From a pragmatic point-of-view, the results also provide some deeper insights as how each dimension is related with restaurant image. Using a stepwise regression analysis, this study presents quality of food, service and physical environment have significant influence on restaurant image.

With the findings of the study, restaurateurs can understand the tourists' priorities in terms of different quality dimensions in the context of CDRs. Quality of food is the main dimension that explained a large proportion of variance (i.e., 27.4 percent) in determining the image of CDRs. The results are consistent with the findings of Ryu et al., (2012). They revealed that customers' perceived quality of food, such as freshness, variety and visually attractive, exerts major influence on the image of upscale restaurant than the quality of physical environment and service. This implies that food quality has been found as a major antecedent of casual dining restaurant image. Specifically, in this dimension, the featured points upon which the restaurateurs should pay more attention include serving tasty and fresh cuisine at an appropriate temperature and offering a wide variety of food & beverages so that tourists can get an unforgettable experience during their trip.

In this study, the service quality dimension ( $\beta = 0.241$ ) emerges as the next best predictor of restaurant image. This supports earlier studies advocating that beyond food, good service also build a favorable image towards restaurant (Ryu et al., 2012; Erkmen & Hancer, 2019). Regarding this dimension, restaurateurs ought to pay a lot of attention to restaurant staff so that they can offer prompt and fast services to customers. They should have the proper knowledge to clarify the menu things

and handle customers' queries effectively. Furthermore, staff should be professional in term of his/ her looks as well as allotted task. These are the important matters to focus on by restaurateurs to make the dining experience satisfactory.

Quality of the physical environment ( $\beta = 0.192$ ) is the alternative dimension influencing the image. This finding is in line with earlier research (e.g., Ali et al., 2013; Ha & Jang, 2010). Ha and Jang (2010) indicated that physical environment is such an important element of dining experience that when a customer enters a restaurant, his or her emotions, and expectations concerning quality influenced by it. Furthermore, the physical environment has an influence on customer' expectations for a memorable dining experience in a restaurant (Ha & Jang, 2010). Even if the customers have a lower perception of the physical environment of a restaurant, then his or her lowered expectations can be exceeded and meet by offering excellent service and food that drive their satisfaction. Relating to this dimension, serving the cuisine in clean plates, cutlery, bowls and ensuring clean and tidy dining area with appropriate illumination and cozy temperature are involved areas that ought to be considered by restaurateurs to make the physical settings engaging in the context of CDRs. Restaurateurs seeking to improve their restaurant image may benefit from the study findings, about the effects of dimensions of quality on the formation of an image of a casual dining restaurant.

## 6. Limitations and future research

Convenience sampling technique was employed to collect data from tourists who dined in a casual dining restaurant. Hence, the generalization of the findings is limited. Furthermore, future studies can include different types of restaurants for measuring and comparing the relative importance of perceived quality dimensions' on shaping restaurant image. The moderating role of tourists' nationality (i.e., domestic vs. foreign) and past visits (i.e., first-timers vs. repeaters) between the quality and image can be further examined. The present study is limited to the constructs for quality and image. Future research can investigate the effect of other factors (e.g., perceived value, other customers) on the image of a restaurant.

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# Indian Pilgrimage: Contemporary Hindu Travel Culture; Practices and Emerging Issues

Prashant Kumar Gautam, Lipika K. Guliani & Era Sood

## Abstract

Pilgrimage is an ancient tradition in India. In an estimate there are more than 1800 religious places, which are situated in various parts of India. Every year huge number of people visits these places. The present paper focuses on studying the concept of pilgrimage better known as "tirth yatra" by the Indian people. The study focuses on different aspects of pilgrimage in early years and in the contemporary world. It focuses on the growth which has paved the way for more advancement in different fields related with the traditional Hindu pilgrimage. Even though the concepts of pilgrim and a traveller have been there for long, it has evolved a lot with the passage of time. The study is using secondary sources to build a narrative for itself. It included studies conducted on existing literature, articles, journals and various online resources to identify the background, various innovations and developments taking place in regard with the Indian tourism industry.

The study concluded that all the changes which have incurred over the period are related with the growth of the travel industry. The focus has changed from the site to the customer in the case of the pilgrimage travel. The growth of mass media, advancement in technology and mobility has led the travel turn into more smooth and enjoyable process. The mindsets and behaviour of the customers have changed over time and they expect better amenities and more resources in the form of more leisure products from the service providers. Pilgrimage has seen a major confluence with leisure. People no longer travel just to a pilgrimage site, they even visit other destinations close by and consume more tourism products than before. With this changing phenomenon, the pilgrimage is facing major issues in different lights. People have become more aware about their actions and hence question the whole viability of certain sacred rituals. It has also led to involvement of certain public and private players which raised the question about thin differentiation between traveller and a pilgrim.

**Keywords:** Pilgrimage, Hinduism, Tourists, India

## Introduction

A tourist is half a pilgrim, if a pilgrim is half a tourist  
(Turner and Turner 1978)

*Tirthyatra* – this word holds a deeper meaning, a whole of emotions and belief in Hindu philosophy and as well as the lives of people. "Tirth" word basically means a fold ; an area in a river which is shallow making it easier to cross the river, whereas "yatra" is to travel. The connotation is that "tirtha" is like a cross over where one can cross over from a mundane space to a sacred space. Hence, the word *tirth yatra* defines a travel to a sacred/spiritual place. Also another coincidence says that most of the Hindu pilgrimage sites are located alongside the banks of river like Narmada, Ganges, Bhramaputra, Godavari and Kaveri etc. In Jainism, God is called Tirthankara, one

who is able to find *tirth*, and achieve *mukti* (release), from *samsaric* (material, life); he also shows the way to achieve it.

Alan Morinis observes pilgrimage is 'both and individual's behavior and social cultural institution'. The social cultural institution which supports the process of pilgrimage, like other aspects of Hindu tradition that have their roots in the mists of time, have also undergone transformation in the context of contemporary time.

## Historical Perspective, Background and Procedure

The concept of pilgrimage has been so deep rooted in the Hindu tradition and culture that the birth of a child in the family marks visiting these sites and performing certain rituals. The process is a life cycle which ends with ones death and starts another with the family after you

Prof. Prashant Kumar Gautam	Professor, Institute of Hotel and Tourism Management, Panjab University, Chandigarh, Punjab.
Dr. Lipika K. Guliani	Assistant Professor, Institute of Hotel and Tourism Management, Panjab University, Chandigarh, Punjab.
Era Sood	Assistant Professor, Quest Group of Institution, Punjab.

and its never ending. Even in the Hindu *Shashtras* (holy books), when the Pandavas (Five acknowledged sons of King Pandu) were exiled to the jungle for thirteen years they wonder what they will do for all that time and Lord Krishna suggests them to go on a *tirth yatra*. This was one of the first mentions of the word and pandavas were probably the first *tirth yatris* (pilgrims).

In the numerous sacred places scattered throughout the geography of India, the ritual specialists are the prime factors in the perpetuation of pilgrimage as a social cultural institution. The priest at the place pilgrimage (*tirtha purohit*) plays a significant role in maintenance and transmission of knowledge obtained at the *tirtha*, and disseminates it amongst friends and family.

Pilgrims visit sacred places for certain benefits that are supposed to be accrue from visiting them. As these sites are considered as sacred, they hold a special place in one's life. It is related with everything good and happy. Some visit these places to get rid of their problems while others visit to find solution for their problems. Although in the normative discourses religious practices are intended to achieve final liberation from the cycle of life, death and rebirth, but pilgrims also have some other aspirations which are aimed at achievements some worldly goals like success, job, marriage, health etc. There are number of reasons why pilgrimage can be considered as a popular religious practice, arguably more widely practiced than ever before.

- ❖ First, it is achievable by vast majority of Hindus. It does not necessarily entail elaborate ritual performance or rigorous ascetic practice.
- ❖ Second, a pilgrimage entails a clearly defined break from routines of daily life and consequently be enjoyable undertaking. Many pilgrimage sites, like Rishikesh are surrounded by natural beauty. These places not only cater to religious needs of the pilgrims, but also for more mundane requirements. Now almost every such places has a bazaar where pilgrims can buy religious paraphernalia- such as colored lithographs or framed photos of gods or deities associated with those places.
- ❖ Third, widening access to media, in particular television and internet, which means people have more knowledge and awareness about the place. Also with more mode of transports, places have become accessible as well.

### Indian Pilgrimages in Numbers

The number of religious destinations is such a huge that a religious books publisher 'Gitapress' which is situated in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh had published a special edition of book titled '*Teertahink*' (Religious places). This book contains information of more than 1800 places of India. During the 49-day Kumbh Mela (Hindu's biggest religious gathering) 2019 that concluded in March, a

significant over 240 million people visited the Sangam city- the venue (John, 2019). The Kumbh 2019 visitors included over 1 million foreign tourists. In addition to this ambassadors from 71 countries visited the Mela event. Government had invested an amount of Rs. 43 billion for organising and making arrangements for Kumbh Mela (Kumar, 2019).

In India there are several annual pilgrimages. Some of them are listed below

1. Kanwar Yatra: This pilgrimage is India's one of the largest annual religious pilgrimage. In this pilgrims gather sacred water from the river Ganga during the month of *Shravan* (July-August) and carry it to dispense as offerings in local Lord Shiva shrines.
2. Amaranth Yatra: This is held in the month of July and August in Jammu & Kashmir, where every year around half a million Hindus visits Amarnath Cave.
3. Manimahesh Yatra: This is held in the month of July and August in Himachal Pradesh, where every year around half a million Hindus visits Manimahesh Lake.
4. Uttrakhand Char Dham Yatra: Millions of pilgrims visits four sacred places named Gangotri, Yamunotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath from May to October every year.
5. Pandarpur Yatra: Thousands of people participate in this yatra every year and visit Bithla temple in Maharashtra.
6. Jaggannath Yatra: The word 'juggernaut' in English has its origin from this yatra, where millions of people participate at Puri, Orrisa.
7. Sabrimala: It is the largest annual pilgrimage in the world with an estimated 45–50 million devotees visiting every year. The temple is open for worship only during the days of Mandalapooja (November 15 to December 26), Makaravilakku (January 14 - "Makara Sankranti") and Vishu (April 14), and the first five days of each Malayalam month (Daily Bhashkar. Com, 2011).

In addition to above these there are several other pilgrimages also like Char Dham Yatra, Kashi Yatra, Mansarovar Yatra, Srikhand Yatra, 84 Kos Yatra etc.

### Pilgrim or Tourist (*Tirthyatri* or *Paryatak*)

The pilgrimage travel is changing and how. The pilgrimage travel is on resurgence now more than ever. While earlier, when travelling to a 'tirth sthan' (a sacred place) was a complex process and itself and was considered to be sacred itself, now the process has been simpler. The whole concept has been reformed and made easier for the travellers. With the coming up of numerous travel agents and modes of transportation, the game has been changed completely from the travel point of view. The journey consumes less number of hours and is hassle

free. The travel agents are available to cater every kind of need for the pilgrim/tourist. Every kind of services is available for the tourists at the destination as well. Comfortable lodges, guest houses and personal shuttles services are attracting more number of people. One can even book services and timing to pay the obeisance from their home at certain destination.

### Pilgrimage or Mobility?

Now pilgrimage is just about the beliefs, but with the increasing awareness and mobility it is turning into a money making business as well. With the rising disposable incomes of the middle class society, the number at these places too is increasing in a rapid change. The business is becoming more lucrative and is seeing more players. It has led to development of full fledged concepts like religious and pilgrimage travel which was present before as well but was not systematic and well established. The religious tourists require more services than the traditional pilgrim travel. In the Rishikesh area, Uttrakhand this is reflected in several recently opened luxury hotels, and a large number of businesses offering leisure activities such as rafting, trekking as well as the jeep rides to one of the Char Dhams. A trip to Rishikesh is regarded as much of a holiday as a chance to visit to sacred places. This is not just limited to Rishikesh but almost every other such sacred place is converted into a package which is just not limited to religious form of travel and is beyond that.

### Impacts of Pilgrimage

As any form of activity, pilgrimage travel too has some cons. In Vrindavan, a popular Hindu pilgrimage centre in India, the improvements in accessibility and availability of transportation have long replaced the traditional pure form of—pilgrimage on foot for the majority of visitors to the particular site (Shinde, 2006, 2007; Timothy and Olsen, 2006; Jackson and Davis, 2000). In accordance with changes in visitor patterns and the expansion of pilgrimage travel, many tourist enterprises (hotels and tour operators) have emerged in the vicinity of the most popular temples, indicating growing tourism activity (Shinde, 2007) and diminishing the sacred atmosphere.

The economic impact of pilgrimage tourism can be seen its contribution to a country, the largest contributions to pilgrimage tourism is seen in the many pilgrimage places in India (Bruner 1994). Many small places economies are highly depend on pilgrimage tourism as evidenced by the significant share of pilgrimage tourism in their total earnings. Many other small business holders in local vicinity too depend on the pilgrims. We can see numerous locals indulging themselves in several kind of tourism based activities like cab services, eateries, photography, guest houses and many other religious activities. Also, each temple has a small bazaar or market serving some local delicacy for both the kind of tourists in the form of dhabas to Air Conditioned restaurants.

Another major change can be seen in how the Hindu traditions or rituals are being carried out at these pilgrimage sites. These days the sacred journeys have given birth to multifarious economic options in the area.

With the growing consciousness about the ill effects of one's activities on environment, a major change has brewed up on how people are viewing pilgrimage travel activities in today's world. While on hand our country is among the four other countries which have declared its rivers as living beings, on the other we are still involved in traditional practices which are considered as pollutants to those rivers. Therefore as the travelers are becoming more aware about their actions and activities, a change can be seen in practices performed by the pilgrims. The rituals being performed are now much more filtered and precise than before.

### Pilgrimage as Tourism Business

The promotion of tourism has brought significant economic benefits and pernicious social effects, among them attracting a clientele seeking ease and entertainment. Modern technological innovations are being used to make a mere pilgrimage into a pilgrimage packaged tour which serves the whole family from the child to the adults. The most famous expression of this today is surely the Akshardham temple complex in Delhi that attracts both international and domestic visitors, including pilgrims in buses passing through Delhi on an itinerary focused on pilgrimage destinations. It was created by Swaminarayan Hindus, followers of a new Hindu movement that has its roots in the early nineteenth century (Williams, 2011). Characterised as a 'show temple' (Reddy and Zavos, 2010) and 'Hindu wonderland' (Singh, 2010) that cultivates a 'Disney divinity' (Srivastava, 2009), Besides the main temple dedicated to Swaminarayan, the founder of this movement, the temple complex further features: an Imax cinema showing a film that follows the founder on his pilgrimage as a young boy; a series of dioramas with robotics presenting highlights from the whole life of the founder; a boat ride presenting Indian civilisation as a Vedic and Hindu glorious past complete with science and democracy; a park with statues of national heroes; a musical fountain and food vendors selling anything from Indian food and tea, to vegetarian pizzas and burgers with Coca Cola.

The focus now has been transferred to the consumers from the site. To make the destination more travel friendly mass media is being focused on. Many puranic texts in Sanskrit describing pilgrimage places and their virtues have these days been converted into short versions in modern languages in the form of cheap booklets available in the bazaars (Pinkney, 2013). Moreover, tourism authorities publish official guidebooks for pilgrimages such as the Char Dham Yatra. The tourist can now find official coffee table books and brochures released by the official ministry. Several destinations are coming up with their

own websites guiding the tourist about the destination from where to stay, what to do , how to reach and even booking your *pooja* slot from the comfort of your home. In more recent times, websites for destinations like Vaiśo Devī are surely growing in importance for many visitors - one can find pilgrims sharing their experiences through blogs and online tourist forums. Also the Devotees of Sai Baba can now book their darshan tickets online through the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) website. IRCTC officials said that the option is currently being extended to customers who book online train tickets to travel to Shirdi Sai Nagar, Kopargaon, Manmad, Nashik and Nagarsol. The darshan dates can either be the date of arrival at the destination station or any of the following days after arrival and only one darshan transaction will be allowed per user. The tickets can be obtained using the PNR numbers of the train tickets, officials said. "This will benefit those travelling to the five stations, who want to go for Sai Baba's darshan," said Pinakin Morawala, PRO, IRCTC, Western Zone Mumbai. While the first phase of the initiative extends the facility to paid darshan ticket holders, it will later be extended to those opting for free ones as well, officials said.

### Pilgrimage and Social Media

Social media is everywhere. Even in the traditional pilgrimage, social media has made its space. It comes with its own sets of benefits and complexities which were nowhere near in the earlier days. While earlier the pilgrimage was seen as act of breaking from the ties of the world and reconnecting with god in a sacred space and environment, it now indeed has been turned into sharing that sacred moment with friends and family on social media. God too has been left untouched with camera applications in today's time.

As said social media is a boon and bane for the pilgrimage, boon because people are more aware about different destinations and cultures than before and bane because the whole concept of distancing from the world during pilgrimage has shattered. An important practice found at such entertaining religious attractions, but also pilgrimage destinations in general, is photography. Photographers ready to take your picture and print it within few minutes are available at many places, but people are increasingly bringing their own cameras, and most mobile phones are now equipped with a camera. People can be found lining up in front of the Ganges or posing while taking a bath, in front of seminal temples, standing next to a sādhu (wandering ascetic) or just after having completed pūjā (worship) with a priest. These practices forces us to reflect on the relationship between photographic practices and the tourist gaze on the one hand (Edensor, 1998; Urry and Larsen, 2011), and the auspicious beholding or ritualised seeing known as darśan on the other (Eck, 1998; Zara, 2015).

### Governmental Initiatives

Involvements by the central and state government too have been on rise in the recent part. The government has launched schemes and designed policies for the betterment of these destinations. The policies focus on developing the infrastructure and providing better services to the pilgrims.

- ✿ **Prasad Scheme:** the scheme was launched during 2014-15 and the word PRASAD stands for Pilgrimage, Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive. Under PRASHAD scheme, 41 sites have been identified at present in 25 states for development. Since the inception of the scheme, an amount of Rs. 727.16 crore has been sanctioned for 24 projects with a total release of Rs. 342.91 crore till 14.12.2018.
- ✿ **Swadesh Darshan Scheme:** Swadesh Darshan scheme has a vision to develop theme based tourist circuits on the principles of high tourist value, competitiveness and sustainability in an integrated manner by synergizing efforts to focus on needs and concerns of all stakeholders to enrich tourist experience and enhance employment opportunities. Under the scheme, fifteen thematic circuits have been identified for development, namely: Spiritual Circuit, Ramayana Circuit, Heritage Circuit, Tirthankar Circuit & Sufi Circuit. Since the inception of the scheme, an amount of Rs. 5873.26 crore has been sanctioned for 73 projects with a total release of Rs. 2769.25 crore till 14.12.2018 covering all thematic circuits under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme.
- ✿ **State Government Initiatives:** Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal launched the 'Mukhyamantri Teerth Yatra Yojana' under which 1,100 senior citizens from each of the 70 assembly constituencies here can undertake free pilgrimage. Under the scheme, a city resident above 60 years will be eligible to take free pilgrimage along with his or her spouse. The applicant can also take along an attendant above the age of 20 years, if the applicant or his spouse is above 70 years. The expenditure of the attendant will also be borne by the Delhi government. "The scheme was launched with an aim that every elderly person's desire to undertake a pilgrimage in his life gets fulfilled." The pilgrimage for three days and two nights can be undertaken on the circuits of Delhi-Mathura-Vrindavan-Agra-Fatehpur Sikri-Delhi; Delhi-Haridwar-Rishikesh-Neelkanth-Delhi; Delhi-Ajmer-Pushkar-Delhi; Delhi-Amritsar-Wagah border-Anandpur Sahib-Delhi; and Delhi-Vaishno Devi-Jammu-Delhi. There is no income criteria but preference will be given to those from economically weaker sections on first-come-first-serve basis, an official said. The Delhi government has also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the railways to cater to the pilgrims availing the scheme.

## Conclusions

*Tirthyatrīs* are changing and so does the *tirthyatra*. With the increase in the disposable income of people , there has been a rise in the expectations , a rise in requirements of amenities is evident. Another is greater literacy and scientific education, which have generated greater skepticism about the literal reality of religious merit (*punya*). It is now more of a confluence of Leisure and Pilgrimage. Pilgrimage is not just a lone concept but a form of travel which is catered as both in the form of religious tourism and sometimes in the form of pilgrimage travel.

An influx of mediators can be seen too. The governments at central and state as well as the service players are involved in decision making. With too many players public and private are working towards making destinations more travel friendly and earn even greater profits. Emergence of pilgrimage travel under this huge umbrella of travel and tourism industry has led to major significant changes in the Hindu travel pilgrimage. The minsets of the yatri have evolved, they are spending money more on the *yatra* and hence expect to make a bigger deal out of it. The advancements in technology and modes of transport has made travel more accessible for different classes of tourist which is the best change that have occurred. But at the same time, it has led to repercussions as well. The destinations are maxing out on their resources, leading to disturbed locals, commercialization of sacredness and commodification of beliefs and values.

The basic Hindu rituals performed at temples or shines have turned into passes which has turned into a comfort for some while changing the concept of *yatra* taken in the earlier times. Hence, the question arises which will lead to future researches in related area, Is this the time for New Age Pilgrimage?

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# Impact of Organizational Cynicism on Employee Engagement: An Analysis on Five Star Hotels at Delhi

Sheeba Hamid, Mohd. Sadiq & Bushra Muzaffar

## Abstract

Organizational cynicism has been identified as one of the inevitable issues, which is damaging the root of every organization and is recognized as one of the main impediments in the success of the organization. Keeping in view that aspect, the current research investigates whether there is any impact of organization cynicism on employee engagement and if so, to empirically test whether this impact is statistically significant or not. The study was conducted in five star hotels at Delhi and data was collected with the help of adapted questionnaire. A total sample of 223 respondents were taken into consideration in the final analysis. Reliability and factor analysis were run to check the suitability of data. Simple Linear Regression was applied to empirically gauge the impact of organizational cynicism on employee engagement and a negative association was found between organizational cynicism and employee engagement. Furthermore, results of the study will draw the attention of human resource managers to control the problem of organizational cynicism and to maximize the level of employee engagement, which will trigger organizational performance. The limitations of the current study will provide the arena for further research.

**Keywords:** Employee Engagement, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Cynicism, Organizational Performance.

## Introduction

Cynicism is serious problem which prevails in almost every type of organization across the globe. It is not only cascading the organizational productivity and profitability but also detrimental for organizational success. Cynicism as a part of organizational behaviour is capturing the propensity of researchers. In the past few years, academic researchers have started to identify the effect of cynicism on organizations. Goldner, Ritti, and Ference (1977) have also advised to examine the possible impact of organizational cynicism. Although there is ambiguity in the definition of organizational cynicism, but most of the researchers are in the compliance that it is a stage in which employees feel frustration and distrust towards their organization (Kanter & Mirvis, 1989; Bateman, Sakano, & Fujita, 1992; Brandes-Ducan, 1995). In the same way, Reichers, Wanous, and Austin (1997) asserted that cynicism is somehow related with diminishing level of trust among the employees in the authority of organizational change. Andersson (1996) have viewed cynicism as a personal characteristic, attitude and belief of individuals. In many previous researches, organizational cynicism is elucidated as attitude of hate

and disbelief of others. While Ozler, Derya, and Ceren (2011) indite that it is a kind of feeling which is related with distress, resentment and lack of trust in colleagues or organization. These kind of feelings are found among the employees due to lack of integrity in the organization.

Thus, on the basis of available literature it can be contended that organizational cynicism is a susceptible problem that needs immediate attention, which is one of the main impediments in the success of the organization.

Together with the concept of cynicism, the study approaches the concept of employee engagement, which is one of the important human resource practices that has positive consequences for any organization. In this globalised era, where there is diversity of workforce at large scale and business environment is elusive, employee engagement may be a key to competitive advantage for organizations (Rana & Chhabara, 2011). Employee engagement is considered as correlation of an employee with the organization and one of the essential practice to motivate, respect, retain and effectively utilize human resource of the organization (Vazirani, 2007; Neeti & Leekha, 2011).

Moreover, it can be concluded that, in this era of globalization and diversity of workforce, it has become one of the challenging task to retain their productive employees because organizations are facing the problem of cynicism. In this situation, employee engagement may be a prompting factor to suppress the problem of cynicism which is harnessing the root of organization.

### **Review of Literature**

In the present study, the researchers have highlighted few of the empirical researches accessible in the area of organizational cynicism and employee engagement. The literature has been divided in two sections. The first section covers the studies related to organizational cynicism and second section deals with the studies related to employee engagement.

### **Studies Related to Organizational Cynicism**

Reichers, Wanous, and Austin (1997) reported that cynicism involves a decline of belief in leaders among the employees. In numerous studies, cynicism is termed as an attitude of hate and lack of trust of others. In a simple way, cynicism is kind of attitude that is concerned with disillusion, distraction and negativity of a person with the organization (Andersson and Bateman, 1997).

Ozler, Derya, and Ceren (2011) encapsulates that organizational cynicism is a kind of behaviour which represents the feelings of anger and frustration and a tendency to distrust individual and groups. Such behaviours are generated when the employee feels that organization is not fair in its policies, procedures and there is biasness in the organization. Shahzad and Mahmood, (2012) posits that cynicism is a personal characteristic that generally reflects negative perceptions related to human behaviour is intrinsic in nature. It is characterized through disparaging and weak relations with colleague working in the organization. Cynical employee feels that his/her co-workers are egoistic and dishonest.

The study conducted by Andersson and Bateman, (1997) have identified various factors which influence organizational cynicism. These are poor organizational performance, layoffs and top management salaries. In their study, Johnson and O'leary-Kelly, (2003) have reported that violations of contract and experience within the organization with an employer can significantly influence cynicism about a new employer. In the view of Cole, Bruch, and Vogel (2006), leadership rhetoric, support from organization, working culture and trust in organization have been identified as antecedents of cynicism.

Abraham (2000) discussed that if the employees are not treated with dignity and respect, they become cynical. This results in lower job satisfaction, absenteeism and loss of job commitment. Andersson and Bateman (1997) have reported that cynicism is negatively related to intentions of performing organizational citizenship behaviours.

### **Studies Related to Employee Engagement**

The study conducted by Saks (2006) explained that employee engagement is the degree to which an individual is attentive and absorbed towards their job in the organization. It is a kind of attachment which the employee has towards his/her job or organization and potential he/she put in achieving the goals and objectives of the organization. Oliver and Rothmann, (2007) emphasize that employee engagement is a position in which individual put his/her best effort in achieving the organizational goal and is assure about his/her efficacy. Vazirani (2007) has define the term employee engagement by stating that it is an association and arousal of the employees with their organization. Rashid, Asad, and Ashraf (2011) view that engagement is the capability of the individual to work with sincere, commitment and aspiration. Robertson (2012) has highlighted that employee engagement is a kind of feeling which develops positive approach among the employees enduring their job in the organization.

Literature related with antecedents of employee engagement highlight that employee commitment and job satisfaction are vital parts and predictors of employee engagement. It clearly reflects the both side exchange of effort between managing body and employees of the organization (Markos & Sridevi, 2010). Garber (2007) has cited that engagement is like a muscle which needs regular exercise to nurture and develop. It will keep employees motivated and enhances their skills towards the work. Lochhead and Stephens, (2004) have highlighted the importance of communication in engagement and retention of employees. They reported that two way communication in the organization is very essential for engagement and retention of employees without which engagement and retention is far away from reality.

### **Objectives of Study**

The main objectives of the present study are:

1. To highlight the concept of organizational cynicism.
2. To assess the impact of organizational cynicism on employee engagement in the hotels under study.

### **Hypotheses Development**

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, following hypotheses is formulated.

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant impact of organizational cynicism on employee engagement in the hotels under study.

**H<sub>a</sub>1:** There is significant impact of organizational cynicism on employee engagement in the hotels under study.

### **Research Methodology**

For the current study, the employees working in five star hotels at Delhi have been included in research population.

It is a very challenging task for the researchers to obtain data from every individual from research population due to time and financial constraints. Hence selected sample will be taken from research population.

The study uses adapted questionnaire in collecting the primary data from the employees working in five star hotels at Delhi. The questionnaire was fragmented into two parts, first part provides the demographic information of the respondents, second part deals organizational cynicism and employee engagement based on Likert's five point scale. Before finalizing the questionnaire, pilot testing was carried out on a small sample to discern the accuracy and flow of questionnaire.

Convenient sampling technique has been used and total 275 questionnaires were distributed among the employees working in five star hotels, at Delhi region. Out of that, 248 questionnaires were returned. Some of the questionnaires were found with ambiguous responses, finally 223 questionnaires which carried explicit information were taken into consideration for final analysis.

### **Reliability of the Data**

Reliability refers to the ability of the data to produce same result consistently (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). In the present study, reliability of variables: organizational cynicism and employee engagement was calculated by using Cronbach's alpha. It is measurement of degree internal consistency among the items of variables. The value of Cronbach's alpha is shown in the table 1.

**Table 1**

#### **Assessment of Reliability**

Variables	Code	Cronbach's Alpha( $\alpha$ )
Organizational Cynicism	OC	.949
Employee Engagement	EE	.834

Table 1 shows the reliability of each variable. The variables organizational cynicism and employee engagement have Cronbach's alpha value .949 and .834 respectively. These values are more than the acceptable range i.e. 0.7 (Nunnally, 1978; George & Mallery, 2003). Hence it can be contended that data is reliable for further analysis.

### **Factor Analysis**

In the current study, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were tested by the researchers. Table 2 depicts the results of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy of the data and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity.

**Table 2**  
**Results of KMO & Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.881
Bartlett's test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2102.810
	Df	45
	Sig	.000

Table 2, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy is 0.881, which falls into the great range as identified by (Kaiser, 1974; Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999).

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity explains whether there is any difference between correlation matrix and identity matrix. For the suitability of data, there should be difference between these two. In the present study, sig. value is .000 which is less than .05. It means there is difference between correlation matrix and identity matrix. Hence the data is apposite for further study.

### **Hypothesis Testing**

$H_0$ : There is no significant impact of organizational cynicism on employee engagement in the hotels under study.

To investigate the impact of organizational cynicism on employee engagement in the hotel under study, Simple Linear Regression analysis has been used. In this hypothesis, organizational cynicism has been taken as independent variable and employee engagement as a dependent variable.

**Table 3**  
**Result of Correlation between Organizational Cynicism v/s Employee Engagement**

		Employee Engagement	Organizational Cynicism
Pearson Correlation	Employee Engagement	1.000	-.692
	Organizational Cynicism	-.692	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Employee Engagement	.	.000
	Organizational Cynicism	.000	.
N	Employee Engagement	223	223
	Organizational Cynicism	223	223

Table 3 represents the correlation coefficient between organizational cynicism and employee engagement. The value of correlation coefficient is -.692, which indicates

that there was moderate degree association between organizational cynicism and employee engagement. The table also depicts that there was negative impact of organizational cynicism on employee engagement in the hotels under study. But it does not reveal that whether this impact is statistically significant or not, that is why Regression Analysis has been used.

**Table 4**  
**Model Summary of Regression Analysis between Organizational Cynicism and Employee Engagement**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.692 <sup>a</sup>	.479	.477	.48990

a. Predictor: (Constant), Organizational Cynicism

In the table 4, the value of R is .692, which represents the correlation between expected and actual value of dependent variable. While the value of  $R^2$  is .479, which means 47.9% variation in employee engagement is explained by organizational cynicism. This indicates that 52.1% variation in dependent variable (employee engagement) cannot be explained by independent variable (organizational cynicism). Thus it can be interpreted that there might be other factors which have an influence on employee engagement in the current study.

**Table 5**  
**Simple Linear Regression: Coefficientsa**

Model B		Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t	Sign.
		Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	4.939	.089		55.197	.000
	Organizational Cynicism	-.516	.036	-.692	-14.265	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

Table 5, represents the value of unstandardized Beta is -.516. It means, if the value of independent variable (organizational cynicism) is increased by one unit, there will be .516 unit decrease in the dependent variable (employee engagement). The value of unstandardized Beta also interpret that there is negative impact of organizational cynicism on employee engagement and statistically significant because sig. value is .000, which is less than .05 (95% confidence interval). Therefore, it can be deduced that there was a significant and negative impact of organizational cynicism on employee engagement in the hotels under study.

## Discussions and Conclusions

The main objective of the present study was to identify the impact of organizational cynicism on employee engagement. Most of the researchers have contended that organizational cynicism creates numerous problems for both i.e. employees and organization. In the current study, the researchers have empirically tested the impact of organizational cynicism on employee engagement through Simple Linear Regression. It was reported from Pearson correlation value that there was moderate degree negative association between organizational cynicism and employee engagement. The value of  $R^2$  was .479, it means 47.9% variation in employee engagement was explained by organizational cynicism. The researchers have found that if organizational cynicism is increased by one unit, there is .516 unit decrease in the level of employee engagement. It was inferred from the analysis that organizational cynicism had statistically significant and negative impact on level of employee engagement in the hotels under study.

The finding of the current study is consistent with previous research findings of literature available on organizational cynicism (Andersson & Bateman, 1997; Dean, Brandes, & Dharwadkar, 1998; Abraham, 2000; Johnson & O'Leary-Kelly, 2003; Cole, Bruch, & Vogel, 2006; Nair & Kamalanabhan, 2010; Dolen, Cremer, & Ruyter, 2012). All the researchers had reported that organizational cynicism has negative consequences and disturb the entire working culture of the organization.

Thus, it is clear from the inferences of current study that organizational cynicism is destructive in nature, as it creates numerous negative consequences for the organization in the forms of low job commitment, low degree of engagement, attrition, absenteeism and turnover intention. It not only distracts the employees, but also decreases the efficacy of the employees. Finding of the study assert that organizational cynicism is affecting the level of employee engagement in a negative way, which is in consonance with the research findings of Maslach and Leiter, (2005). It means organization cynicism will decrease the engagement level of employees that will hamper the performance of the organization and creates job tension and fatigue among employees and develops the intention of attrition (Khan, 2014; James, 2009). In the findings of their study Mangi and Jalbari, (2013) have reported similar results that cynicism is one of the predictor of turnover intention and work engagement is the controlling factor of organizational cynicism and turnover intention.

From the responses provided by the respondents, it is clear that the statement 'policies and practices are not fully implemented in the organization' has highest average value among all statement of organizational cynicism, followed by statements 'organization is not fair in rewarding system' and 'organization is lacking in terms

of trust' respectively. Hence, it indicates that one of the major aspects of developing the attitude of organizational cynicism is that the organization is not fair in its policies and procedures and does not implement the human resource practices as per rules and regulations of the organization. It was further reported that the organization is not fair in rewarding system as per the performance of employees, which decreases the level of trust among the employees towards their organization. These kinds of activities trigger the degree of organizational cynicism and degrade the level of employee engagement in an organization.

Therefore, it is the responsibility of human resource managers to pay propensity in effective implementation of human resource practices in the organization and keep monitoring on them. Such practices will minimize the inevitable issue of organizational cynicism by increasing level of employee engagement, which hinders the success of the organization. Because employee engagement does not only control the degree of organizational cynicism, but also reduces turnover intention of employees (Mangi & Jalbani, 2013). To suppress organizational cynicism and to minimize the level of cynicism in the organization, employee engagement should be an important and regular practice.

### **Limitations and Future Research Avenues**

No study is free from limitations and in every research, there is always scope for further improvement and research. Paucity of literature associated with organizational cynicism in context of Indian hotel industry is one of the limitations of current research. Results of the study totally depend upon information provided by the respondents. If there is any biasness from respondents' part, it may add to the limitations of study. The findings are entirely based on statistical analysis on sample size of 223. Future researchers may enhance sample size to obtain more accuracy in the results. Present study is confined to Delhi region, future researchers may conduct same study in different region of India as well as in the arena of other sectors. The study investigates the impact of organization cynicism on employee engagement. Future researchers may analyse the impact of organizational cynicism on other variables like attrition, absenteeism and job commitment.

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## **Potential and Prospects of Homestay Tourism in Manipur, Northeast India**

**Rajendra Kshetri & Yumlembam Khogen Singh**

### **Abstract**

*As part of the destination management policy for Indian tourism, homestay can be adopted as a viable alternative solution to problems of tourist accommodations especially in those far-flung areas of tourist destinations where there is lack of well-equipped hotels and resorts. The basic concept of homestay remains same all over the world but one can find different kinds of homestays in different parts of the world. However, one interesting and distinctive characteristic of homestay is the very fact that every homestay is unique and special. This hints toward the importance of context-specific tourism planning and destination management for the overall development of a region. While acknowledging the potentials of homestays in transforming the landscape of tourism industry in the region, incumbent governments at the centre and state are committed to develop and promote homestays in Manipur.*

*In this backdrop, the present paper critically analyses the existing tourism policies with special emphasis on homestay tourism. The paper identifies some existing popular homestay destinations located in places of tourists attraction in Manipur like Loktak Lake, the largest freshwater lake in Northeast India and Keibul Lamjao National Park, the only floating national park in the world and home to Sangai, the brow-antlered deer (*Cervus eldii eldii*) which is found nowhere else in the world. Then, this study does in-depth case studies of the selected homestays in and around above mentioned tourist destinations to comprehend their present situation and challenges in particular and future prospects of homestay tourism in Manipur at large. Lastly, after having analyzed the existing national as well as Manipur state tourism policies along with feedbacks from interviewed homestay owners and insights from field observations, the present paper suggests some policy recommendations to formulate a better tourism policy of Manipur that can harness the potentials of homestay tourism in Manipur.*

**Keywords:** Homestay Tourism, Tourism Policy, India, Manipur, Loktak Lake, Keibul Lamjao National Park, Tourism Planning and Destination Management, etc.

### **1. Introduction**

As part of the destination management policy for Indian tourism, homestay can be adopted as a viable alternative solution to problems of tourist accommodations especially in those far-flung areas of tourist destinations where there is lack of well-equipped hotels and resorts. The basic concept of homestay remains same all over the world but one can find different kinds of homestays in different parts of the world. However, one interesting and distinctive characteristic of homestay is the very fact that every homestay is unique and special. This hints toward the importance of context-specific tourism planning and

destination management for the overall development of a region. While acknowledging the potentials of homestays in transforming the landscape of tourism industry in the region, incumbent governments at the centre and state are committed to develop and promote homestays in Manipur especially in some famous tourist destinations on priority basis. However, Manipur presents a different socio-cultural and economic set-up for homestay tourism as compared to already tested tourist destinations like Shimla, Ladakh, etc. Thus, there is need for a comprehensive study and holistic understanding on the potential and prospects of homestay tourism in Manipur, Northeast India.

## 2. Methodology and Objectives

In this backdrop, the present paper critically analyses the existing tourism policies with special emphasis on homestay tourism. In addition to the above objective, this paper identifies some existing popular homestay destinations located in places of tourists attraction in Manipur like Loktak Lake, the largest freshwater lake in Northeast India and Keibul Lamjao National Park, the only floating national park in the world and home to Sangai, the brow-antlered deer (*Cervus eldii eldii*) which is found nowhere else in the world. Then, this study does in-depth case study of a selected homestay located in and around the above mentioned tourist destinations to comprehend the present situation and challenges in particular and future prospects of homestay tourism in Manipur at large. Lastly, after having analyzed the existing national as well as Manipur state tourism policies along with feedbacks from interviewed homestay owner(s) and insights from field observations, the present paper suggests some policy recommendations to formulate a better tourism policy of Manipur that can harness the potentials of homestay tourism in Manipur.

## 3. Tourism Policy and Homestay Tourism: A Critical Analysis

For the first time a tourism policy of India was formulated in November, 1982 by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. However, the National Tourism Policy, 1982 did not adequately emphasize on the role of private sector, foreign investment, domestic tourism and the need for development of niche tourism products. However, in the Chief Ministers' Conference held on October 30, 2001; the then Prime Minister of India, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpajee stated:<sup>1</sup>

Tourism is a major engine of economic growth in most parts of the world. Several countries have transformed their economies using the tourism.... Tourism has great capacity to create large scale employment of diverse kind- from the most specialised to the unskilled and all of us know that generation of massive productive employment opportunities is what India needs the most.

The above statement of the visionary Prime Minister of the stature of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpajee Ji led the foundation for the formulation of the National Tourism Policy, 2002 that envisaged tourism as a major engine of economic growth. When it comes to the current demands of Indian tourism industry, the National Tourism Policy, 2002 needs revision and the incumbent government at the centre is planning to roll out a new National Tourism Policy by the year 2018. Hence, it is the right time for policy framers and experts in the field to reflect on for an improved national tourism policy. National Tourism Policy, 2002 nowhere mention the concept of 'Homestay' but it brings the need of imparting special thrust to village tourism, 'rural tourism and tourism in small settlements'<sup>2</sup> and encourages 'guest tourism' to attract the adventure

loving young tourists who are not looking for five star accommodation but only for simple and clean places to stay.

In case of **Manipur**, the process for drafting a tourism policy for Manipur was initiated only in 1992. The past governments took more than two decades just to finalize Manipur Tourism Policy, 2014 and it is meant to be for ten years. This is against the fact that tourism was established in Manipur in 1972, and given a separate directorate in 1973. Later, Manipur Tourism was given an 'industry' status in January 1987. In line with NTP, 2002; Manipur Tourism Policy, 2014 also attempts to position tourism more as 'an engine of economic growth' and this can be seen from the statement:<sup>3</sup>

Manipur Tourism Policy, 2014 which envisages new initiatives towards making tourism the catalyst in employment generation, environmental re-generation, development of remote areas and development of women and other disadvantaged groups in the State, besides promoting social integration is, therefore, vital to the state's economy.

Like NTP, 2002; Manipur Tourism Policy, 2014 (MTP 2014) also focuses on community participation and involvement of private entrepreneurs for comprehensive tourism development industry in Manipur. On the question of 'homestay' in the tourism policy of Manipur, it is not that the Government of Manipur is not aware about the importance of homestay tourism. Manipur Tourism Policy, 2014 very much acknowledges the potential of homestay tourism for the overall development of tourism industry in Manipur. MTP 2014 recognizes 'home-stay' as a niche tourism product and emphasizes on giving thrust to it as part of nature/ eco-tourism. While seeking to harness the potential of tourism potential of Manipur, MTP 2014 envisages developing "home-stays & village stays".<sup>4</sup> In relation to 'Homestay', Manipur Tourism Policy, 2014 puts like this:<sup>5</sup>

Nature tourism centred on villages, coupled with 'Homestay Concept', shall be promoted as an important tourism product of Manipur to spread tourism and its socio-economic benefits to rural areas.

While presenting the strategy for implementation of action plan and promotion of thrust areas, MTP 2014 puts development of accommodation facilities at Loktak Lake Complex in Phase- I (2014-2017) but still focuses on construction of resorts, house boats, floating restaurants, etc. However, the establishment of homestay has been kept postponed by saying: "Homestay concept would be promoted in a planned manner, especially in the interior areas for providing an unique experience to the visiting tourists".<sup>6</sup> As part of the human resource development and capacity building programme, MTP 2014 also mention about establishment of "mobile training units for community service providers in rural areas identified for the development of rural tourism and home stay

concepts<sup>7</sup> but until now, hardly any such training units can be seen in Manipur.

The copy of the 'Tourism Brochure'<sup>8</sup> published by the Directorate of Tourism, Manipur attached with the Manipur Tourism Policy, 2014 also needs serious corrections and refinement. In this brochure, lots of mistakes can be seen apart from shortcomings in presenting some of the uniqueness of Manipur. For instance, in this tourism brochure the geographical area of Manipur has been vaguely written as 'about 22,000 sq. km', 'Leelas' of the famous Raas Leelas has been wrongly translated as 'Leelas (Sports)' and descriptive account of the native cuisine is too brief and insufficient, etc. In this tourism brochure, 'home-stay' has not been acknowledged as a viable alternative accommodation for tourists. This official tourism brochure of Manipur, in its 'Yellow Page' section, listed 15 hotels and one guest house as choices of tourists on 'where to stay' but there is no mention about 'home-stay' as an alternative. This points toward negligence as well as late arrival of the 'homestay concept' in Manipur's tourism industry.

However, many of the planned actions for development of home-stay tourism in Manipur remain at planning stage only. It is also evident from the statements made by the concerned authorities on different occasions. For example, as a part of 'Paryatan Parv 2018' celebration, the Directorate of Tourism, Govt. of Manipur on 19 September 2018 organized a seminar on 'Home Stays & Sustainable Tourism'. During the seminar, Director of the Department revealed that the concerned department is 'preparing' guidelines for home stay tourism in Manipur and 'planning' to provide training to the registered home stay owners and spread awareness to the public on the importance of homestay development.<sup>9</sup> In Manipur Tourism Policy, 2014; it is clearly stated that "the State Government should come out with a policy of approving and promoting 'HOME STAYS' in village and tribal areas including those around Loktak Lake along trekking routes & nature and wild life parks and tribal village centres".<sup>10</sup> However, a policy exclusively meant for homestays in Manipur is yet to be formulated or come out. Such a delay in policy implementation may be the reason behind slow development of homestays as an alternative tourist accommodation in Manipur. Thus, provisions pertaining to homestay in MTP, 2014 seem to have shipwrecked in the sea of half-hearted implementation.

#### **4. Homestay Tourism in Manipur: Potential and Prospects**

Relaxation and exclusion of Manipur from the Protected Area Regime since January 2011 has started attracting more foreign tourists to the state. As per the estimates, the number of foreign tourists visiting Manipur has increased manifold from only 300-400 tourists in 2014-15 to approximately 4000 tourists in 2017-18. This is on top of the more than 1.5 Lakh domestic tourists annually. On

the other hand, in Imphal area we have around 300 hotel rooms only.<sup>11</sup> Hence, hotels alone will be not sufficient to cater the ever-increasing demands for accommodation of tourists. Therefore, alternative tourist accommodations like homestays become inevitable need of the hour.

There are a few homestays in Manipur, the more popular being Maipakchao Family Homestay, Loktak/ Thanga, Moirang; Aheibam Homestay, Imphal; Hut Village Cottage Homestay in Imphal, Imphal; Shalom Lodge, Ukhrul; Nungshi Homestay, Haobam Marak, Keishamthong, Imphal; etc. For tourism in far flung areas like Ukhrul and for its Shirui tourism, 'home stays' are the only viable option.<sup>12</sup> According to the then Director of the Directorate of Tourism, Government of Manipur, there are five to six homestays in Senapati district, more than 10 homestays in Bishnupur district near Loktak lake and a few in Ukhrul district.<sup>13</sup> Realizing the potentials of homestay in changing the face of tourism in Manipur, the state government is even planning to come up with the 'state-funded homestays' in future.<sup>14</sup> Manipur government is also planning to promote homestays in hill areas like None town instead of building hotels.<sup>15</sup>

In February 2018, the Director-General of the Union Ministry of Tourism Shri Satyajeet Rajan visited the Keibul Lamjao National Park to assess the possibilities of setting up homestays in and around Loktak Lake. During the visit, the Director-General expressed his keenness to develop homestays at 'Loktak park' in Manipur and requested the state government to come up with an action plan/ proposal and set up the necessary infrastructure.<sup>16</sup> The tourism ministry mooted its willingness to provide loans to villagers to set up homestays and urged the concerned authority of the state to make at least 50 homestays in the Keibul Lamjao village by early 2019.<sup>17</sup> Thus, the huge potential of homestay tourism in Manipur has started getting attention from both state and central governments. After seeing success stories of some homestays, it can be safely deduced that homestay tourism has a bright future in Manipur.

#### **5. Maipakchao Family Homestay: A Case Study<sup>18</sup>**

'Maipakchao Family Homestay' is located at the bank of Loktak Lake in Thanga Ngaram Leikai, Bishnupur District, Manipur which is around 6 km away from the historic Moirang town. The homestay started functioning in February 2014 and it is the first homestay in Manipur claimed by its owner Mr. Maipakchao Oinam (58 years) who is a national awardee social worker. As president of a non-profit organisation named LEDO (Loktak Eco-tourism Development Organisation), Mr. Maipakchao met Mr. Raj Basu, the then Director of the Help Tourism, Kolkata when the later visited Loktak Lake in early 2013. The idea of 'rural tourism' was implanted to Mr. Maipakchao by Mr. Raj Basu of Help Tourism. In December 2013, as an outcome of Mr. Raj Basu's second visit to the Thanga village, Mr. Maipakchao along with

some other locals were given an opportunity to go for an exposure trip to some homestays in Assam and Kolkatta. After attaining training along with nine other villagers in February 2014, Mr. Maipakchao volunteered to start his Maipakchao Family Homestay.

The homestay was started with four rooms and later, these rooms were given attached toilets & bathrooms in 2015 by spending around Rs. 20,000/- This was the only cost of establishing his homestay. Now, his homestay can easily accommodate ten people at a time as some rooms of his extended family members are also being used. As far as the charges are concerned, the Maipakchao Family Homestay is comparatively cheaper as compared to the nearby privately run Sendra Park & Resort by the Classic. Even though these accommodations are close and near the Loktak Lake, the homestay is charging only Rs. 1200/- per night per person including breakfast and both meals while the resort is charging Rs. 4000/- for the same (prices as in July 2018). As an owner of the homestay, his family is earning around Rs.30,000/- in a month on an average. So far, his homestay has hosted more than 500 domestic tourists and 200 plus international tourists of which he found domestic tourists to be more generous. The Maipakchao Family Homestay is yet to register in the Directorate of Tourism, Government of Manipur.

His homestay provides all the homely facilities available to his family and treats tourists just like a family member. In addition to the accommodation charges, tourists pay extra charges separately for exposure trips at their own depending on their choice of trips. According to the owner of the homestay, the best length of stay should be 2 nights and 3 days if one wants to fully enjoy all the features and activities of his homestay. Sometimes, tourists come for only one day or stayed for as long as two weeks. Activities and programmes for the tourists include enjoying panoramic views of the Loktak Lake, sunset views, floating ring *phumdi* (biomasses), etc. from top of the hill, boating in the Loktak Lake, witnessing fishing activities and observing tools and techniques of fishing, visiting floating huts, visiting INA museum, Keibul Lamjao (floating) National Park, Karang Island, and visiting nearby villages to observe village life, etc. On top of these, during the nights in his homestay, tourists get the experience/ local knowledge via conversation on various historical themes of the state and get entertained by sharing jokes. Another salient feature of his homestay is demonstration of unique attributes of Manipuri culture by local cultural troupe along with explaining the implicit meanings of each demonstration by the owner himself. Tourists enjoy demonstrations/ performances of *Pena* Song, *Leima Jagoi* (dance), *Mukna* (indigenous wrestling), *Pung Cholom*, *Thabal Chongba*, and a photo session in local costumes. The average expenditure of a tourist for all the above touring activities will be around Rs. 6000/- only. As an owner of the homestay, he often develops emotional relationships with the tourists and remains in touch with

the tourists who had visited his homestay. Many tourists have visited his homestay repeatedly for more than 3 or 4 times, and most of them are professional photographers or researchers.

His homestay maintains a register to keep the records of all the visitors and feedbacks of the tourists. He thinks that his homestay can cater to the needs and comfort of the tourists with exception of some tourist who are not clear on the concept of homestay. Tourists who visited his homestay become the agents of advertisement and promotion of the homestay when they wrote and share their experiences on print and social media. There was no personal effort from the owner of the homestay but recently a dedicated website (<http://www.loktaksweethomestay.com/>) has been opened by the LEDO for promotion of their homestays. LEDO (Loktak Eco-tourism Development Organisation) is a non-profit organisation which was conceptualized in April 2013 and got registered on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2013. Along with promoting homestay tourism/ rural tourism as a means to earn sustainable means of livelihood for the villagers in and around Loktak Lake, LEDO has been actively engaged in social services like organizing health camps, promoting a Polish technology to fight plastic/polythene wastes pollution in Loktak Lake, and conservation of nature by converting 'waste into wealth', etc. Maipakchao Family Homestay provides 2 percent of its earnings to LEDO as organisational share.

Through his homestay, in line with rural tourism, provides direct earning opportunities for his family members and also generates indirect jobs for around 50 individuals like boat owners, vehicle owners, artists, members of cultural troupes, fishermen, weavers, etc. He has not faced any major problem while running his homestay and his homestay has close association with local organisations, and has contact with local security forces and health practitioners at his personal level. Sometime, some travel agents and tour organizers from outside the state approach his homestay and do business. However, there is no formal contract with them and he has not agreed to any commission system. Mr. Maipakchao Oinam shared that he is gaining lots of respect and love from the fellow villagers as the proud owner of the homestay and, also due to his associated community-welfare oriented activities.

After the successful venture of Maipakchao Family Homestay, Loktak Eco-tourism Development Organisation (LEDO) launched the first 'Floating Homestay, Loktak Lake' on 18<sup>th</sup> April, 2018 and the organization is planning to establish at least ten such homestays in and around Loktak Lake to provide sustainable means of livelihood to villagers.<sup>19</sup> This new initiative of LEDO has huge potential for growth in future given the uniqueness of the venture. Boathouses are common in Indian tourism but 'floating homestays' on

the floating biomasses of a freshwater lake is very unique. It can be and must be projected as an USP of Manipur's tourism.

## 6. Some Policy Recommendations

Growing interest in the intangible culture of different societies like lifestyles, cuisine, ceremonies, music, religious beliefs, traditions, customs, and history among the tourists act as a strong attraction for the homestays located in far-flung rural areas. The unique intangible cultural heritages of Manipur can be attractions for international as well as domestic tourists. Therefore, homestays should be planned more in rural areas.

Homestays in and around Loktak Lake can be established but it has to be within the assessed carrying capacity of the lake.

Homestays can be a model 'Tourism Unit' which is private sector driven, community welfare oriented and Government regulated programme.

After imparting training, a section of the state police should be earmarked to act as 'tourist police' in line with the guidelines given in NTP, 2002. It can give a feeling of better security and safety especially among the prospect homestay tourists (who shall be staying in remote areas) that in return can help in the overall growth of tourism industry of the state.

A register of key homestays in Manipur should be maintained and published both in hard and soft copies, to be uploaded to an internet portal. Thus, creating an exclusive but integrated and interactive website for homestay tourism in Manipur can do wonders.

Potentials of Manipur's rivers remain untapped for the promotion of tourism. Harnessing the potential of rivers, special tourist boats from Imphal city to floating homestays on Loktak Lake via Nambul River can be presented as a unique tourism product and the same can be extended into proposed 'Loktak Tourism Cruise' in MTP, 2014. Thus, it can serve as another tourist attraction of the state.

Priority should be given to homestay as an alternative 'tourism unit' while preparing a comprehensive tourism policy of Manipur.

There is need for more research and database creation on potential and prospects of homestay tourism in Manipur in light of other states/ countries.

Although the State Tourism Directorate and concerned homestay owners have already initiated small steps, there is a serious need for promotion, publicity, and marketing of homestays in Manipur using larger platforms so to accentuate, more effectively, its existence to the prospect international and domestic tourists.

Exemption of taxes on homestay as non-commercial 'Tourism Unit' should be strictly followed and continued until it fully develops into a commercially viable programme.

More 'FLOATING HOMESTAYS', but within the carrying capacity and with all necessary precautions and regulations for protection and preservation of environment, should be established in and around Loktak Lake to form an USP (Unique Selling Proposition) of Manipur's tourism industry.

Homestays are ideal means of community participatory tourism if we look at the financial viability and commercial returns. This is in line with the guiding principles of investments in tourism development.

According to Manipur Tourism Policy, 2014 a new 'Tourism Unit' shall mean private commercial establishments providing public services/facilities in identified tourism destinations and the one which commences operation of the project on or after 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2014, with prior approval in writing from the State Government. The concerned clause of Manipur Tourism Policy, 2014 proposes consideration for providing incentives to the tune of 20% (subject to a ceiling of Rs 35.00 lakhs) for a new 'Tourism Unit' involving one crore rupees and above. However, given the very concept of homestay and the lesser amount of investment involved, this particular proposal in the policy will exclude homestays owners from getting any possible incentives from the Government's side. Thus, special consideration should be given for 'Homestays' as a special 'Tourism Unit' while setting criteria for providing incentives.

## 7. Concluding Remarks

Homestay can serve as linchpin of tourism industry in Manipur as it can truly harness the deep-rooted symbiotic relationship between tourism and reach cultural assets of Manipur. Homestay shall serve as an effective means of bringing 'social integration' of the region with the mainstream as it provides an opportunity for cultural exchange between the host society and visiting tourists. Development of homestays in the key tourist destinations of the state will enhance the competitiveness of Manipur as a tourist destination in national and international tourism map. Establishment of sustainable homestays in and around Loktak Lake and Keibul Lamjao National Park is an imperative not just for Manipur's tourism development but also for India's tourism development. The chosen destinations of Loktak Lake and its vicinity as priority area for homestay tourism development is a good decision in the sense that it can be in total synergy with other aspects of tourism like adventure tourism especially water sports, eco-tourism, cultural tourism, rural tourism, museum tourism, festival tourism, etc.

Owners of private homestays seem to be reluctant of government's intervention but this can be changed if a win-win partnership could be envisaged. Homestays are found to be low cost in terms of investment but giving handsome income in return. Homestay has a high employment generation potential as it creates various direct and indirect jobs and the benefits accrue

to the stakeholders. The multiplier effects and benefits of homestay tourism can be clearly seen percolating to all stakeholders and the people. Thus, homestay tourism should be promoted as a low-cost employment creation mechanism.

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## **Role of Supply Side Stakeholders in the Promotion of Ecotourism: A Study of Ecotourism Practices in Himachal Pradesh**

**Sagar Sood, Sarla Shashni & Aditi Kohli**

### **Abstract**

*Being composite in nature, ecotourism involves various stakeholders for its successful practice. Stakeholders are a group of individuals who are vital for the successful ecotourism development of any region. It may involve supply side stakeholders like local government, ecotourism operators, local people and community organizations and demand side stakeholders i.e. the tourists. Current study assesses the role of supply side stakeholders in promotion of ecotourism in Himachal Pradesh, a state in north western Himalaya. For this purpose, a field research was conducted in the October month of the year 2015, through in-depth interviews, interactions and observations with the operators/owners/managers of ecotourism units/operators/organizations in four districts i.e. Kullu, Kangra, Shimla and Solan of the state. The study was based on the pillars and principles of ecotourism given by Hetzer (1965) and Er (2010) respectively. Results revealed that the ecotourism units/organizations have emphasized on minimizing environmental impacts, generating respects towards local culture, providing maximum benefits to local people and maximizing tourist satisfaction. Also, the recommendations are made for supply side stakeholders for sustainable development of ecotourism in the state.*

**Keywords:** Ecotourism, Supply Side Stakeholders, Ecotourism Practices, North Western Himalaya.

### **1. Introduction**

According to Backman & Munanura, (2015), stakeholders are the key player in ecotourism while ensuring sustainable development. The International Ecotourism Society (TIES, 2015) defined ecotourism as 'responsible travel to natural areas that conserve environment, sustains wellbeing of the locals and involves interpretation and education which is meant for both host and guest. In ecotourism, major stakeholders are tourists, suppliers, local governments, accommodation providers, tourism agencies, local communities, NGOs, ecological groups, etc. (Dologlou, 2016). According to Ngila, (2009), majority of ecotourism activities are being carried out in the rural areas where, government agencies, community organizations (civil society) and private sector are involved in its planning and implementation. For its proper planning and implementation, involvement of

different stakeholders especially local communities is very vital in all the stages (Mowforth & Munt, 1998; Reid, 1999; Fennell, 1999; Scheyvens, 2002). Also, local communities' participation in ecotourism can only be achieved if they are centric in decision making process rather than indulging in the business operations (Mowforth & Munt, 1998; Fennell, 1999; Scheyvens, 2002). Bhuiyan, et al. (2011) described role of governments in tourism planning and management while private sector seeking government assistance to ensure its sustainability.

Ecotourism which is a component of sustainable tourism (Dawson, 2001) has developed into the fastest growing sector of the tourism industry (Kanjhal, 2008; Honey, 2008). The principle that separates ecotourism from conventional tourism is mainly education and sustainability component, ethical nature of involvement, livelihood generation to local people and a narrow base

<b>Sagar Sood</b>	G. B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment and Sustainable Development Himachal Regional Centre, Mohal-Kullu, Himachal Pradesh
<b>Sarla Shashni</b>	G. B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment and Sustainable Development Himachal Regional Centre, Mohal-Kullu, Himachal Pradesh
<b>Aditi Kohli</b>	Government Degree College, Kullu, Himachal Pradesh

(Hawkes & William, 1993; Blamey, 1995; Goodwin, 1996; Wallace & Pierce, 1996). It has grown tremendously in last two decades (Kontogeorgopoulos & Chulikavit, 2010) and has generated a great deal of interest from scholars, development organizations and practitioners (Gray, 2003; Fennel, 2002). It is multi-dimensional in nature (Narayan, 1998; Cirit & Thatte, 2008; Somarriba-Chang, 2010; Montaguti & Mingotto, 2015) and has been defined at times by various researchers as small-scale, sustainable, responsible, minimal impact, education, highly benefitable, local community oriented, dependence on parks and protected areas, contributes to conservation, interest in nature with elongated benefits, tool for biodiversity conservation, concurrent benefits to local ecosystems, positive guest host relationship, builds environmental and cultural awareness and respect, community conservation centric, alternate income source and environment awareness (Kutay, 1989; Ziffer, 1989; Fennell & Eagles, 1990; Valentine, 1993; Western, 1993; Brandon, 1996; Goodwin, 1996; Wallace & Pierce, 1996; Fennell, 2003; Stronza & Durham, 2008; McLaughlin, 2011; Sharma & Pradhan, 2011; Arts et al., 2012; Kiper, 2013; Wabnitz et al., 2018; Ebiloma & Ayodele, 2019).

According to United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), tourism is considered as vital contributor to job creation, poverty alleviation, environmental protection and multicultural peace and understanding across the globe (UNWTO, 2015). It is the fourth largest industry of the world after oil, chemicals and food (UNWTO, 2018). Tourism contributes 1.6 trillion US Dollars in exports, 10.4 % of World's GDP (direct, indirect and induced), 7% of World's Exports (UNWTO, 2018). In 2017, the tourism sector created 313 million jobs which is 9.9% of total employment generated throughout the World (WTTC, 2018). In 2018, the Travel & Tourism industry experienced 3.9% growth, compared to the global economy (3.2%). One in five new jobs were created by the industry over the last five years (WTTC, 2018). Globally, tourism is a trade, regarded as "an activity essential to the life of nations because of its direct effects on the social, cultural, educational and economic sectors of national societies and their international relations" (Cooper, 2008; Keller & Beiger, 2011; McCabe et al., 2011; Swanson & Edgell, 2013; Pratheep, 2017). The number of travelers around the world has reached up to 1.33 billion in 2017 (UNWTO, 2018). This development of tourism can increase pressure on natural resources (Sunlu, 2003). With the use of tourism resources in unsustainable way, there is always a risk of deterioration or even destruction of environment and indigenous culture (Romeril, 1985, 1998; Khah, et al., 2011). As long as ecotourism activities are undertaken in sustainable manner, it can include with in itself many forms of tourism like adventure, religious, heritage, wildlife, and cultural tourism (Agarwal et al., 2013).

The ecotourism policy formulated by Government of Himachal Pradesh in 2005 has encouraged a partnership between civil society (local community, NGOs, Eco-clubs, academic institutions) as well as private enterprises/businesses and state government departments of Forest, Tourism, Fisheries, Irrigation and Public Health, Power and Public Works Department (HPFD, 2019). This has encouraged the state government to partner with the tourism stakeholders in the state to run ecotourism units under the public private partnership (PPP) mode throughout the state. Although, the private sector has been continuously promoting and practicing the alternate forms of tourism in Himachal Pradesh since couple of decades. Therefore, this study has been formulated to throw the light on the role of supply sector in promotion and development of ecotourism in state and involves the visit and assessment of 12 ecotourism units/societies in Himachal Pradesh.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Study Area

The present study has been carried out in the Himachal Pradesh, a hilly state of North Western Indian Himalaya. It is the third largest state in the western Himalayan region and lies between latitude 31.1048° N and longitude 77.1734° E. It is located between the elevation of 450 to 7026 meters above mean sea level (amsl) (Sood et al., 2015). Being a mountainous state, it offers an array of tourism activities such as camping, hiking, trekking, angling, bird watching, rafting and various sites for cultural and religious visits. These forms of tourism can be found in all parts of the state.



**Figure 1:** Ecotourism sites/units/organizations selected for the study

To assess the role of stakeholder for promotion of ecotourism in the state, four districts of the states namely Kullu, Shimla, Kangra and Solan were selected. Criteria for the selection of sites were based on the inflow of the tourists and ecotourism locations under Public People Participation (PPP) mode. A total of 12 potential ecotourism sites/units/organizations (figure 1) by community organizations, private sector and under PPP mode were visited during the study period.

## 2.2. Data Collection

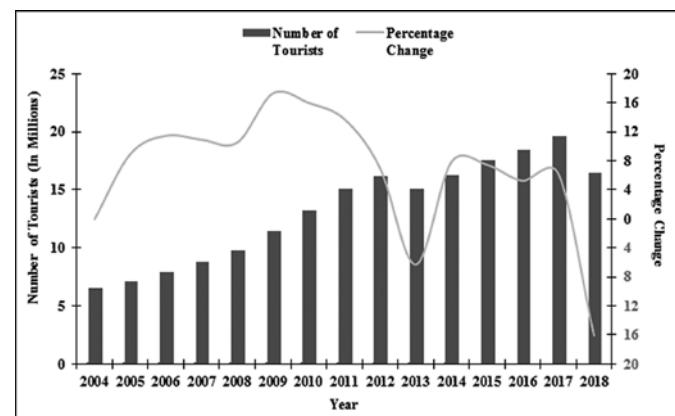
A wider approach was followed for the search of literature. The language was restricted to English only. The keywords used for search of related studies were tourism, ecotourism, sustainable tourism, forest, Himalayas, conservation, environment, culture and appropriate synonyms related to tourism, environment and conservation. To attain the firsthand knowledge about the role of stakeholders in ecotourism development in Himachal Pradesh a visitation to various ecotourism sites in Himachal Pradesh was done in the October month of year 2015. Semi structured interviews were also conducted with the ecotourism units' owners/managers. Apart from above, researchers used their individual knowledge to assess the ecotourism activities at the ecotourism units. The theme of the interview revolved around minimizing environmental impacts, respecting host culture, maximizing benefits for local community and maximizing tourist satisfaction.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. Results

#### 3.1.1. Tourism in Himachal Pradesh

As per the Economic and Statistics Department, Government of Himachal Pradesh, the tourism sector contributes to 6.6 per cent in the state Gross Domestic Product (GDP). According to Department of Tourism and Civil Aviation, for the year 2018-19, there is an allotment of INR 14387.21 lakh for development of Tourism in the state. In 2018, the tourist arrival in the state stands at 161 lakhs for domestic tourists and foreign tourist arrivals were 3.56 lakhs (DoTCA, 2019). Figure 2 represents tourist arrivals in Himachal Pradesh in last 15 years which has been continuously growing in the state. There was a dip in the number of tourists in the state in years 2013 and 2018 mainly due to natural calamities in Himachal Pradesh and neighboring state of Uttarakhand. At present about 3128 hotels are registered with the department of tourism and civil aviation in the state to accommodate tourist's inflow (DoTCA, 2019). To promote alternate tourism in the state, a new scheme "Nai Rahain, Nai Manjile" has also been announced by state government for development of virgin destinations with a budget provision of INR 50 crore (Economic Survey, 2018-19).



Source: Tourism and Civil Aviation Department, Himachal Pradesh

**Figure 2:** Tourists Flow in Himachal Pradesh and percentage change from previous years

#### 3.1.2. Ecotourism in Himachal Pradesh

In 2005, the Himachal Pradesh State Forest Department adopted an Ecotourism policy with the aim of making Himachal Pradesh a leading ecotourism destination by 2010 (Blanchard & Desbiolles, 2013). The main objective of this policy was to take tourism from over explored tourism destinations to less developed nature-based destinations, but with a sustainable approach. The policy was formulated keeping in mind ensuring adequate economic return and sustainable livelihood opportunities to the local communities of the state. The policy has been further revised on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2016 due to the procedural requirements of obtaining clearance of Eco-tourism sites under Forest Conservation Act, 1980 as per guidelines of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), Government of India (HPECOSOC, 2019). The revised policy focused on making the state a leading ecotourism destination by 2030, in which eco tourists would consist 10% of total tourists (Times of India, 2016). The objective of this scheme is to provide tourists an opportunity to live with the local community in their natural environment and provide local community an alternate source of income. After the revision of the policy in 2016, 79 sites were identified for promoting ecotourism and 50 have been allotted to Himachal Pradesh State Forest Development Corporation Limited (HPSFDCL) for developing them as nature camps. Out of these 50 sites, the HPSFDCL has already begun work on 35 sites (Facilitating Ecotourism in Himachal Pradesh, 2017). Table 1 represents the ecotourism units under Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode under ecotourism policy formulated by the forest department in 2005.

**Table 1: Ecotourism units' setup under PPP mode in Himachal Pradesh**

S. No.	Ecotourism Unit/ Organisation	Place	District
1	Camp Potter's Hill	Summerhill	Shimla
2	Ala Forest Rest House	Dalhousie	Chamba
3	Nature Treat	Kumarhatti	Solan
4	Pine Hills Eco Camps	Chewa	Solan
5	Sanawar Nature Camp	Sanawar	Solan
6	Aamod	Shoghi	Shimla

**Source:** H.P. Forest Department, 2019

Private sector/community groups can play an important role in promotion of ecotourism in the Himachal Pradesh. The stakeholders have developed a number of ecotourism units throughout the state. The stakeholders involved in the ecotourism sector are either working individually or are working as an organization. The selected private ecotourism units were represented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Ecotourism unit/organization setup by private sector in Himachal Pradesh**

S. No.	Ecotourism Unit/ Organisation	Place	District
1	Igloo Nature Camp	Sangla	Kinnaur
2	Sangla Valley Sustainable Development Society	Sangla	Kinnaur
3	Biodiversity Tourism & Community Advancement	Tirthan	Kullu
4	Ananda Project	Naggar	Kullu
5	Ecosphere Spiti	Kaza	Lahaul & Spiti
6	Institute for Environment Studies and the Science Awareness Trust	Pong	Kangra
7	The Judge's Court	Paragpur	Kangra
8	Himalayan Eco Lodge	Junga	Shimla
9	Himgiri Nature Retreat	Rajgarh	Sirmaur
10	Camp Himalayan	Gushaini	Kullu
11	Banjara Camp & Retreat	Sangla	Kinnaur
12	Banjara Retreat & Cottage	Shoja	Kullu
13	Banjara Orchard Retreat	Thanedar	Shimla
14	Lodge at Pong	Pong	Kangra
15	Clouds End Villa	Dharamshala	Kangra
16	Country Cottage, Tea Garden Resort	Palampur	Kangra

17	Giri Camps	Rajgarh	Sirmaur
18	Oakwood Hamlet	Shoghi	Shimla
19	Parkwood	Shoghi	Shimla
20	Nagri Resort	Nagri	Kangra

**Source:** Secondary sources

### **3.1.3. Role of stakeholders in ecotourism promotion in Himachal Pradesh:**

#### **3.1.3.1. Ecotourism sites selected for study in Himachal Pradesh**

The above described ecotourism sites/units/organization (table 1 & table 2) were studied using the help of secondary sources like literature, reports, websites, books, government policies and out of those 12 sites were selected for the field validation. These sites were widely spread in the four districts of the state namely Kullu, Shimla, Kangra and Solan. Out of total 12 sites, five units under PPP mode, 5 units operated by private sector and two community societies were selected for the study. Table 3 represents the ecotourism units visited by the researchers during the course of the study.

**Table 3: Visited ecotourism units in Himachal Pradesh**

S. No.	Ecotourism Unit/ Organisation	Ownership	Location
1	Biodiversity Tourism & Community Advancement	Community	Kullu
2	Ananda Project	Community	Kullu
4	Camp Potter's Hill	PPP	Shimla
5	Nature Treat	PPP	Solan
5	Pine Hills Eco Camps	PPP	Solan
6	Sanawar Nature Camp	PPP	Solan
7	Aamod	PPP	Shimla
8	Oakwood Hamlet	Private	Shoghi, Shimla
9	Parkwood	Private	Shoghi, Shimla
10	Nagri Resort	Private	Nagri, Kangra
11	The Judge's Court	Private	Kangra
12	Country Cottage, Tea Garden Resort	Private	Kangra

The study involved semi structured interviews with the ecotourism units' owners/managers. The questions revolved around the four components of ecotourism, first described by Hetzer, 1965 namely minimizing environmental impacts, respecting host cultures, maximizing the benefits to local people and maximizing tourist satisfaction (Weaver, 2001). Similar to above, the principles of ecotourism given by Er, 2010 namely, protection of natural and cultural heritage, empowerment

and financial benefits for local communities, minimum environmental impacts and respect for tourists.

#### 3.1.3.1.1. Minimizing environmental impacts:

Under the ecotourism policy of the state, the ecotourism units under PPP mode are setup on the forests lands (HPFD, 2017). A hectare land is given to ecotourism operators, on which no cemented structures are allowed to build. Figure 3 (a) represents the use of renewable materials for construction of mud cottage at Aamod, Shimla district. Moreover, not even a single tree is allowed to cut during the construction of unit. The units' setup by the private sector has also considered the minimal environment impact as their top priority. The farms of the private sector's ecotourism owners have been developed using organic farming. A special emphasis has been given on the solid waste management in all of the ecotourism units visited. The use of non-biodegradable materials has been minimal in all of the units. Also, the flora and fauna are also given an equal importance by the units' promoters. Figure 3 (b) represents the Country Cottage, Kangra district where the Royal Society of Bird Watching, London, has identified 108 species of birds.

#### 3.1.3.1.2. Respecting host culture

Hosts play an important role in development of tourism in any destination. The hosts showcase their unique cultural heritage to the guest community. The ecotourism units visited have closely knitted the host community component in its packages. The eco walks to the nearby villages have been the highlighted in most of the packages. Most of ecotourism units which may be under PPP/private sector serves the authentic local food which represents the food culture of the state. Figure 3(c) shows a local woman cooking food traditionally on a wood stove (*chulla*) for the guests at Judge's Court, Kangra district.

#### 3.1.3.1.3. Maximizing benefits to local people

Tourism which could be called sustainable, only if, it extends maximum of its benefits to the local people. Following this principle of sustainable tourism, the ecotourism operators studied have been local community centric. Most of the ecotourism units studied have employed the local people as their supporting staff. The civic society has played an important role in promotion of ecotourism in the state. The NGOs which represents the civic society in this study has very well webbed the local people to get associated in tourism industry of their region. Biodiversity Tourism and Community Advancement (BTCA), a community-based NGO of Kullu district has formulated 55 women self-credit groups (WSCG's) which are mainly associated in activities like making processed foods, local handicrafts, medicinal plants propagation. Along with it 185 male members of society are directly linked with the tourism industry of the valley in form of porters, nature guides, cooks etc. Figure 3(d) depicts the members of BTCA society during

a training programme. Similarly, Ananda Project, a community-based organization located at Naggar village of Kullu district has also been involved in ecotourism activities. The organization is running number of projects like conserving environment, awareness of ecological issues, encouraging cooperation and assisting local people in generation of alternative source of income. The organization is the voluntarily contribution of *Kulvians* and tourists alike (Singh, 2004). Figure 3(e) shows a 5000 years old Krishna temple adopted by Ananda, Kullu district.

#### 3.1.3.1.4. Maximizing tourist satisfaction:

Tourist satisfaction is the ultimate goal of any tourism operator. The basic principle of ecotourism involves the equal participation of guest and host communities. Every ecotourism unit which has been studied is following this principle of ecotourism. The tourists actively participate in every activity in which they are involved. The operators give uttermost importance to the guest satisfaction. A proper feedback is taken from the tourists and if there is any lacking from the hosts side, a proper redressal of the same is made. Figure 3(f) represents the interview with the ecotourism operator on tourists' satisfaction.



**Figure 3(a): Mud Cottage Built at Aamod, Shimla**



**Figure 3(b): Country Cottage at Palampur, Kangra**



**Figure 3(c):** Local Woman Cooking Food on Chulla, Kangra



**Figure 3(f):** Interview with ecotourism operator

### 3.2 Discussion

The pillars of ecotourism (Hetzler, 1965) and principles of ecotourism (Er, 2010) formulated the foundation of the current study. The study revolved around 4 broad themes involving minimal environmental impacts, respect towards local culture, maximum benefits to local communities and enhanced tourists' satisfaction. With the increase in number of tourists, the pressure on environment has been increasing with a great pace. Thus, minimizing the environmental impacts is very important. This formulates the basis of ecotourism, on ground of which it operates. In the present study, every ecotourism entity involved in the study has been doing its best on minimal environmental impacts. The government has formed stringent rules for the protection of flora and fauna in the PPP ecotourism sites. Similarly, the private sector is also doing their best for the conservation of environment, which can sustain the tourism resources for the future.

Host culture is an integral part in promotion of tourism at any destination. The indigenous culture differentiates a destination from any other destinations. Every ecotourism entity studied has been closely related to the local culture of that particular vicinity. The operators have developed their ecotourism units in such a way that is perfectly amalgams with the individual areas culture. The guest community is served with local food which is mostly cultivated organically in the farms of the tourism operators or the villages nearby. Therefore, the host culture has been perfectly served by host communities to guest community along with its authenticity.

Tourism will be called sustainable, if it provides maximum of its benefits to local people. The studied entities have given uttermost importance to this principle. The NGOs associated in tourism industry have made the local people a key stakeholder in the tourism development in their particular destinations. Whereas, the ecotourism setup under PPP mode and privately-owned ecotourism units, have employed the local people in their respective



**Figure 3(d):** BTCA Society Members During Meeting, Banjar



**Figure 3(e):** Krishna temple adopted by Ananda, Kullu

units. Correspondingly, the government gives preference to the bonafide Himachalis in allotment of forest land for ecotourism units. Moreover, under the ecotourism policy of the state, the financial benefits are also provided to bonafides of Himachal Pradesh. The public sector and private sector are equally putting their efforts to provide local people a platform for being centric in ecotourism development in the state.

The tourism stakeholders do all the hard work to achieve higher degree of tourist satisfaction. Tourist satisfaction is a very important part of a tourism process because increased tourist satisfaction can increase tourist demand at any destination. Ultimately, it can help stakeholders in reaping higher financial benefits. The ecotourism entities studied throughout the four districts have emphasized on providing higher tourist satisfaction.

#### 4. Conclusion

Himachal being a mountain state holds an ample opportunity to be promoted as an ecotourism destination. It covers all the necessary ingredients of ecotourism like landscape, flora, fauna, culture, tradition, and opportunities for different tourism activities. These indigenous features of the state can help in promotion as an ecotourism hotspot both nationally and internationally with the involvement of all stakeholders. Stakeholders involvement is a major aspect in ecotourism development while ensuring minimum environmental impact, positive host guest relationship, maximum benefit to locals and tourists' satisfaction. With the proper implementation of Ecotourism Policy of the state, the mass tourists could be directed towards the other potential ecotourism destinations of the state. Through this, the benefits generated through tourism could be spread to the stakeholders throughout the state. Ultimately, with involvement of supply side stakeholders at centric position in ecotourism development may boost the ecotourism industry of the state many folds.

#### 5. Recommendations

Tourism, if properly planned and managed can be used as a potential tool for poverty alleviation, community advancement, biodiversity conservation and culture preservation. This can only be achieved with promotion of sustainable tourism i.e. ecotourism with the involvement of wide array of stakeholders in its implementation. On the basis of our current study following recommendations are made;

- a. State Government should formulate more policies for Ecotourism development in the state
- b. The proper rules and regulations should be there to regulate tourism activities in state.
- c. Involvement of local people in tourism activities to make them economically empowered.
- d. Focus should be more on positive guest host relationship to upsurge tourism.

e. Development of ecotourism site in any specific location should be in collaboration and with the involvement of local communities.

f. Education and awareness about the ecotourism regulation among locals should be made prior to developmental activities.

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# **Examining the Status and Possibilities of Rural Tourism in India**

**Suneel Kumar & Anjali Gupta**

## **Abstract**

*Aim of the study- Rural tourism is an integral component of tourism though has not made remarkable achievement in terms of figures but carries immense potential with the increasing trend and changing taste and preferences of stakeholders. Thus, the study looks around the concept of rural tourism its scope, associated benefits and stakeholders involved in the process and try to assess the current efforts taken in this direction, potential impediments hindering its growth along with SWOT analysis of rural tourism industry followed by suggestions based on the analysis.*

*Research methodology- To complement the study, exploratory analyses has been adopted. For such purpose various secondary sources have been referred including reputed journals, newspaper articles, websites and national & international published reports.*

*Findings- The study conducted explored dimensions of rural tourism which includes multiple niche tourism products. Rural tourism act as an engine for growth in rural areas by accelerating the employment opportunities thus it is helpful in reducing the income distribution gap. Though recognizing the potential of rural tourism various efforts have been made including launching of schemes and promotional events like Swadesh Yojana Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana, Swachh Tourist Destination, and Paryatan Parv etc. but lacks holistic effort in this regard. In addition, carries potential threat to its sustainability and competition from other Asiatic giants in attracting potential tourists. To make efforts count government need to fill existing gaps that exist in terms of ineffective marketing strategy, lag in requisite skills, stringent legislation norms, communication gap and trust issues involved.*

*Future implication- By analyzing the current footing of rural tourism in India the study highlights the areas and various measures that can be considered to create benchmark in tourism industry.*

*Suggestions- Effective online and offline marketing strategy tailored as per the target market needs through better understanding of target market latent need combined with offline promotion through organization fairs and festivals, training and workshops to build the skill set of rural people, vocational language courses, liberal legislation, seminar, session local population participation, to encourage greater participation, creating awareness through communication of benefits associated on radio and television, improved financial assistance and infrastructure building, access to tools and equipment and continuous monitoring and review of schemes implemented can help in overcoming the identified gaps.*

**Keywords:** Rural Tourism, SWOT, SAGY, VLC

## **1. Background, Introduction and Rationale of the Study**

The monotonous, uncolorful, fast pacing, time bound and technology surrounded life of people has unleashed their desire to free themselves from such limitations, get out and explore the natural, open area surroundings coated with essence and flavor of culture and traditions.

Rural tourism paves the way to satisfy the burgeoning need of the urban population. Also, the trend of greater portion of income directed towards spending on leisure and travelling, rural tourism can harness such trend and convert it into profitable opportunity. Though rural tourism competes with other forms of urban tourism but since rural areas are known to be identified for their intactness from the rest of world away from large forms

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**Suneel Kumar** Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Shaheed Bhagat Singh College, University of Delhi, Delhi.  
**Anjali Gupta** Research Scholar, Faculty of Management Studies, University of Delhi, Delhi.

of modernization and urbanization, still dependent on traditional means and methods to deploy their day to day activities adds simplicity and austerity to it.

Regional dialects, forms of art, cuisines, folks, dances, colors, music, festivals, clothing/ ethnic wear, and rituals indeed commute the diversity that India has to offer. Call it Spiti Valley of Himachal Pradesh famous for Buddhist monasteries, yak safaris, its cultural performance or Sundarbans in West Bengal (UNESCO World Heritage Site) made up of 102 islands where inhabitant rely on natural means to ensure their survival or Malana village in Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh is known for its own democracy or Bishnoi village near Jodhpur famous for its aroma of distinct Rajasthan's culture, opium ceremony, folk dance and villagers harmonious nature depicted by their practice of burying their dead (instead of burning them as a ritual in Hindu religion) to preserve trees as wood is used in cremation etc, each destination gives tourist a different taste to explode their taste bud and satisfy their craving for peace. India whose heart lies in its rural living and its traditional values uncovers a whole new chapter for the urban folks to learn, experience and unite themselves with the real beauty of India.

This facet of tourism for India has come along with it as a blessing because with industrialization/ urbanization phase not yet timed out, India still carries a sanctuary of rural wonders with it. India's landscape consists of around 66% of population reside in its 6.5 lakh villages. Identification, presentation and promotion of rural areas in the tourist's platter will not only offer materialistic reward in terms of income generation avenues, domestic source of living for local population but in a way will also assist in preserving the culture, traditions, uniqueness, beauty and nature prone to distant form urbanization thereby losing their own distinct identity. This paper accompanying various research conducted in this domain aims at exploring the potential of rural tourism in India by widening the understanding of rural tourism, various forms, identification of basic instrument acting as lubricant for fueling the demand, initiatives undertaken by government in this regard, identification of existing weeds hampering the rural tourism crop, followed by recommendation to eradicate such weeds.

## 2. Review of Literature

Rathore, (2012) assesses the impact of rural tourism by undertaking secondary data analyses along with this list out the possible barriers that act as an obstacle in growth of rural tourism followed by suggestions to overcome such challenges. Kaurav & Kaur et.al. (2013) scrutinizes the pros and cons attach to rural tourism and evaluate the impact of rural tourism by understanding what goes into development of rural tourism. Also identifies opportunities that rural tourism embodies by involving rural people in such activities. Khound (2013) the study adopted both primary and secondary data analysis to

identify the constraints and prospects of rural tourism in three villages of Assam. Due to eminent history, strong culture it acts as a prominent rural tourism spot but faces constraint with respect to language problem, insufficient financial support, lack of training as major constraints. Effective promotion and awareness schemes can help in overcoming the identified constraints. Singh & Narban (2015) depicts that an updated view on the recent developments and growth in the area of rural tourism by recognizing government initiatives and rural tourist spot along with their USP's. By promoting rural tourism not only new jobs will be created but will also bring halt to rush to urban cities for job and add diversification to the tourism industry in India. D.V, Reddy.S, & Shilpa (2016) undertakes secondary data analysis to identify various forms of rural tourism and how effective participation by government and private sectors can transform the industry and also spot the potential of rural tourism to spread environmental awareness by bringing tourist close to nature which may build environmental conscious attitude among visitors. Kapur (2016) identified the prospects of rural tourism by exploring the framework of rural tourism in India and the benefit that it offers to nation in terms of income generation, reducing the divide and boosting employment. The study is also accompanied by measure that can be taken to exploit its potential. Singh & Gantait, et. al. (2016) envisages into the scope of rural tourism by dwelling into the needs, benefits rural tourism offers followed by the challenges faced and marketing strategies to overcome challenges. Being new concept, it has the potential to reap benefits in India through financial and social wellbeing by employing effective marketing communication strategies.

## 3. Research Objectives

Rural tourism is not a new concept especially in context of India and it has gained popularity with the rampant industrialization and urbanization touching vast areas and population. The present research paper aims at scrolling various sources to achieve below enlisted objectives:

- ❖ To examine the stakeholders involvement their benefits and scope of rural tourism.
- ❖ To know about the current status, government initiatives and challenges faced in building rural tourism potential underlying the landscape of tourism in India.
- ❖ To undertake SWOT analysis of rural tourism in India and suggest measure to make industry more attractive to stakeholders.

## 4. Research Methodology

To accomplish the said objectives, secondary data was found to be an excellent source. Exploratory analysis has been run via collecting data from reputed journals, tourism ministry website, reports and articles were

collected and analyzed to fulfill said objectives. To have a better and in-depth understanding of the rural tourism industry, a SWOT analysis, acronym for Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat was conducted. This analysis is critical so as to determine whether there exists any potential for rural tourism to be developed in the country and what are the challenges and threats the industry might encounter if it continues on the path. A policy document analysis has been carried out to explore the various schemes and initiatives which have been undertaken by the government for the development and promotion of rural tourism in India.

## 5. Rural Tourism- An Overview

Rural tourism roots itself lies in the way of living, serene beauty, and the natural ambience engulfing rural area. Essence particular to rural area forms major offering in case of rural tourism. Such areas are characterized by unique activities, traditions, culture, beliefs, values, natural surroundings, local cooperation, trust, warmth, farms, lands, mountains etc. which makes them unique from others. It has been argued that all forms of tourism in rural area cannot be termed as rural tourism since rural tourism collaborate all sorts of activities that distinctively represent the rural life. Thus, any form of tourism that is urban in nature and is offered in rural areas is essentially not rural tourism. Thus, forces that strive together to depict the rural form of art, culture, living, ethics and heritage which one can't associate with urban embellishment concludes rural form of living. Rural tourism can thus be defined as a form of tourism that take place in rural areas characterized by sparsely populated area, predominant natural environment wherein locals rely on activities dependent on nature as a major source for living; showcasing the rural life, activities and events, art, culture and rich heritage specific to that location. Rural tourism is essentially an activity which takes place in the countryside allowing tourist to personally participate in day to day chores, thereby offering a sense of personalized touch and belongingness with the place and people.

### 5.1 Scope of Rural Tourism

Rural tourism is multi-faceted concept that can be bifurcated into various niche tourism products. This includes cultural tourism, adventure tourism, farm/agricultural tourism and eco-tourism.

❖ **Agricultural Tourism:** Agricultural activity generally forms the primary source of income for most of people in rural areas thus, agriculture, farming forms a major part of activities that rural folks are indulge in. Thus, it carries potential to be distinctively offered as a product wherein attraction is built over farms. Such kind of tourism involves operational farms engaging in tourism activities that automatically supplements their agricultural income. It generally

involves activities like farm hosting, farm stays etc. This concept has not yet been fully materialized in India despite of having huge resource. Effective packaging, promotion, development of infrastructure and training can help in boosting tourism and strengthening farmer's economic position as well.

- ❖ **Cultural Tourism:** Culture is a phenomenon which is distinct to any area or group of people in any area. This entails the lifestyle of people, their art, traditions, indigenous cultural communities, architecture and other elements specific to that location. Culture is strand that takes over and is displayed in each and every aspect of one's living. Wherein culture has in some form diluted and has become standardized in urban areas this is something that is portrayed as main attraction for tourist to explore. It also includes monuments, theatres, historic remains, archeological sites etc. that in some way are representative of distinct culture. Promotion of rich culture and heritage of rural India can further lead to solidification of cultural identity and satisfying the cultural needs of tourists.
- ❖ **Adventure Tourism:** Adventure means visiting to some unusual place that is exciting and dangerous. Adventure tourism is a kind of niche tourism which involves some sort of risk and also requires specialized skills. It means visiting to challenging places and involves lot of fun and thrills. Free fall, climbing, zip lining are of some of the types which falls in the category of adventure tourism. The scope of adventure tourism is very wide as it includes ecotourism, disaster tourism, ethno tourism, etc.
- ❖ **Eco Tourism:** Rural areas generally find close connection with the nature which is generally depicted by their activities and abundant natural flora, fauna, fisheries, wildlife and undisturbed natural areas. Industrialization and modernization in urban areas has taken the opportunity for urban folks to appreciate and enjoy the natural beauty. This instills motivation and force to explore, learn and develop environmental consciousness. This responsible travelling to natural areas conserving the environment adds to the wellbeing of local people. There are various spots that have been identified and promoted as eco tourist spot adding significant contribution to revenue generated from tourism.

### 5.2 Stakeholders Involvement and their Benefit from Rural Tourism

Rural tourism can be propounded as a double edge sword as it creates employment opportunity for the rural masses thereby preventing the large exodus to glittery urban areas. Thus, it ensures economic and social wellbeing of the individuals and act as a key determinant in the development of rural areas by enhancing its contribution to overall nation's GDP. Additionally, the monotonous

lifestyle of urban population has accentuated their need to liberate themselves from the dwells of fixed four walls, pollution and stressed life and rejuvenate their life wherein rural tourism provides an excellent medium to cater such growing needs of the present generation to "counter urbanization" syndrome/ who rarely ever have had such experience. Thus, technically it carries the potential to improve rural productivity, creates employment, equitable distribution of wealth, and ensures conservation of the rural environment, conservation of culture and preservation of heritage, supplements primary income, empowerment of community, develops environment consciousness. By offering various benefits rural tourism paves the way for sustainable development of the area. It involves minimal exploitation of natural reserves of village and maximum efforts in preservation of culture. Various stakeholders that form part of rural tourism comprise of local population including farmer, artisans, craftsman, textiles and weavers, guides, accommodation provider and food suppliers.

## 6. Rural Tourism in India: Present Status and Trend

India's landscape consists of around 66% of population reside in its 6.5 lakh villages thus through promoting and construction of effective rural tourism infrastructure and identification of potential destination can eventually lead to makeover of rural areas socially and economically. As per WTCC report (2018) India is going to be third largest tourism economy in 10 years by adding nearly 10 million jobs in tourism sector and forecast of increase in international tourist arrival by 5.5% p.a. by 2028 thus indicating the strong potential of tourism industry in India. Tourism industry contributes 9.4% of current GDP (2017) and is estimated to grow with compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 9.72%. Tourism growth potential can be harnessed for development and promotion of unique rural tourism offering. As per the data available (2011) 153 rural tourism projects in 28 States/Union Territories have been sanctioned by the Ministry of Tourism including 36 rural sites where UNDP has supported for capacity building. The report identified rural tourist destination within each state along with the unique selling proposition (USP) that each rural destination has to offer. In total 172 districts have been identified as rural tourism destination over PAN India. Along with this additional 52 rural tourism sites had been commissioned by ministry of tourism. USP's identified under the report indicates major USP that India bags with it which comprises of adventure tourism, eco-tourism, heritage, folkdance, spiritual and art & craft. Although the success rate of such projects were found to be 0.37% accompanied with low tourist arrival as per the report of ministry of tourism on 'Evaluation cum Impact Study of Rural Tourism Projects' (2011) and allocated lack of marketing and advertising as critical reason for low tourist arrival and lack of financial assistance, software

and selection of good projects as other main reason for failure of projects implemented.

### 6.1 Major Initiatives taken by Government

- ✖ **Rural Tourism Scheme:** Ministry of tourism launched "rural tourism scheme" for infrastructural development of rural areas. It aimed at encouraging the adoption and implementation of projects based on the proposal submitted by states along with providing financial assistance upto Rs. 50 lakhs under the scheme. The activities supported under the scheme consists of overcoming the infrastructural gaps by improving the surroundings through fencing, landscaping, development of park, improving the connectivity through building roads, improving solid waste management, sewage management, construction of amenities, procurement of equipment requisite for various forms of rural tourism as in cases of adventure tourism, water sports, ecofriendly mode of transportation, tourists accommodation, refurbishment of monuments, signage, reception and other activities related to tourism.
- ✖ **Village Level Council (VLC):** Village level council is a forum which provides the local people to participate and interact in the local community development by participating in work plan implementation. Such initiative is likely to smooth the implementation of project by weeding out the possible impediments that can be encountered while implementing projects through local community involvement and thereby increasing the probability of its success.
- ✖ **Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY):** Honorable Prime Minister launched the Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) in 2014. The scheme was launched to aim at developing the rural areas through social and cultural development. Yojana aimed to bring all members of parliament under one roof by making each member to choose one village and take responsibility for the development of village into a model village (*Adarsh Gram*) through proper implementation of various schemes and undertaking indigenous initiatives focal at the holistic development of village by improving the physical and institutional infrastructure. Development of successful model village will indeed help in replicating the model in other villages. Projects undertaken and implemented under this Yojana has shown significant improvement on various social, human and economic development indicators including landmark success on fronts like Open Defecation Free (ODF), 100 % immunization, no malnutrition, improved farmers access with soil health cards, internal village roads, women self-help group, household electrification etc. The Yojana envisages expanding its frontier to touch and improve the living of rural population. Overcoming the basic infrastructural constraint under this Yojana

- essentially act as a major determinant in making rural tourism much more attractive option for the tourist. Lacks of proper facilities, muddy roads etc. are some of the infrastructural constraints that rural areas encounter. Also, infrastructural facilities are much likely factors influencing tourist purchase of product. By improving the quality of life it improves the social wellbeing of locals thus again will influence the tourist experience. Promotion of rural tourism based on their USPs can be accompanied with success achieved on various development fronts
- ❖ **Swadesh Darshan Yojana:** In order to attract large number of tourists, government launched Swadesh Darshan Yojana in 2015. The scheme is targeted at formulation of theme based tourist circuits which basically involves different tourist destinations on its route thus acts as a motivating factor for tourist who have entered the circuit to complete the circuit. Under the scheme tribal and rural circuit has also been identified. Nagaland, Chhattisgarh, Telangana and Bihar have been selected for forming tourist circuit defined under tribal and rural theme in 2018. Under the scheme financial assistance shall be released for development of tourist relates services (roadways and transport facility, cloak rooms, ATM facility, Wayside amenities, Solid waste management, Wi-Fi connectivity etc.), infrastructure (restoration of historic monuments, construction of craft haats, water supply, sewerage, acquisition of tourism related equipment etc.) and capacity development, skill development and knowledge management through short term courses. The scheme holds great potential for building the capacity of rural tourism by formulation of circuit. Various rural destinations can get greater exposure through greater direction of efforts by government in this regard. The proposed circuits are coated with a theme to enhance its attraction for tourists as some of them are shown in the image below
- ❖ **Swachh Tourist Destination (Swachh Bharat Mission):** Swachh Bharat Mission, superlative programme launched with the objective to reorient thinking of masses including youngsters as well as elders to be a responsible citizen and take initiative and pride in keeping surroundings and public places clean. Under the mission, special initiative has been undertaken to clean up 100 iconic heritages, spiritual and cultural places in the country. Development of 'Swachh Tourist Destination' will enhance the magnetism of such destination for tourist and might help in multiplying the revenues by increasing the footfall. Its potential for rural areas has not yet been analyzed. The model has been developed for destinations that are iconic for its heritage, spirituality and cultural context.
- ❖ **Digital Village or Digi Gaon (Digital India Drive):** Digital India an ambitious objective of India to made the government services available electronically to citizens by improving the digital infrastructure. It also includes plans to improve the connectivity of rural areas by building appropriate infrastructure for high speed internet networks. Government brought the objective in limelight by introducing 'Digital Village' or 'Digi Gaon' programme aimed at providing telemedicine, education and skills through digital technology. This also involves developing efforts like equipping villages with solar lights, LED's, Wifi choupal to transform these villages into self-sustained villages with all requisite infrastructure in place. This project falls under Bharat Net Project which aims to connect 2.5 lakh villages through high speed optical fiber network. Government visible efforts in this direction can ripe sustainable fruits for rural tourism by improving the literacy level can encourage entrepreneurial ventures by building the capacity and developing the skill. The digital friendly environment in remote areas for tourists can prove to be a crucial asset in attracting and retaining tourists.

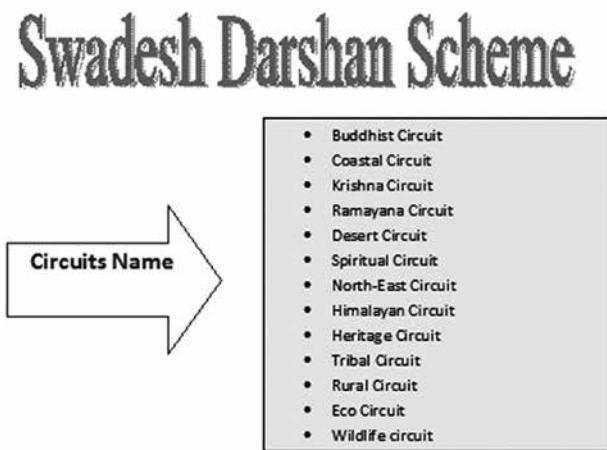


Figure 1: Swadesh Darshan Scheme

## 6.2. Marketing Initiatives Undertaken by Government

Besides providing financial assistance and improving the structural functioning of rural areas government has undertaken various marketing initiatives on its level to expand the horizon and attract more tourist. Government launched 'Explore Rural India' sub brand under 'Incredible India Brand' to give a kick start to rural tourism. Organization of various fairs at national and international level such as World Travel Mart (WTM), International Travel Bourse (ITB) Berlin, Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) etc. the world's principal tourism forums. Involvement of artisans in cultural fests like Dilli Haat, Mega Craft Mela etc. Organized India@60 event in Singapore showcased talent of eight selected skilled artisans from rural areas in order to gain exposure

to competitive offerings by world. Recently ministry of tourism launched Paryatan Parv in 2017 covering 31 states and union territory wherein the main focus laid on showcasing the diversity, benefits of tourism, creating awareness and reinforcing tourism vibes. The theme of Paryatan Parv 2018 was based on three main components Dekho Apna Desh, Tourism for All and **Tourism & Governance**. Cultural performances, food festivals, display of art handicrafts and tourism heritage walk were some of the highlights of the programme. Moving to a specific market, product oriented tourism government launched 'Incredible India 2.0 Campaign' thereby focusing on niche tourism like Heritage Tourism, Adventure Tourism etc.

## 7. Factors Hindering Growth Potential of Rural Tourism

To an extend various initiatives taken were mainly targeted at improving the infrastructural and associated facilities in rural areas which definitely concrete the base over which other possibilities can be explored but along with building sound infrastructure various other social and behavioral factors also play their part in determining the attractiveness of rural tourism and above analysis also points out unexplored potential of rural tourism yet to be materialized. This consists of the following:

- ❖ Improper marketing initiatives: Current efforts undertaken by government to improve the status of rural areas by developing basic infrastructure can be effectively materialized only when complemented with appropriate marketing efforts. Government has not focused on this dimension essential for boosting rural tourism in India. No concrete rural tourism centered marketing plan is under visualization while the implemented efforts like organization of Mela have not significantly improved rural tourism statistics.
- ❖ Lack of Awareness: As the rural artisans and vendors are not fully aware of the potential that rural tourism can bring to them they show relatively less interest and resistance in participating in tourism activities which can enhance their economic capacity and improve their living.
- ❖ Lack of appropriate skill: Literacy levels are found to be critically low in rural areas which are essential for building the entrepreneurial capacity. Such forces act as a constraint in developing potential of rural tourism. Improved literacy level can facilitate them to acquire skills and initiate their own venture complementing tourism industry. Tourism agencies, accommodation providers, guides services are bound to rise with increased attractiveness and marketing of rural tourism.
- ❖ Government legislation: Licensed accommodation units are required to pay taxes to the government

and as per this legislation rural marketers find it difficult to comply with the legislation as it reduces profitability and thus incentive to carry out such activities.

- ❖ Lack of communication skills/ communication difficulty: As the rural areas have their own regional dialects, difference in the medium of communication bound to disrupt the exchange of information and sharing of experience between the rural operators and tourists.
- ❖ Lack of trained personnel: Under tourism and hospitality industry, the hospitality acts as a major factor influencing tourist experience. Lack of skill in this regard poses a potential determinant restraining the growth of rural tourism in India.
- ❖ Skeptic local involvement: Generally rural people enjoy their close tied community and do not feel the need to associate with outsiders or displays lack of trust on others. Diluted local involvement can also be perceived as distinct factor hindering its potential.
- ❖ Marginalized asset: Agricultural tourism is still found lagging in terms of its share in total tourism. Insufficient infrastructure, financial assistance, lack of incentive to indulge in tourism activities, lack of support in grooming up skill has led to marginalized/ surfaced condition of agro tourism in India.
- ❖ Lack of governance/ foresightedness: The assessment and continuous monitoring of the scheme launched is essential to gauge the ground reality check and identify areas of improvement and alternatives available. Various initiatives have been taken but its impact specifically in terms of its impact on rural areas and tourism parameters has not been assessed and analyzed.

## 8. SWOT Analysis of Rural Tourism in India

A prerequisite in developing future course of action involves inspection of current position and identifying control areas. SWOT analysis is a tool that not only helps in identification of its strategic position by looking into strength and weakness but also identifying areas that can be capitalized and potential areas of threats. Wherein strength and weakness can be attributed to factors within control (internal factors) while opportunities and threats can be caused due to external factors. Planning can only be successful if it is done keeping in mind the strength and weaknesses of the organisation. Planning would only be fruitful if it helps in tapping the potential opportunities in the market while mitigating the possible threats which might be harmful. SWOT analysis does exactly the needful. It helps in understanding the possible ways to tap the opportunities present or that would appear in due course on the basis of one's strength while keeping in mind the weaknesses and potential threat which may arise in the near future. The following table explores the

strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats of rural tourism industry in India-

**Table 1 SWOT Analysis - Rural Tourism**

Strengths	Weakness's
Rich landscape and Natural beauty Affordable access to area Indigenous culture and traditions Quiet environment E tourist visas Increase government financial assistance in Building Digi villages and Working through sewage and sanitation facilities Increasing investment support 100% FDI allowed	Lack of communication skill Inadequate sanitation Unidentified tourism potential Lack of trained and experienced personnel Inadequate marketing Low internet and ATM penetration Limited accommodation and transport facility Lack of awareness Government legislation Skeptic local involvement Marginalized asset
Opportunities	Threats
Tap burgeoning growth in tourism sector Attract private investments Increase motivation to travel and explore natural surroundings Advent of affordable technology solutions	Loss of vegetation garden and agricultural land Loss of traditional culture Competition faced from neighboring countries Expected fall in foreign investment

India's dynamic rural topography consisting of lucrative eco, adventure sites and rich cultural heritage can act as determinant factor in stimulating impetus and capitalizing the increased tourist diverging interest. Government consistent efforts in making tourism industry lucrative via putting various schemes in place to overcome existing infrastructural constraints, creating circuits; allowing 100% FDI, introduction of E visas can pave the way for increase tourist arrival and exploiting greater share in total capital investments. WTTC report forecast decrease share in total national investment over a decade by 0.2% thereby raising alarm for India. Thereby measures underlying promotion and effective marketing can help in boosting and complementing the growth in tourism industry. Increased competitive edge and foreign exchange earnings can help in sourcing possible technology solutions and implementing them as cost effective means in improving the infrastructure. Branding of government initiative 'Digi Gaon' can help in further attracting investments. But the constraints faced on ground reality comes in form of lack of communication skills, lack of infrastructural support, limited transportation and accommodation facilities, unidentified hidden potential, lack of awareness, inadequate marketing mix, application of same tax

brackets in rural areas, lack of trained personnel and low education level. Bringing transformation at ground level can uphill India's competitive position and beating the competition faced from other Asiatic giants. WTTC reports China as most powerful country in travel and tourism and is expected to maintain its position while India ranks third on same parameters. Targeting and overcoming the weakness through introduction of sustainable strategies will not only help in facing stiff competition but preventing degradation and protecting its distinct culture.

## 9. Conclusion and Suggestions

Retrieving the roots of rural India, rural tourism allows tourist to explore the unheard stories, culture, warmth, natural escape, lands and rich heritage of rural areas. Rural tourism understood as travelling to rural areas can be further classified based on what treasures such area has to offer thus it expands its roots and majorly comprise of niche products like eco, agro, cultural and adventure tourism. tedious, monotonous, routine urban life, increasing urban population density, lesser job opportunity, competitiveness, lack of natural reserves act as prime motivators responsible for 'urbanization syndrome'. In order to fuel the demand generated, as estimated and compressed in WTTC report, accelerating the efforts in creating a market oriented offering is need of hour. Recognizing its potential government initiated its efforts in promotion of rural tourism by identification rural tourism sites and implementation of projects. Witnessing sluggish growth in tourist arrival and low success rate various reforms targeting equipping rural destination with essential infrastructure were undertaken. The most popular scheme being Swadesh Darshan Yojana extensively promoted for formulation of tourist circuits to essentially improve tourist arrival and provide them with enriching experience by meeting all their needs along route through creation of infrastructure. Other initiatives include Rural Tourism Scheme, Digital Village, Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana, Swach tourist destination to complement its effort in this direction whereas on marketing front various exhibitions, fairs and melas are organized Partyatan Parv being one of them. Though India enjoys rich heritage, one of favorable destination to explore rural vibes but carries potential threat from neighboring countries thereby hitting its potential investment block. Overcoming various constraints faced including lack of awareness, communication skill, basic infrastructure and communication strategy can twin fold the yield. Too much concentrated efforts might not reap visible efforts need to be complemented with other minute factors to make offering complete as recommended below.

- ❖ A good product is not itself essential for it to be sold unless the product is communicated to the target audience. Similarly developing an integrated

- marketing mix with distinctive focus on its promotion and advertising can create wonders in improving the extent of awareness and attractiveness of product. Since urban population and foreigners are prospective target customer effective communication of offering can bring in improved yields
- Online means of communication and various social media channels for such purpose can be effectively employed. Visuals, videos can add the information content and can thus influence the purchase decision. Also exhibition of crafts and art at national and international level can further be pushed.
- ❖ Rural folks still are unaware of hidden potential of rural tourism. Organization of seminars, workshops, events encouraging local community involvement, promotion of benefit accrued to other via acting as tourist agent can add to the number of stakeholders involve in rural tourism.
  - ❖ Various legislation governing the activities of tourist operators especially imposition of taxes and compliance of procedure involve restraint their steps. Thus, minimization of such constraint can encourage more people to join the bandwagon as provider of tourist products
  - ❖ Improving the literacy levels, use of digital technology, and establishment of Vocational language learning centers can add to the skill set of rural people thus enabling them to take up job of guide.
  - ❖ In order to encourage greater involvement of local population sessions can be organized communicating tourism benefits and resolving the issues faced by them.
  - ❖ Various training programs aimed at sharpening of skills of existing stakeholders can be initiated.
  - ❖ Access to tools, equipment, easy financing and access to infrastructure can boost the agricultural produce as well as can revive the demolish state of agro tourism in India.
  - ❖ Continuous monitoring and supervision measures must be put in place to assess it performance, impact and for planning future course of action.

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## Research Note-1

# Measuring Hotel Performance using Balanced Scorecard Model: A Case of MICE Tourism\*

Jatin Vaid, Arvind Kumar Dubey, Subodh Kesharwani & Davinder Kumar Vaid

### Abstract

Measuring performance in tourism organizations, specifically of hotels and convention centers involves a study of multiple dimensions, as a single dimension like the financials may not be adequate to reflect it (Mohammad, Rashid, & Tahir, 2013). Also, financial indicators are historic in nature and do not provide sufficient indicators for future performance (Zahoor & Sahaf, 2018). Many research studies in the past have sought to link financial and non-financial measures to propose a comprehensive model for measuring organizational performance (Liang & Hou, 2006). The Balanced Scorecard (BSC) model has been widely used in service industries, especially in hospitality and tourism organizations as comprehensive measure of performance (Mohammad, Rashid, & Tahir, 2013). It translates an organization's mission and strategy into a broad set of four performance measures, namely: financial, customer, internal business processes, and learning and growth, thus providing a framework for strategic measurement and enabling organizations to track their financial outcomes while scrutinizing progress in building the capabilities for future growth (Kaplan & Norton, 1996).

The present paper has elucidated the relevance of Balanced Scorecard Model in measuring performance of hotels with respect to MICE tourism. Through content analysis the paper has summarize the most commonly used dimensions and indicators in designing a scale for measuring performance of hotels and convention centers.

The research study adopts a content analysis technique that involves ascertaining categories and counting the number of occurrence where those categories are used in a particular piece of text to produce expressive information on previous researches (Yoo & Webber, 2005). Here, the content of eight relevant research articles was analyzed in terms of the dimensions and indicators of performance of the four balanced scorecard perspectives.

**Keywords:** MICE tourism, Content Analysis, Balanced Score Model, Performance Indicators, Service Industry.

## Introduction

MICE Tourism involves travel for business purposes including travel for attending meetings, conventions, and expositions and for incentives (Buhalis & Costa, 2006). This segment of tourism has witnessed unmatched development in the last 2 decades and continues to grow at a fast pace (Seaton & Bennett, 1996). It is a major slice of the international tourism market and is of economic importance to many countries (MalekMohammadi & Mohamed, 2010). Some of the important factors that can be attributed to the growth of MICE tourism and for shaping its future may include rising demand for

business travel; availability of Professional Conference Organizers (PCOs); ease of using new technology; and application of sophisticated marketing strategies by hotels and convention centers to manage customer relationships (Buhalis & Costa, 2006). This involves dealing with a number of dedicated convention specialists to market their venue effectively (Kotler, Hamlin, Rein, & Haider, 2002).

Hotels and convention centers today are giving importance to marketing of MICE tourism as a strategic philosophy in the light of research on its past, present and potential customers (Seaton & Bennett, 1996). The focus

**Jatin Vaid** Assistant Professor, Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies, New Delhi

**Dr. Arvind Kumar Dubey** Assistant Professor, SOTHSM, IGNOU, New Delhi

**Dr. Subodh Kesharwani** Associate Professor, SOMS, IGNOU, New Delhi

**Dr. Davinder Kumar Vaid** Professor, JIMS, Kalkaji, New Delhi.

has evolved over a period of time from transactional to a relationship mindset, wherein organizations are strategically oriented to retain existing customers and improving their quality of experiences, rather than only acquiring new ones (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003).

Customers are satisfied if they perceive that products and services meet their needs and are delivered as expected. Customer satisfaction is further seen to be influenced by product features, customer sentiments, ascription for success, opinion of being treated with fairness, and behavior of other customers (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003). Keeping a strategic orientation towards customer needs, is observed to have a positive impact on employee performance and customer satisfaction, and eventually leads to customer loyalty (Mohammad, Rashid, & Tahir, 2013). Organizations having a substantial base of satisfied customers are believed to earn higher revenues than their competitors, reflecting better financial performance (Zahoor & Sahaf, 2018).

Organizational performance has been quite a well researched topic in various sectors, over the last decade. Though, having 'Market Orientation' and a focus on satisfying customer's needs is said to influence it, there has been a lot of debate to develop a consensus about the dimensions and indicators to measure organizational performance (Salehzadeh, Pool, Tabaeian, Amani, & Mortazavi, 2017).

Measuring performance in tourism organizations, specifically of hotels and convention centers involves a study of multiple dimensions, as a single dimension like the financials may not be adequate to reflect it (Mohammad, Rashid, & Tahir, 2013). Also, financial indicators are historic in nature and do not provide sufficient indicators for future performance (Zahoor & Sahaf, 2018). Many research studies in the past have sought to link financial and non-financial measures to propose a comprehensive model for measuring organizational performance (Liang & Hou, 2006). The Balanced Scorecard (BSC) model has been widely used in service industries, especially in hospitality and tourism organizations as comprehensive measure of performance (Mohammad, Rashid, & Tahir, 2013). It translates an organization's mission and strategy into a broad set of four performance measures, namely: financial, customer, internal business processes, and learning and growth, thus providing a framework for strategic measurement and enabling organizations to track their financial outcomes while scrutinizing progress in building the capabilities for future growth (Kaplan & Norton, 1996).

## Literature review

Development of Balanced Scorecard has been one of the most noteworthy developments in the field of strategic management and performance evaluation, deserving concentrated research attention (Liang & Hou, 2006).

(Mohammad, Akroush, & Odetallah, 2014), in their paper examine the validity and reliability of Webster's marketing culture scale in the context of restaurants in Jordan. The study makes use of EFA, CFA and structural path models to analyze the data collected using structured questionnaires from a sample of 334 restaurant managers. The findings show that innovativeness; management frontline interaction and organization dimensions of marketing culture had significant effect on performance. However, the study fails to study the customer's viewpoint and factors other than those mentioned in Webster's scale.

(Mohammad, Rashid, & Tahir, 2013), look into the relationship between four CRM dimensions, viz., customer orientation; organization; knowledge management and technology with the four perspectives of organizational performance of Balanced Scorecard model in the context of hotels in Malaysia. The study considers 152 responses from managers of three-star to five-star hotels on a structured questionnaire administered through post. The findings of the study show that there exists a significant relationship between CRM dimensions and financial perspective of performance. However, technology had an insignificant relationship with learning & growth perspective.

(Zahoor & Sahaf, 2018), in their research empirically investigate the causal relationship between the various perspectives of Balanced Scorecard. A set of 13 performance indicators were selected based on an extensive review of literature and clustered into the four perspectives of Balanced Scorecard, with the help of expert opinion. The data for the study has been collected from two Indian banks, one each belonging to private and public sector, through personally administered questionnaires. The data was analyzed using first-order and second-order CFA on various scales used in the study. The results of the study show that non-financial indicators are causally interrelated and have an impact on financial performance.

(Salehzadeh, Pool, Tabaeian, Amani, & Mortazavi, 2017) Study the effects of internal marketing and market orientation on organizational performance based on the Balanced Scorecard. Theirs' is a cross-sectional study on responses of restaurant managers in Iran. The findings suggest that restaurants should motivate their employees by providing them proper training and a robust reward system. Also changes in customer behavior should be proactively detected and informed to the management for necessary actions.

(Liang & Hou, 2006)'s research focuses on HTT Hotel in Taipei, Taiwan to empirically verify the cause and effect relation between measures and performance drivers in Balanced Scorecard. Data was collected from company documents and personally interviewing CFO and MIS staff of the hotel. The same was analyzed using multi-

stage regression (Simultaneous Equation Modeling) and path analysis. The results show that customer satisfaction is significantly related to financial perspective of performance. Also, hotels should invest in renovating their facilities, as the same is observed to positively impact customer satisfaction.

(Sainaghi, 2010) Extensively reviews 152 research papers to identify research gaps in performance measurement of hotels using Balanced Scorecard. Four critical areas for future research along with their objectives, findings and questions as mentioned are strategy, production, marketing and organization.

(Min, Min, & Joo, 2008) Focus their research on luxury hotels in Korea. The study seeks to develop a Balanced Scorecard to measure efficiency of hotels and eventually benchmark performance standards by identifying causes of inefficiencies and strategies to improve their competitiveness. It also uses DEA, under the BSC

framework to measure efficiency of six Korean hotel chains. The findings show that giving discounts on hotel rooms, not necessarily lead to higher occupancy rates; and expansion strategies do not always result in higher profitability.

(Evans, 2005), In their research paper explores the implementation of Balanced Scorecard dimensions to measure performance in hotels of North East England. The sample units in this study are the General Managers of these hotels, and data has been collected using questionnaires administered through post. The results illustrate the efficacy of using the Balanced Scorecard approach, meanwhile highlighting certain areas to be considered by management to avoid any difficulty in its implementation.

A summary of these research studies highlighting their research design, factors considered for research and broad implications to organizations is illustrated in Table 1.

Author(s)	Nature of study	Sample units & context	Theoretical background	Factors	New perspective insights	Organizational implications
(Mohammad, Akroush, & Odetallah, 2014)	Empirical	Managers of restaurants / Jordan	Webster's scale	Service quality Interpersonal relationships Management frontline interaction Selling task Organization Internal communication Innovativeness	'Management frontline interaction'	Only 3 dimensions: 1. innovativeness; 2. Management frontline interaction; 3. organization, had significant effect on performance
(Mohammad, Rashid, & Tahir, 2013)	Empirical	Managers of 3 star and 5 star hotels / Malaysia	Balanced Scorecard	Customer orientation CRM Organization Technology based CRM Knowledge management	All dimensions of CRM have a positive and significant impact on hotel performance; CRM Technology does not have a significant relationship with 'learning & growth' perspective	Management to reinforce strategic dimensions of CRM based on organizational culture and should not overly rely on CRM technology, alone.
(Zahoor & Sahaf, 2018)	Empirical	Employees of public and private sector banks / India	Balanced Scorecard	Financial Customer Internal business process Learning & growth	Employee learning & growth positively influences internal business process; which influences customer perspective and finally financial performance	Management should focus on cultivation and development of intangible assets integral to indicators of BSC
(Salehzadeh, Pool, Tabaeian, Amani, & Mortazavi, 2017)	Empirical	Restaurant managers/ Iran	Balanced Scorecard	Internal Marketing Market orientation.	Internal Marketing positively influenced Market Orientation and Performance	Adoption of IM and MO approaches helps managers improve performance, have better control over changes.

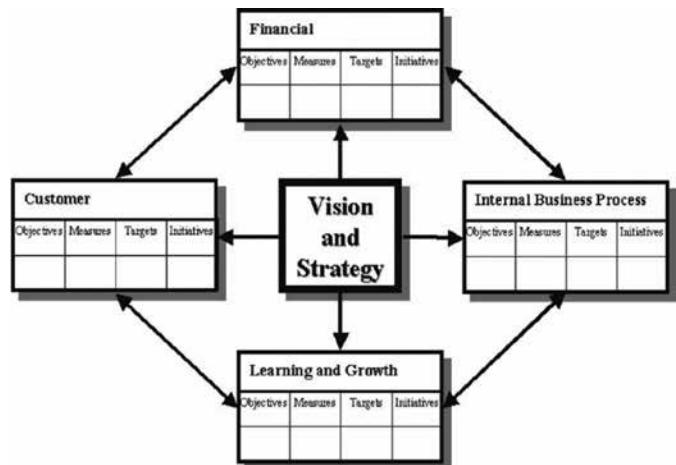
(Liang & Hou, 2006)	Empirical	Hotel Managers / Taipei, Taiwan	Balanced Scorecard Service Profit Chain	Financial Customer Internal business process Learning & growth	Customer satisfaction measures are significantly associated with financial performance; Excellent facilities increase customer satisfaction	Financial outcomes can only be achieved if customers are satisfied
(Sainaghi, 2010)	Theoretical	Review of literature	Balanced Scorecard	Financial Customer Internal business process Learning & growth	Strategy; Production; Marketing; Organization; IT	Customer perspective, strategy and process perspective are the most researched areas
(Min, Min, & Joo, 2008)	Empirical	Luxury hotels / Korea	Balanced Scorecard Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA)	Financial Customer Internal business process Learning & growth	Reduction in room price did not lead to higher occupancy rates; At maturity stage, mere expansion of hotel capacity may not lead to higher profitability	Lower DEA score means greater likelihood of failure for hotels.
(Evans, 2005)	Empirical	Managers - Hotels / North East England	Balanced Scorecard	Financial Customer Internal business Innovation & Learning	RevPar (Revenue per available room; Customer satisfaction; Service errors; Identification of new markets	Linking performance appraisals with BSC outcomes; Strategy information to be disseminated throughout the organization; early identification of negative trends

**Table 1: Summary of Literature Review**

Looking at its importance, little academic research has focused on the use of Balanced Scorecard in tourism organizations, specifically in the Indian context.

#### Theoretical framework - The Balanced Scorecard

The Balanced Scorecard, introduced by (Kaplan & Norton, 1996) and depicted in Figure 1 is one of the most widely used models to measure performance of hotels and convention centers, as it interprets mission and strategy into goals in quantifiable terms, viewed from financial, customer, internal business process and learning & growth viewpoint (Mohammad, Rashid, & Tahir, 2013). The meanings of these dimensions are discussed in Table 2.

**Figure 1: Balanced Scorecard**

Dimension	Meaning
Financial	Based on financial metrics
Customers	Concerned with what really matters to the customers
Internal Process	Related to critical internal processes in which the organization must excel to implement strategy.
Learning & Growth	Focused on building continuous improvement in relation to products and services, and to create long term growth.

**Table 2** Balanced Scorecard Dimensions and their meanings

The integration of these four dimensions in balanced scorecard explicates the understanding of cross-functional relationships in an organization thereby improving decision making and ensuring better performance (Zahoor & Sahaf, 2018). Moreover, (Liang & Hou, 2006) notes that as Balanced Scorecard has its heart in linking business decisions and results, it can be helpful to organizations in developing, implement and communicating their strategy at all levels.

### Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Elucidate the relevance of Balanced Scorecard Model in measuring performance of hotels with respect to MICE tourism;
2. Conduct a thorough review of available academic literature in identifying various dimensions and indicators of performance for the four perspectives of Balanced Scorecard.
3. Through content analysis, summarize the most commonly used dimensions and indicators in designing a scale for measuring performance of hotels and convention centers.

### Methodology

The research study adopts a content analysis technique that involves ascertaining categories and counting the number of occurrence where those categories are used in a particular piece of text to produce expressive information on previous researches (Yoo & Webber, 2005).

Here, the content of eight relevant research articles was analyzed in terms of the dimensions and indicators of performance of the four balanced scorecard perspectives, as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: BSC Perspectives and performance indicators**

Dimensions and indicators of performance	Study	Balanced Scorecard Perspectives			
		Customer	Financial	Internal Business Process	Learning and Growth
(Mohammad, Akroush, & Odetallah, 2014)	Exceptional service quality; focus on customer needs	Profitability; sales volume; ROI; Market share rate	Open door policy; approved set of policies; performance rewards	Technological advances; receptive to change; training to frontline staff	
(Mohammad, Rashid, & Tahir, 2013)	Increase sales growth; satisfy customer needs; customer satisfaction; customer's intention to purchase	Reduce total cost and unexpected losses; increase return on asset and net profit margin	Increase market share; operating efficiency; ability to retain old customers; reduce customer complaints	Employee's problem solving abilities; service quality; intention to learn; promote corporate culture	
(Zahoor & Sahaf, 2018)	Service quality perception; customer satisfaction; Customer loyalty	Net profit; Sales performance; Profitability (Return on Assets)	Service standard communication; Service failure prevention; Service failure recovery; Service technology	Innovative work behavior; Employee empowerment; Employee training	
(Salehzadeh, Pool, Tabaeian, Amani, & Mortazavi, 2017)	Customer satisfaction, Understanding customer needs, Customer service, Addressing customer complaints	ROI, ROR, Reduce costs and wastage	Improving service quality; Implement internal processes; R&D;	Skills & knowledge of staff; Employee satisfaction; Develop creative ideas; Identify staff development needs	
(Liang & Hou, 2006)	Customer satisfaction – Average sales per customer & Occupancy rate	Contribution margin ratio	R&D; Maintenance expenses	No. of employees; Training hours; Job rotation; Retention rate	

	(Sainaghi, 2010)	Customer satisfaction	Financial ratios	Service quality and innovation	Efficiency / productivity score
	(Min, Min, & Joo, 2008)	Occupancy ratio; Market share	DEA efficiency score w.r.t. revenue, profit margins and occupancy ratio	Cost as % of revenue; Expense as % of profit	Investment in facility upgrade; Payroll related expenses including employee training costs
	(Evans, 2005)	Guest satisfaction	Revenue growth; Productivity; Improve cost efficiency	Employee satisfaction; Retaining high quality employees	Training; Continued development of employees

## Results and Discussions

The swift growth of MICE tourism in the last few decades has not been well matched with the level of research, as is noticeable from the number of studies reviewed in the context of performance measurement (Yoo & Webber, *Progress in convention tourism research*, 2005). The studies reviewed provide some profound insights into the indicators of performance used in measuring four perspectives of performance in Balanced Scorecard.

As depicted in Table 4, customer satisfaction and service quality are found to be most cited indicators to measure customer perspective of hotel's performance. Similarly, ROI/ROA and sales performance are most used to measure financial performance. Reducing service failures and R&D seem to be leading indicators of internal business process and finally, Training & skill development of employees and innovative work environment are for the Learning & growth perspective.

The results will be useful for future studies which embark on developing a scale to measure performance of hotels.

**Table 4: Most cited indicators of performance measurement**

Balanced Scorecard Perspective	Indicators of performance	No. of times cited
Customer	Customer satisfaction	7
	Service quality	3
Financial	Return on Assets/ Return on Investment	6
	Sales performance	2
Internal business process	Reduce service failure	5
	Research & Development	2
Learning & growth	Training & Skill Development of employees	6
	Innovative work environment	4

Research has proved that financial performance can only be achieved if customers are satisfied (Liang & Hou,

2006). Tourism organizations are seen to increasingly adopt marketing orientation, wherein they place learning about customer needs at the centre of their strategies and proactively monitor changes in customer behavior (Salehzadeh, Pool, Tabaeeian, Amani, & Mortazavi, 2017). Moreover, as pointed out by (Yoo & Chon, 2008), consumer – decision making has been a pivotal area of research amongst tourism organizations.

MICE tourism, in spite of its economic significance has not been well researched, particularly in the area of understanding the needs of participating delegates and measuring performance of convention venues like hotels and convention centers (MalekMohammadi & Mohamed, 2010).

(Oppermann & Chon, 1997), in their path-breaking research have explained the interaction between three prominent players in MICE tourism: associations; locations; and potential delegates. Also, they have highlighted four important factors that shape the participation decision of delegates. These are: personal/business factors; association / conference factors; location; and intervening opportunities. Deeper insights to these factors can be useful to management of hotels and convention centers to understand the broad dynamics of MICE tourism and strategize to improve their performance using the rubrics of Balanced Scorecard.

## Limitations and Future Research

Limitations in research exist as a consequence of trade offs in research design (Mohammad, Akroush, & Odetallah, 2014). The current research focuses only on the four dimensions of Balanced Scorecard as originally proposed by (Kaplan & Norton, 1996). A potentially rich area for future research may be to compare this model with Data Envelopment Analysis Model, which is another popular model, used to measure organizational performance in tourism industry.

Secondly, our research only focuses on tourism industry in a way of analyzing scale dimensions and its constructs. These constructs cannot be generalized for other industries without further examination. Thus, future studies may examine the constructs of Balanced Scorecard in other service industries.

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## Research Note-2

# Heritage Village: A Policy Paper for Tourism Development in North East India

Bhaskar Kumar Kakati

### Abstract

*Tourism is one of the world's largest and fastest-growing industries which have the potentiality for income generation and employment. North-East India, the extreme east part of India has a huge potentiality for development of tourism because of its strategic geographic location and features. Further, it is the host of many tribal communities. In spite of this contribution of tourism towards the state's Gross Domestic Product and employment, generation is negligible. This paper focuses on the possibility of promotion of different culture for tourism development in this region through the model of development of heritage village. This paper also discusses the Government Private Community Partnership (GPCP) model which is the backbone of development of heritage culture/village in this region.*

**Keywords:** Heritage Village, GPCP, Seasonality, Interstate

### Introduction

Tourism is one of the world's largest and fastest-growing industries. Accordingly, most of the government encourages tourism because of its potential to spread economic development and reducing regional inequalities in income distribution (Pearce, 1988; Coccossis & Parpasis, 1995). The term tourism originated from the Greek word 'tomus' meaning round shaped tool (Kamra & Chand, 2002). Thus, in short, tourism may be defined as a movement. However, all movements are not tourism. World Tourism Organisation defined tourism as "activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited." (World Tourism Organisation, 2011). Tourism as defined by UNWTO as the activity of the visitor. "A visitor is a traveller taking a trip to the main destination outside his/her usual environment, for less than a year, for any main purpose (business, leisure or other personal purpose) other than to be employed by a resident entity in the country or place visited. These trips taken by visitors qualify as tourism trips" (Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2010, p. 10). Therefore "Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon related to the movement of people to places

outside their usual place of residence, pleasure being the usual motivation" (*ibid*:1). Tourism is an important sector of development as it generates income. Moreover, it is one of the major factors which can promote harmony at society through interchanging values of social, cultural, geographical, ecological understanding between tourist and host.

### Tourism in India at Glance

Due to its diverse socio-cultural and geographical as well as historical factors, India is one of the major designations of tourist of a different nation. Further, its diverse cultural, linguistic and political divisions also created a hotspot for domestic tourist. During 2017, in India, international tourist arrivals grew by a remarkable 7 per cent and it reached to 1,322 million. This is the higher growth since 2010. In global, highest growth is recorded in Europe and Africa with 8 per cent followed by Asia and the Pacific with 6 per cent growth. The Middle East and America recorded with 5 and 3 per cent growth respectively (UNWTO, 2018). However, during 2018, up to April, it was Asia and the Pacific region which recorded the highest growth with 7.8 per cent international tourist arrival followed by Europe with 6.8 per cent (*ibid*).

In 2017, South Asia (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka)

**Dr. Bhaskar Kumar Kakati** Centre Manager, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Centre for Policy Research and Analysis, Indian Institute of Management, Shillong, Meghalaya

shared 8.2 per cent of total international tourist, out of which share of India was 4. 8 per cent. Similarly, the share of South Asia to the percentage of income from international tourist was 10.1, out of which India has a share of 7.1 per cent(*ibid*) with 177874 Crore. India's rank in world tourist arrivals was 26<sup>th</sup> position among the entire nation 1. 17 per cent share to international tourist arrivals. On the other hand, India's rank in world tourism receipts was 13<sup>th</sup> with a share of 2. 05 per cent (Market and Research Division, 2018).

In 2017, with 10.04 Million foreign tourists arrived in India, India experienced a growth of 14.0 per cent. On the other hand, the growth rate of domestic tourism in India during this year was lower than international tourism with 2.3 per cent annual growth with 1652.49 million domestic tourists. Interestingly out of 1652.49 million domestic tourists, 1380.89 domestic tourists visited 10 States with a share of 83.6 per cent. These states include Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Telangana, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Rajasthan. So, the rest of the States and Union Territory shared only 16.4 per cent. The same thing was observed in the case of foreign tourist arrivals. The top ten states shared 87.6 per cent and rest states only shared 12.4 per cent. Top ten destinations in India for foreign tourist in India are Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Punjab, Kerala, Bihar, and Goa. So, rest states shared only 12.4 per cent (*ibid*).

### Tourism in North East India

"Tourism in North East is a yearlong product-based affair with the aim of promoting and preserving the locations as ecological hotspot" (IIM Shillong, n.d, p. 15) which can play a major role in the economic development of this region. Tourism in North Eastern India can be discussed in many different broadheads such as nature related, socio-cultural, religious, and others.

North East India is the eastern most region of India consists of eight states namely Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. This region comprises an area of 262,230 square km and shares more than 4500 km of the international border with Tibet, Myanmar, Bangladesh and Bhutan. This region is characterised by its hilly and difficult terrain, sizeable share of tribal population, strategic location along borders with neighbouring countries and weather conditions and extreme events (Sharma, Joshi, Joshi, Rawal, & Dhyani, 2015). "Landscape constituents of the region viz. hills (60%), plateaux (12 %) and plains (28 %) along with river systems contribute substantially in enriching its scenic component" (Bhattacharya, 2008, p. 143) of North East India.

"North-east India is a treasure trove of myths and mysteries along with some of the best gifts of "Mother Nature" (Mazumdar, 2009, p. 1). Interestingly, most of the North Eastern States are being also referred by

a unique name which refers to the uniqueness of these states. For example, Assam is also known as "gateway to North-east India", Arunachal Pradesh is known as "land of the rising sun". Further Nagaland is referred to as "Switzerland of East". Meghalaya which means "abode of clouds" also termed as "Scotland of east" by the Britishers, (Mazumdar, 2009). Manipur is described as "Land of Jewel" by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru (Joshi, 2002).

### Trend of Tourism in North East India

Regional Tourism Satellite Account, 2009-10 prepared by National Council of Applied Economic Research, is the major source of data for analysing the trend of tourism in North East India. The objective of this section is to analyse the trend of tourism in North-Eastern India regarding the contribution of tourism to State's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), employment opportunity, number of tourists visit to North East India and major contributing states to domestic tourism to North East India.

The finding of the Regional Tourism Satellite Account 2009-10 reveals that the tourism scenario in the North East region is different. The share of tourism in the state's GDP is different in different states. Though there was annual growth of tourist arrival to North East India, still the direct share of tourism to State's GDP is less than that of the average share of tourism to GDP of India (see table-1). Among the states of North East India, tourism contributes highest to state's GDP in Nagaland and lowest in Arunachal Pradesh (See table-1).

**Table: -1: Contribution of Tourism to State GDP and Employment during 2009-10**

State	Share of Tourism to State GDP (in %)	Direct share of tourism employment in total state employment (in %)
Arunachal Pradesh	1.95	2.56
Assam	2.73	2.87
Manipur	2.18	3.33
Meghalaya	2.14	4.43
Mizoram	2.88	2.59
Nagaland	3.68	3.79
Sikkim	2.83	6.03
Tripura	3.04	4.83
India	3.8	4.37

Source: \*Regional Tourism Satellite Account, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, 2009-10

Similarly, the direct share of tourism in North East India to employment is less in comparison to the total share of India to total employment except Meghalaya, Sikkim and

Tripura. On the other hand, in Sikkim, the direct share of tourism to the employment of state is highest among all North East Region but a contribution of this sector to total GDP of the state is below the national average. This is same for a state like Meghalaya (See table- 1). Thus, there is a need of policy intervention for growth of this sector in North East India which has huge potential in accelerating economic growth of the region through contribution to State GDP and employment, "in addition to the worrying gap between the conceptualization and actualization of the tourism policies of the Northeastern state" (Neog, 2011, p. 2).

Although in terms of contribution of tourism to state GDP and employment is less than that of national average but encouraging achievement is that there is the positive annual growth rate of foreign tourist to North-Eastern India during 2013 in all the North Eastern State (see table-2). Annual growth of foreign tourist was highest in Arunachal Pradesh with 111 per cent and lowest in Tripura with 1.87 per cent. However, in case of the arrival of domestic tourist, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur experienced negative annual growth. The annual growth was highest in Nagaland with 63.9 per cent followed by Meghalaya with 17.9 per cent. The Regional Tourism Satellite Account 2009-10 revealed that the total number of tourists in Assam is much higher than the other states of North East India. It is because of the infrastructure facilities available in compare to other states of North East India. Moreover, it is well connected with railways and airport. Details of that are facing by North East India will be discussed in the latter part of this paper.

**Table: -2: Number of tourists visited North-East India during 2013**

State	Domestic Tourist		Foreign Tourist	
	Number	Annual Growth rate (%)	Number	Annual Growth rate (%)
Arunachal Pradesh	1250000	-5	10,846	111
Assam	4680000	4	17,638	5
Nagaland	58,413	63.9	3,679	11.3
Mizoram	68,203	7.6	836	4.5
Manipur	120000	-17.9	2,769	45.1
Sikkim	580000	9.1	31,698	2.11
Tripura	360000	2.9	11,853	1.87
Meghalaya	75000	17.9	8,400	45.1

Source: Regional Tourism Satellite Account, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, 2009-10

Analysis of Regional Tourism Satellite Account 2009-10 reveals another interesting fact about the trend of domestic tourism to North East India. As per the account, more than 70 per cent tourist arrival to different states of North

East India was from only 16 states of India (See table- 3). Importantly, out of these 16 states, 6 were from North East India itself. This shows that North East India is not convenient for tourist of more than 50 per cent states and union territories of India or least known to these states in terms of the tourist destination. Those outside states and union territories of North East India which have the highest contribution towards tourism of North East India are Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Interestingly, this account revealed that state like Manipur was least visited by the tourist of outside states of North East India. This state was mostly visited by tourist from Assam, Nagaland and Meghalaya which constituted 94 per cent of total tourist visit to this state in 2013. Maybe the political situation is forbidden tourist from other states to visit Manipur.

**Table: -3: Per cent distribution of trips to the North Eastern States by states of origin**

Name of the Destination	Origin of trips	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Arunachal Pradesh	Name of State	Karnataka	Uttar Pradesh	Chhattisgarh	Others
	Percentage	31.9	25.3	8.3	34.5
Assam	Name of State	Arunachal Pradesh	West Bengal	Bihar	Others
	Percentage	26.3	17	14.4	42.3
Manipur	Name of State	Assam	Nagaland	Meghalaya	Others
	Percentage	76.7	9.5	7.8	6
Mizoram	Name of State	Kerala	Maharashtra	West Bengal	Others
	Percentage	61.1	11	7.6	20.3
Meghalaya	Name of State	Assam	Tripura	West Bengal	Others
	Percentage	80.7	7.5	5.4	6.4
Nagaland	Name of State	Assam	Manipur	West Bengal	Others
	Percentage	88.3	7.7	1.2	2.8
Sikkim	Name of State	West Bengal	Tamil Nadu	Rajasthan	Others
	Percentage	47.7	13.6	13.5	25.2
Tripura	Name of State	Delhi	Assam	Maharashtra	Others
	Percentage	62.5	18.7	9.2	9.6

Source: Regional Tourism Satellite Account, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, 2009-10

In here we must understand why tourist visits to North East India. There are many conditions as discussed above, the tourist may visit for holiday, wildlife tourism, ecotourism etc. The Satellite Account has revealed the reason for trips made by tourist to North East India (See table-4).

**Table: -4: Trips by Purpose (in %)**

Purpose	Arunachal Pradesh	Assam	Mizoram	Manipur	Sikkim	Tripura	Meghalaya	Nagaland
Business	4.4	15	5.8	35.9	4.3	2.3	6	30.4
Holiday/leisure	5.3	6.5	68.7	0	51.4	9.1	27.1	1.2
Social	56.1	47.2	22.6	54.4	19	71.4	55.5	10
Religious	34.2	5.1	0.6	1.4	15.6	0	0.1	2.1
Medical	0	8.3	0.9	8.3	0	1	6	54.1
Others	0	17.9	1.4	0	9.7	16.2	6.3	2.2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	101	100

Source: Regional Tourism Satellite Account, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, 2009-10.

Trips to different states of North East India shows that people used to visit North East India basically for the social purpose which means to meet friend or relatives followed by holiday/leisure. Interestingly, the data shows that no tourist visited the Manipur for holiday purpose maybe because of political disturbances. Sikkim leads North-East India for holiday purpose.

### **Tourism in NER: Major Challenges**

North Eastern Region of India has a long history of tourism development with the declaration of Kaziranga a game reserve in 1916 and wildlife sanctuary in 1950 (Bhattacharya, 2008). This region may have great cultural, geographical diversity and may have a long tradition of tourism development but the trend of tourism in North Eastern Region (NER) shows that North Eastern region of India failed to take its advantage in the tourism front. The slow progress in tourism in this region is the result of lack of planning and managing this sector. Although the respective Government has introduced different policies along with policies of Union Government and North Eastern Council (NEC) but fail to meet the aspiration of tourist due to many reasons. Still many states of North East India depend upon for central fund for the promotion of tourism in these States.

There are two kinds of challenges to the tourism industry of hill districts of NER. First is the natural challenge -which includes its physiographic situation of the region, and secondly the man-made challenge which includes infrastructure, policy, political constraint etc. However, the man-made challenges are not independent of natural challenge. For example, it has Inner Line Permit (ILP) as it is in borderland; the communication is not good as it is hilly. Some can be solved by developing policies easily and some need to be critically addressed in phase manner.

Further, it is also observed that in many centrally sponsored projects, there is a lack of coordination between the concern state government and central government which led to the failure of many important projects of tourism in these states.

"In the tourism sector, transportation plays an important 'flow' function in the tourism value chain. It links tourists at their origin with appealing stocks of environmental and cultural assets at the destination" (Jennifer Reilly et al. 2010 as cited by Rizal & Asokan, 2013, p. 237). "Transport activities are essential for tourism because they provide the link between generating and destination regions and the ability for tourists to move around the latter" (*ibid*: 237). As far as hill districts of North East India are concerned, Transportation is dominated by road transport. The other means of transports are insignificant. Accordingly, most of the hill districts of NER having no railway route. Although in India, Railway is considered as the most economical mode of transportation but due to difficult terrain and geographical condition, in NER, still road plays an important role in transportation. The NER has total Railway routes of 2452.07 Km, but in comparison to total railway routes of India, it shares 3.83 per cent only (see Table-5). Interestingly share of Assam to total railway routes of North East India is 93.13 per cent. Still, Sikkim and Meghalaya have no railway routes due to hilly terrain. Therefore, in NER road plays a major role in transportation. However, "the cost of maintenance of these roads is also much more than the national average due to the terrain, soil types, high rainfall, long duration of monsoon and shorter working season of maximum five months or so" (NEC, p. 17). In here another concern is that many studies (Rizal & Asokan, 2013) show that the average annual growth rate of tourist is much higher than the average annual growth percentage rate of tourist inflow in NER states. It is a matter of concern.

**Table: -5: Railway Routes length (in km)**

State	Arunachal Pradesh	Assam	Manipur	Meghalaya	Mizoram	Nagaland	Sikkim	Tripura	NER	India
Routes (in km)	1.26	2284	1.35	0	1.5	12.9	0	151	2452	64014.9

Source: Rajya Sabha Unstarred, Question No. 1467, dated on 06.08.2010.

Other challenges which can be solved through proper planning and policy to the tourism industry of NER are infrastructure, absence of tourist guide, lack of basic facilities at tourist destinations etc. Further the problem of permits system also one of the major hurdles in the development of tourism to the Hilly states of the Himalayan region of North East India. For example, ILP applies to domestic tourist to visit Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Mizoram. Similarly, Restricted Area Permit (RAP), Protected Area Permit (PAP) is applicable for foreign nationals. Further, there is not much spatial database on GIS platform available for the tourist spots of these regions. Proper using Global Positioning System (GPS) would assist the tourist to identify directions from the source to destination of each tourist spots.

All the above-discussed challenges in North East India to the tourism industry can be mitigated with proper policy and planning. For example, exclusion of Mizoram, Nagaland and Manipur from Protected Area Permit may encourage foreign nationals to travel these states. Along with these persistent problems, some other strategic issues need to address to boost up the tourism industry of this region. These include seasonality and tourism management.

Seasonality is one of the major challenges to entire North East India. Seasonality may refer to the tendency of tourist flow to become concentrated in a particular period which is a relatively short period of a year. It can be broadly "classified as natural and Institutional" (Rizal & Asokan, 2014, p. 7212). Thus, the seasonality of tourism may affect the tourism industry by influencing employment. As a result, the seasonality of tourism provides only seasonal income and employment. Those who are involved with this sector only get employment during a certain period and has to remain unemployed in the off season. The entire NER is prone to seasonality because of its physiographic situation. It may be the reason; still, tourism has not developed as an industry in NER as it is not positioned to provide full employment.

In a study on seasonality of tourism in Hill district of Assam, Bhagabati and Bhattacharya (2005) have

developed a model to mitigate the seasonality of tourism to these districts. They recommended that most of the activities should be emphasised during the intensive period of tourism. During this phase focus should be laid on the marketing of tourist product, make available of non-fixed roof accommodation as tourist influx is high, promotion of local knowledge. Then, during the preparatory or/and retreating phase focus should be on preparation for tourism marketing and evaluation. The off-season can be utilised for the preparation of tourist product (Bhagabati & Bhattacharya, 2005). "Proper campaigning of the region's wide variety of physical and cultural products (the hidden substances for developing tourism) can bring a dramatic change to the present socio-economic situation of the region" (*ibid*: 143)

#### **Heritage Village: The New Possible Way to Develop Tourism in NER**

Heritage is one of the most common terms associated with tourism. Since long different heritage sites attract tourists. There are different sites of NER which have been declared as a heritage site. But have anybody talks about the heritage village of heritage culture.

Dictionary meaning of heritage features belonging to a particular society which are being created in the past but still have historical importance. Similarly, in simple term, culture is the lifestyle of people. Thus, culture reflects different rituals, livelihoods, eating habit, settlement pattern, festivals and ceremonies etc., related to one's life. Can it be the major destination for tourist?

Focusing on the promotion of heritage culture is vital for the promotion of tourism because it may solve the problem of seasonality through restraining influx of tourist throughout the year because of its unique features that I am discussing at the end of this unit. Further, the most essential attribute of the heritage culture is the promotion of rural tourism.

Promotion of rural tourism or heritage culture may be one of the major options of development of tourism in NER states. The potentiality of development of rural tourism is high in NER compare to other states of India.

The study on Rural Tourism in India shows that out of 107 projects taken for study, 41 projects have been successful, 33 projects have been performed averagely and rest 33 projects have failed to attain the objective of the project. Hence success percentage is only 38.31 excluding partially successful (ACNielsen ORG-MARG

Pvt. Ltd, n.d.). However, the most encouraging story is that in spite of lack of coordination between different stakeholders, the success rate of rural tourism project of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, is higher in North East India than the average success rate of India. Except for Manipur, the failure rate of these projects was less in all other North East India (see table- 6).

**Table: -6: State-wise performance of the rural tourism projects**

State	No. of Projects covered	Successful Projects		Average Projects		Unsuccessful Project	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Arunachal Pradesh	3	3	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Assam	4	0	0.00	3	0.75	1	25.00
Meghalaya	2	0	0.00	1	0.50	1	50.00
Manipur	3	1	33.33	0	0.00	2	66.67
Nagaland	5	3	60.00	2	0.40	0	0.00
Sikkim	1	1	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Tripura	2	2	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Total	20	10	50.00	6	0.30	4	20.00

Source: -Impact & Evaluation Study of Rural Tourism Projects

The same study (ACNielsen ORG-MARG Pvt. Ltd, n.d.) reveals that major factor that prevents all the projects from being successful is the remote tourist destination of North East India basically in the hill districts with no basic facilities for the tourist. Therefore, it is important to have a policy of tourist-friendly to cater to the demand of incoming tourist. In North-East India "for decades, we are advocating for the development of tourism sector very casually without fixing our strategies, goals and priorities and in most cases without any authentic action plan" (Bhattacharya, 2008, p. 144).

In NER, there is great potentiality to promote heritage culture through the promotion of rural tourism because it has around 121 notified Schedule Tribes (ST) (Registrar General of India). The number will be more if we take into the accounts of sub-tribes also. The proportion of ST population live in NER is 27.78 per cent whereas in India it is only 8.63 per cent. So, there is a great possibility to showcase the rural tribal village in NER through the promotion of rural tourism in NER.

Moreover, promotion of heritage culture is also possible in the city centre with having better infrastructure. A rural set up may develop in the city centre to promote heritage culture with having all the attributes of rural life. However, in here, it must be kept in mind that until we consider tourism as an industry like other large-scale industry, promotion of heritage culture in the city centre will not be possible. Like other industry, there is a need for planning and allocation of land to promote heritage culture in the city centre. In such artificially develop

villages, the management may employ a large number of employees such as artists, artisans etc., to regularly showcase the different attributes of the culture of different tribes and community. This type of set up may assist in employment generation, contribution to the state's GDP and mitigating the problem of seasonality as the influx of tourist expected to be same throughout the year. Thus, this city-based tourist village will have

1. Infrastructure depicting the rural house which may be used as staying house for tourist.
2. Ethnic food- may be prepared by the tourist under the guidance of a mentor or may be made available to them.
3. Handicraft or handloom- which may be ordered before by tourist or maybe directly made available to them on spot. Further, they may experience the process of preparing handloom and handicraft in the tourist village.
4. Dance/Song/Music- Performed by the local artist.

Now a question may arise- who will promote this? Generally speaking, still in NER development of tourism is looking after by the Government. Many departments, as well as an organisation, have been promoted by both state and central government to promote tourism in NER. However, for sustainable growth of tourism, the Government alone cannot play the major role. It is the reasons why most of the tourism failed in NER. There is a need for participation of the private sector and especially the community.

The heritage culture or heritage village tourism may be developed through "Government, Private, Community Partnership" (GPCP) model. It is similar to the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model but in GPCP special focus is being laid on the participation of the community. All these three parties have an important role in developing, managing and owning the tourist destination in this model.

First steps of this model are to find out the destination for the promotion of heritage culture in the city centre. This will be carried out by the Government sector. Moreover, it is essential to know the customer behaviour and potentiality of the areas chosen for tourism development before selecting any site for development.

Planning constitutes the second phase of this model which is more crucial and important as all three players have a major role in this phase and success of this model is completely dependent on the success of this phase. Generally, it has been observed that tickle down approach is being deployed for the development of tourist spot in where participation of community seems to be negligible or nil. In this phase, all the entire players need to plan for the development of the site for tourism development. In this phase, the entire three parties must develop a vision and achievable goals concerning tourism promotion.

The third phase constitutes both infrastructure development and promotion of the tourist spot. Infrastructure needs to be developed by the Government sector which will focus on both hardware and software components. Promotion of tourist spot needs to carry out by the private sector with focusing on the branding of the spots and tourist destination. Finally, the tourist spot will be managed by the community.

## Conclusion

The North Eastern Region of India has a huge possibility of tourism being its strategic location. The NER shares an international boundary with Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Myanmar and Nepal. Interestingly the entire states have shared international border with at least one country. Tourism in NER has a great potentiality but still contribute a less to state GDP and employment. Further, it suffers lots of logistic problems which need to be developed for the development of the tourism industry. "Traditionally, in India, tourism development policy adopted a top-down approach" (Bhattacharya, 2008, p. 156). There is a need for the development of the people-friendly policy involving the local community and other stakeholders. Thus, "there is necessity for development of alternative model for promotion of different products of tourism in NER" (Kakati, 2019, p. 48). In this regard, promotion of rural tourism or heritage village or heritage culture in NER has the great potentiality for development of tourism in this region as it needs a low budget to develop and focus on the participation of the local community.

Heritage culture through the promotion of rural tourism has great potentiality to develop the tourism industry in NER. This can be promoted through the GPCP model which focuses on Government, Private and Community participation in tourism development. Moreover, the prioritizing of the tourist project is also important for the influx of tourist to a certain place. For this a report of ACNielsen ORG-MARG Pvt. Ltd has suggested that the Government must keep three factors for selecting locations for developing as tourism destinations. This includes- location, Vicinity to famous tourist spots, diligent implementation and maintenance of hardware and software components (ACNielsen ORG-MARG Pvt. Ltd, n.d.). Further, there is a possibility of a tie-up between different states NER. It will be led to the mobilisation of tourist to different parts of NER. Moreover, as NER is becoming a new market place for different industrial product, the Government may think of business tourism to these states. This will also assist in boost up of economic development of these states. Along with these, the Government may focus on following to promote tourism in NER

1. Promotion of low budget tourism package
2. Documentation of Tourist destination
3. Capacity building of all stakeholders including tourist guide and tourist drivers.

## Endnotes

1. North Eastern Council is the nodal agency for the entire North Eastern States of India constituted as a statutory advisory body promoted under NEC Act 1971. The council is looking after economic and social development of the eight states of North East India and functions under the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.
2. ILP is an official travel document necessary for the citizen of India to visit a certain protected area for a limited period. For details see, Neba, G. (2015). Applicability and Relevance of Inner Line Permit (ILP) in Arunachal Pradesh. IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science, 20(7), 50-52.
3. Under the Foreigners (Restricted Areas) Order, 1963, the entire Union Territory of Andaman & Nicobar Island and Parts of Sikkim has been declared as Restricted Area. For details see, Ministry of Home Affairs. (1963). Foreigners (Restricted Areas) Order. New Delhi: Government of India.
4. Protected Area Permit is applicable as per Foreigners (Protected Areas) order 1958, all areas falling between the Inner line and the International Border of State. This includes (i) Whole of Arunachal Pradesh (ii) Parts of Himachal Pradesh (iii) Parts of Jammu & Kashmir (iv) Whole of Manipur (v) whole of Nagaland (vi) Whole of Sikkim (viii) parts of Rajasthan (ix) parts of Uttarakhand. However, from 2011, PAP is not applicable for Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram. On the other hand, the foreigner must register themselves within 24 hours of entry to Mizoram, Manipur and Nagaland at the Foreigner Registration Office. For details see, Cook, S. (2018). Permits for North East India and What You Need to Know. Retrieved February 13, 2019, from <https://www.tripsavvy.com/permits-for-north-east-india-1539554>

5. This includes the construction of permanent structures such as entrance gate, accommodation block, landscaping etc. For details see ACNielsen ORG-MARG Pvt. Ltd. (n.d.). Evaluation cum Impact Study of Rural Tourism Projects. New Delhi: Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.
6. This includes different one-time activity such as workshops, seminar, awareness campaign, cultural festival, training etc. For details see AC Nielsen ORG-MARG Pvt. Ltd. (n.d.). Evaluation cum Impact Study of Rural Tourism Projects. New Delhi: Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

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### Research Note-3

## Coordination between Administrative Announcement and Ground Level Management in Tourism: Evidence from Chilika Lake, Odisha

Rashmi Ranjan Choudhury & Saurabh Kumar Dixit

### Abstract

In tourism industry the administrator or Government and local community plays equal role in development of destinations, services and overall tourism progression. This paper focuses on the development aspects of tourism and the parties involved in the process. Government as the top level or administrator contributes in policy formation, fund grant and monitoring the whole process where as the ground level players gives their effort in implementation of policies, better use of the funds and smooth management of tourism services. Hence better coordination between the top level and the ground level can achieve the goal and direct the development process in a succeeding direction. The paper aims to study the present status of coordination between the different levels and their involvement in tourism development. Community development is the major aspect of any tourism practice to achieve important agenda of Millennium Development Goal (MDG). Present study is based case study approach using secondary data and carried out through qualitative analysis and personal observations. The study focuses on the local community intentions towards tourism, their level involvement and administrative act in the whole process of development. Finally the study suggests the practical implication of the findings in the reality to achieve the tourism development in long run.

**Keywords:** Tourism Development, Government, Local Community, Tourism Policy, Public Administration

### 1. Introduction

In the present era of development tourism industry is also like other industries, substantially assemble of processes managed by a number of different individuals or institutions so-called stakeholders in the industry (Bramwell & Lane, 1999). The processes generally comprises like decision making, monitoring, service delivery, and resource management etc. The diversified processes involve various stakeholders in the industry according to demands and needs. Multiple stakeholder participation increases efficiency, equity and harmony (Timothy, 1998) at the same time rises concerns like social, economic, political and environmental issues. Studies suggest that any tourism development has certain limits and the boundary of acceptability need to be arbitrated by the stakeholders (Pfueller, Lee, & Laing, 2011). Hence strong coordination is the important facet among the stakeholders to achieve mutual benefit from the process and conclusive development of the industry as a whole. Co-ordination among stakeholders in tourism

industry need to be addressed because of the uncertainty, complexity and fragmented nature of the industry. While planning and management are the prime focus of tourism development, coordination particularly at ground level stances essential (Jamal & Getz, 1995; Reed M. , 1999).

It is found that, literature explores the conceptual and theoretical issues of the coordination or collaboration of stakeholders (Jamal & Getz, 1995; Bramwell & Lane, 1999), however real world situations are still unexplored in the developing countries like India. The rationale of this study is to find out the coordination at the ground level is factual or rhetoric. How far the coordination among stakeholders exists in tourism at the study area Chilika Lake, India are examined through this study. A case study based approach was considered for the research and four tourism associated case studies were selected from the study area as well as stakeholders opinion on coordination was collected. The overall strategy is to plot the theoretical knowledge and collected evidences into a conceptual debate to reach an adaptable outcome.

**Rashmi Ranjan Choudhury** Research Scholar, North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong, Meghalaya  
**Saurabh Kumar Dixit** Associate Professor, North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong, Meghalaya

The largest brackish water lagoon of Asia, Chilika Lake situated on the eastern coast of Odisha in India. Spread over three districts, bordered by hill and hillocks of Eastern Ghats and one side connected to sea, the lagoon is rich with high biodiversity. The lagoon is the largest wintering ground for millions of migratory birds and home of the IUCN red listed endanger Irrawaddy dolphins (Chilika At a Glance, n.d.). As a whole the lagoon is a diversified tourism destination in the country. The beauty of the lagoon attracts several wild life visitors, eco-tourists and number of bird watcher especially in the winter accelerating the tourism industry in the region. The industry provides additional economic benefits to the locals living surrounding the lagoon, apart from traditional agriculture and fishery. Several stakeholders are involved in tourism process where the local community stands as primary one. Hence for long term planning and tourism sustainability the coordination and collaboration is the concern, where the present study will provide necessary inputs.

## 2. Objectives

Academic contributions explains the tourism as a driver of economic and social development and regional progression of any society where tourism occurs. Gap of coordination between the parties in tourism industry is considered for the study. The tourism development process and the parties or stakeholders involved in the process are the major focus of the study. The primary objective of the study is to overview the role of the stakeholders in tourism industry and the level of their participation. In the second objective coordination between the involved stakeholders in the tourism are analysed at the study area of Chilika lake region. Finally the study suggests few practical implications and corrective measures based on the findings of the study.

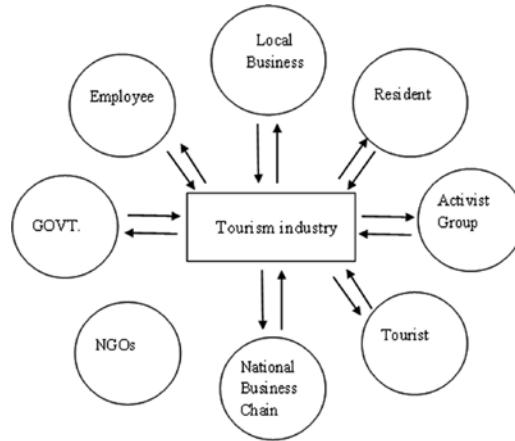
## 3. Literature Review

### 3.1 Stakeholders in Tourism:

The term stakeholder has a long history in academic literatures but the Stanford Research Institute (SRI) in 1963 has generalised the term and defined as "those groups without whose support the organisation would cease to exist." In the later stage different scholars define stakeholders in different way like some define the term broadly (Freeman, 1984) where some define in a narrow manner specific towards an organizational purpose. Freeman (1984) a pioneer in 'stakeholder theory' has refined the definition of SRI and stated "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation's objectives". Further the study of stakeholder theory became popular among different scholars (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Clarkson, 1995; Sautter & Leisen, 1999) and several studies carried out on the concept with support and critiques. A group can be considered as stakeholder which having genuine

interest in organisation's activities and objectives. "The interests of all stakeholders are of intrinsic value. That is, each group of stakeholders merits consideration for its own sake and not merely because of its ability to further the interests of some other group, such as the shareowner" (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). Each stakeholder need to be treated as an end in the organisation and can't be ignored to compromise other end. Management should have a stronger voice than stakeholders to control over and need to provide equal attention to each stakeholder group regardless of their power (Sautter & Leisen, 1999). Jones (1995) suggests that in any organisation various groups have direct influence on managerial decision making process. "To be an effective strategist you must deal with those groups that can affect you, while to be responsive and effective in the long run you must deal with those groups that you can affect" (Freeman, 1984). Failure to maintain participation of even a single stakeholder group can lead to failure of the organisation (Clarkson, 1995). Understanding three major concepts like identification of the stakeholders, process of organisational relationship with stakeholders and negotiation among organisation and stakeholders are needed for smooth management (Freeman, 1984).

In tourism the stakeholders are Government, tourism planner, Destination Management Organisations (DMO), travel entities, employees, NGOs, residents and tourists etc. Each and every one has specific role for better management of tourism at any destination.



**Figure 1:** Tourism Stakeholder Map. Adopted from Freeman, (1984); Sautter & Leisen, (1999)

Stakeholders are the player's having one of the three basic attributes such as: power, legitimacy and urgency based on their level in the organisation (Mitchell , Agle, & Wood , 1997). In tourism industry Government is the controller of the whole process has all three attributes and the primary stakeholder among with shareholder or owner, investors, employee, managers and suppliers (Savage, Nix, Whitehead, & Blair, 1991).

### **3.2 Role of Administration or Government as Primary Stakeholder:**

In any modern society Government is the top level or supreme organisation for any process or course of action. The Government directly or indirectly engages in issuing definition, resource distribution, controls decision-making and encourage stakeholders through collaborative governance by providing resources (Hardy & Koontz, 2010). The government provides mainly technical and financial support, improves the human resource through training and development then facilitating stakeholders by making the resources available (Gupta & Koontz, 2019).

Adi. et. al. (2017) emphasized in their study that the local government has a major role in development and they highlighted Government as three pillars namely: motivator, facilitator and dynamist.

Community-based projects and activities initiated by the government agency had significant social impacts, as they lead to increased participation and trust among community members (Gupta & Koontz, 2019).

Government plays a very important role in implementing policies and resident participation. Government perceives retaining of traditional activities of a community as a tool for tourism development. Many a time's local residents who do not have enough assets have taken initiatives in tourism development and the process of economic diversification without much support from the government or intervention from tourism enterprises turns to be unsuccessful (Su, Wall, Wang, & Jin, 2019).

### **3.3 Government Proclamation in Tourism**

Government proclamation can be understood as administrative initiatives with the intention of promoting transparency, accountability and self-regulation (Aritia, Vliet, & Verburg, 2018). Proclamation increases the coordination between all the stakeholders and government. Although it is widely accepted and believed to involve everyone in policy affairs some stakeholders believe it limits their freedom and autonomy. Governments usually go through four distinct phases of policy cycle i.e., agenda setting, policy formulation, implementation and evaluation (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2009). Stakeholders experience many barriers in different phases of policy cycle among which administrative and legal barriers are most. Lack of information on policy issues, a lack of cooperation among organisations and inadequate funding are also hindrances for stakeholder's participation (Aritia, Vliet, & Verburg, 2018). Hearn, (2007) identified that sometimes the opinions and views of local community are not taken seriously and ignored by policy makers in the process of proclamation. Most of the time local community are not being able to be a part of government proclamation process due to a number of factors like: lack of capacity and skill, fear of collusion

with the government and lack of clear role in the policy process (Aritia, Vliet, & Verburg, 2018) which limits the coordination among the stakeholders. According to Sawhney, et.al (2007), NGOs can play a role to bridges the gap between the local community and government by providing wide range of information, perceptions and solutions as NGOs work closely with local community.

### **3.4 Ground Level Management in Tourism.**

Effective ground level management is fully dependent on the participatory approach of stakeholders (Mathe, 2014). They are considered as individuals who can affect and be affected by decision making. More ground level participation is beneficial to reach the objective of any project (Newig, Challies, Jager, & Kochskämper, 2014), hence participation is expected from the general public and not just the relatively small pool of expert stakeholders (Reed M. , 2008). Management tends to be undertaken through partnerships which act as collaborative fora for diverse stakeholders including local authorities, management agencies, and third sector organizations while representing local level specific issues (Harris, 2013). Partnership can be achieved through participatory approach effectively.

Participatory activities include "identifying, planning and acting with a range of stakeholders and members of the public as appropriate". Participation is characterized by increasing degrees of local ground level management and direct citizen involvement in both decision making and implementation of policies (DEFRA, 2013).

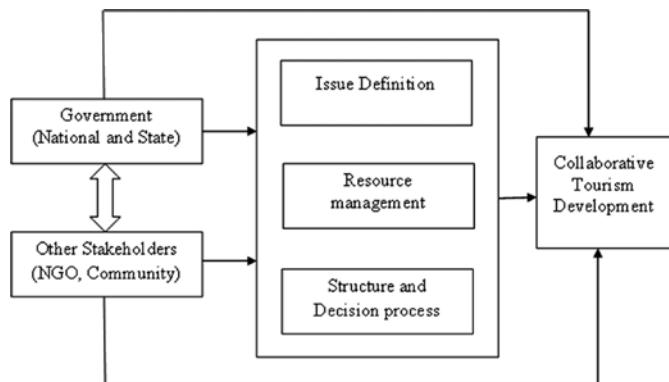
Collaboration and stakeholder's involvement in the tourism process are increasingly being used in developing countries. (Reed M. , 1997) The fragmented nature of the tourism industry creates a recognized need for coordination and collaboration in planning (Hall, 1994) as different stakeholders have different interests in the tourism process. (Ladkin & Bertramini, 2002). In that course of action stakeholder's identification turn out to be complicated task in emerging tourism destinations where interests are not collectively organized (Reed M. , 1997). Hence collaborative management and coordination can resolve conflicts, solve problems and establish a long and mutual participation among the stakeholders by pooling resources in ground level (Bramwell & Lane, 1999).

### **3.5 Co-ordination of Stakeholders in Tourism Development:**

Coordination among stakeholders takes a significant role in tourism development which follows some adaptive planning process at the ground level. Identification of stakeholders and their issues, participant's desire to participate, power imbalance among participants comes under the scanner of the adaptive planning process (Reed M. , 1999). In this study coordination can be understand as cooperation of involved stakeholders in decision making process, resolving conflicts and sharing

benefits of development (Ladkin & Bertramini, 2002). Jamal & Getz (1995) defined collaboration as "process of joint decision making among autonomous bodies, key stakeholders of an inter-organisational domain to manage issues related to the planning and development of the domain". Collaboration is the major facet to maintain coordination between the stakeholders in the tourism development. Community based tourism and community participation is often considered as key notion of collaboration and becomes important in ground level management of tourism (Murphy, 1988; Tosun, 2000; Ladkin & Bertramini, 2002).

Level of participation also another key concept to maintain co-ordination among the stakeholders. International Association for public participation suggests, effective communication encourages level of participation providing adequate information to the parties involved in the process (Ladkin & Bertramini, 2002) which further inspires in planning, fund management and make the parties more expertise in the process.



**Figure 2:** Stakeholder Co-ordination Framework. Source: adapted from (Gupta & Koontz, 2019)

#### 4. Methodology

The study was designed as an exploratory case study (Rowley, 2002; Zainal , 2007) based study to find out the coordination between different parties involved in the tourism at the study area. The data for the research was collected from the locals at the study area as well as from the available secondary source media reports, newspaper articles, periodicals and journal literatures. Different cases of the study area were analysed based on the similarities with the secondary data and further data was collected from the local community members at the study area through focus group discussion and personal interaction.

All total, seventeen persons (Fifteen locals and two administrative official) were interacted for this research at the study area. Before each interaction section respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and assured for protection of their identities. Subsequently the respondents were referred with numbers as: Respondent 1, Respondent 2 and so on. Finally the case studies and

collected qualitative data were scrutinised to develop constructive arguments for the study.

#### 5. Analysis of Case Studies:

##### *Case study I: Case of First International Bird Festival at Mangalajodi Chilika.*

To promote tourism at Chilika Lake and to showcase the lagoon and magnificent migratory birds in the tourism map the state government has conducted 'First National Bird festival' in the month of January, 2018 at Mangalajodi village, bank of the brackish lagoon. First of this kind of event in the eastern region was organised by State Forest and Environment Department with association of Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC) and Chilika Development Authority (CDA). The state tourism and culture minister and secretary to Government were presented and inaugurated the event. In the two day run event a workshop on diversity of birds, film show was shown in the first day and participants visit for bird watching was planned in the following day. Around seventy (70) number of participants registered for the inaugural bird festival. The stay for the participants was organized at OTDC Panthnivas at the state capital Bhubaneswar. The event's main aim is to promote tourism but the hospitality facilities and travel arrangements were organized from outside. The local communities were not much aware of the first ever bird festival and their participation in the event was limited. The officials throw light on different aspects of tourism during the event and one such aspect was 'home stay' but further developmental measures have not undertaken in that facet.

*"The International event was planned in a shorter time period by Government and the local authorities were not involved because everything was managed from outside" (Respondent 1)*

*"...before it was informed us that the participants will be accommodate in the homestays available but in later stage we did not get any response from the authorities" (Respondent 2, 5)*

##### *Case study II: Case of Water Aerodrome at Chilika Lake, Odisha.*

In the first quarter of the year Central and state government came up with 'Sea plane' and 'Water aerodrome' project at the Chilika lake for development of tourism at the region (The Economic Times, 2018). Though regional tourism would have a progression but consequences on the ecosystem, local community and migratory birds would have faced an irrevocable damage. Before measuring the negative consequences the Central expert team visited the area and given a nod to the civil aviation ministry regarding the Chilika project. Along with Chilika Development Authority (CDA) the apex regulatory authority for Chilika Lake various conservationist, NGOs and local people opposed the project.

*"We (local communities) were not informed about the project even the village authorities did not get any information regarding that". (Respondent 7, 11, 12)*

Finally Airport Authority of India (AAI) has cancelled the proposed project keeping in view of conflict from various authorities (Odisha Sun Times Bureau, 2018; Press trust of india, 2018).

#### **Case study III: Safety and Security measures at Chilika Lake for safe tourism:**

As a scenic natural tourist place Chilika lake gets tourists and day visitors throughout the year. Several island destinations situate inside the lagoon where boat service is only the medium. The safety and security measures somehow found to be neglected by the traditional boat owners and the boat association as well. Though all the boats are licensed in Chilika many of them are not fit and life jackets are not available in many private operating boats (Mohanty, 2018). Time regulation and crowd management also a concern during peak tourism season. Several times boat mishap took place in the lagoon costing life and money as such happened in June last year. After the incident authorities takes strong decision regarding boat size, riding capacity, GPS tagging of each boats and mandate life jacket in all ferry service providers (Express News Service, 2018). These types of incidents stand as threat for tourism industry hence regular survey and actions by authorities and local's awareness are necessary.

*"...after any incident, every time they (Administrative officials) assure us to provide life jackets and electronic gazette in subsidized rate but further no action was carried out that regarding". (Respondent 11, 14)*

#### **Case study IV: Declining Dolphin tourism at Chilika Lake:**

The brackish water lagoon is the single largest habitat of the endangered Irrawaddy dolphins in the world (Ghosh, 2018; Express News Service, 2018). This species of dolphins are different in look having blunt nose with bulging foreheads and shy in nature mostly seen at the sea mouth region of the lagoon. The dolphin watching activities attract many eco-tourists and wildlife visitors giving a significant growth to the tourism industry. Since 2007 the industry has seen a noticeable decline (D'Lima, et al., 2018) in the special interest sector of the industry. Researchers state that 'dolphin sightings are not guaranteed' and 'unrealistic expectations' lead the declining activities.

*"Unregistered organisation's intervention, over boating activities lead to divert the dolphin habitat are the main reason of unsustainability of the dolphin tourism at the lagoon". (Administrative respondent)*

D'Lima, et al., (2018) found that there is no substantial operational changes in the activities and annual tourist visit has slow down in their next visit to Chilika. They suggested multidimensional sustainability indicators

need to be studied, user friendly decision making tools and integrated management plan could contribute to sustainability of the dolphin tourism at the lagoon.

#### **6. Finding, Discussion and Suggestions:**

In the review of previous academic studies and other media literatures it can be clearly stated that Government is the administrator and primary stakeholder of any development process. The service industry tourism is mostly depends on the ground level operators to provide facility at grass root level hence their participation in decision making and implementation are most important (Campos. & Hall, 2012). Coordination between different players in the industry can direct the development in appropriate direction which can be achieved through tourism based capacity building, flexible partnerships and revenue sharing among all parties etc (Goodwin, 2002). Government as the planner should include those stakeholders who agree with the strategic development process (Sautter & Leisen, 1999). The cases of the study area and the observation of the researcher find out some precarious issues and the study throws insight on such issues like:

##### **6.1 Gap between Local Governance and Stakeholder**

In the information based industry communication between the stakeholders play a significant role. Most of the time the Government initiatives for the tourism development are not properly disseminated among the stakeholders. Local community is more involved in the informal sectors in tourism where the skill development and capital investment is very low (Goodwin, 2002). Market trend, customer demand and stakeholder's capability are the major aspects of tourism planning which can be understood through better communication between Government and local stakeholders. From the Case Study II it is clear that, there is a gap between the governance and local organisations in the study area region. Without proper assessment Government proclamation regarding the major project pulled the administrator to revert back on decision (Odisha Sun Times Bureau, 2018). According to Beaumont & Dredge (2010) types of tourism network, the local tourism organisation (LTO)-led network has more effect on the governance in the study area.

##### **6.2 Transparency and Accountability of Tourism Development**

Transparency and accountability are important parameters in tourism development as they establishes credibility and trust among the stakeholders. Stakeholders also feel their input is worthwhile and their involvement in decision-making process (Beaumont & Dredge, 2010). Tourism industry at the study area is under control of the informal sectors and many organisations run there are unregistered which lead to difficulties in transparency and accountability. In the ferry transportation in the lagoon it is observed that number of unregistered

operators run the service (Mohanty, 2018). In conclusive tourism development the unaccounted operators stand as constraint on the way of decision making and policy formation process.

### 6.3 Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders

Tourism development is a complex process needs regular observation of the activities of the concerned stakeholders or parties involved in it. Tourism Development Councils (TDCs), Destination Management Organisation (DMO) and local government play the role of top level governance having the responsibility of drafting tourism action plan, policy framing and regulating the whole process (Beaumont & Dredge, 2010). Local participants and ground level players like service providers are responsible of smooth management and implementation of the action plans in a sustainable direction.

Chilika Development Authority (CDA) is the apex regulatory body at the study area region which conserves the lake biodiversity, take part in multidimensional activities along with some other agencies. Moreover the local community as a major stakeholder are not aware of the consequences of biodiversity loss, as several cases of bird poaching comes in to news in every winter (Patnaik & Pradhan, 2018; Mishra, 2018; PTI, 2016).

### 6.4 Suggestions

The study has practical implications in decision making process in tourism development and few recommendations are drawn based on the finding of the study.

- ❖ Financial capital investment in tourism found to be the major issue for the local community hence Government initiative in this regard is highly recommended.
- ❖ Transparency and accounting of grass root level projects should be done time to time to bring trust among the stakeholders.
- ❖ Local community participation need to be encouraged in decision making process to bring a better coordination with the top level.

## 7. Conclusion

Using the case study approach it is understood that, the coordination gap between the administrator and stakeholders stands as hindrance in tourism development in the study area. The participatory management approach can be adopted to establish better understanding among the stakeholders and proper techniques need to be carried with efficient individuals. Skill development, capacity building and awareness programs will help to strengthen the coordination between government and other stakeholders by shrinking the gap between them.

The Government initiatives on capital investment with smooth management system and community involvement in decision making can be helpful regarding the concerned

issue. Proper feasibility study of the development issue and impacts on the parties as well as on environmental issues need to be addressed before administrative proclamation. To conclude it is the responsibility of all stakeholders including the Government to maintain the coordination to accomplish the tourism development.

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